Her Killing Moon
by Angelic_Hellraiser

Summary

It was a simple task, a simple hunt. Track down the girl from the subway, the one who – by some bizarre stroke of luck – had ended up with the object. Kylo Ren was a master of his talent and loyal to his cause. Nothing could shake that loyalty, nor the trust he held in his supreme leader. Nothing.

UPDATES: Epilogue is all that's left! Currently busy with #NaNoWriMo2019 & original projects, atm, but it will be posted soon.

Notes

A/N: Golgotha Tenement Blues - Machines of Loving Grace sets the mood for this first chapter. This project began mostly because I just wanted to write vamp/werewolf smut for Reylo. I regret nothing. Thank you. (Mind those warnings!)
** Updates will be sporadic depending on my RL schedule!

**OVERALL WARNINGS**: blood, gore, language, blood kink, rough kink & explicit sexual content (BE SURE TO CHECK THE TAGS ABOVE, TOO!)

**SIDE NOTE**: All the pixel art you see is made by me. Please let me know if you wish to use it. Thank you.

**OTHER PLACES TO FIND ME:**

Reylo Tumblr: ReyloisBlessed
Personal Tumblr: angelic-hellraiser
Twitter: cthulupriestess
deviantART: AngelicHellraiser
Instagram: angelichellraiser
FFN: Obsidian Lullaby
Wattpad: AngelicHellraiser
Night winds ruffle his damp locks of hair and goose-flesh rises on his nude skin as the faint stars above flicker against the thick veil of city smog. He sighs, heavy eyes drifting closed as the scents of the city waft up from the streets below, dank alleyways, car pollution, manhole covers belching vaporous filth through their open seams.

He hates the city. A fetid nest overgrown with countless hungry mouths open and screaming.

Still, addictions of the base animal call to him in those secret moments and he finds, in a bleak and twisted way—a way he'll never admit to openly—he can appreciate the cravings. Women strolling the lamp-lit streets with legs that go on forever, smooth red lips and smoky eyes, hollow eyes. Vagabonds lingering in the trash littered alcoves with their sleeves rolled back, nasty needle bites tattooing their skin. Over zealous hands stuffing food down a crowded gullet, the separation...
between hunger and _hunger_ only a blur, the actions an endless cycle of reflex.

No matter how many times you feed it—that creeping, ravenous wolf grinning behind your eyes—it's never enough.

*_Nothing fills that emptiness._

He pads back into his apartment, bare feet warm despite the chilly floor. His bed remains untouched, perfectly made, the lamp on his nightstand illuminating a handwritten note. 'Subway' it reads. No time. No date. No further information. Though, the handwriting is unmistakable. Kaydel Ko Connix.

A knock abruptly sounds at his door, sharp and loathe to be ignored.

He ignores it, tongue rolling along his teeth behind his lips, thinking.

Another knock, harder.

Perhaps he should have visited his supreme leader sooner, spoken to him openly about... his thoughts. But the idea of revealing those weaknesses to anyone, let alone his master, unsettles him. To entertain such childish notions is unbecoming of what he is _now_, how far he has come. He halts the current train of thought with a disgusted exhale, his lips curling in a bitter snarl.

*_The past is a dead thing._

And he doesn't need guidance on crushing his weaknesses. He has perfect control. _Perfect control._

A third knock.

"What!" he snaps.

"Open the door, Ren." Demands a stiff voice.

Armitage Hux, General Hux as he prefers to be called. A man driven by simple needs, useful as he may be. Ren runs his hands through his hair, annoyance boiling his blood. Never has he understood why Snoke keeps such a vile creature in a seat of power. Hux delights in power alone. He desires no other purpose but to dominate. There is nothing principled about his motives. Nothing worthy of his seat.

Ren takes his time finding fresh clothes. A cable-knit turtle neck, leather gloves, comfortable trousers, boots and a double-breasted leather trench coat. All in varying shades of black.

"I don't have time—"

He strides to the door and abruptly rips it open, meeting Hux's gaze with swirling night eyes. "I take it there's a good reason you're pestering me." His fingers dig into the door frame.

"I will not be addressed in such a manner." the man lips peel back over perfect white teeth. "You will—"

"Get to the point." Ren drawls. "Why are you here?"

A dramatic pause, blue eyes burning at him like licks of azure fire. Then, Hux's mouth twists in a derisive smile. "Snoke wants to see you. Now."

Ren's face remains blank. "The supreme leader is sending you out as his errand boy? Should I be
questioning your proficiency as a military leader, general? Your skills have proven disappointing as of late."

Hux's face blisters red with rage, but he swallows his retort. "You know as well as I that he does not like to be kept waiting."

"I don't follow orders from you." Kylo says smoothly, leaning into Hux's space.

Hux arches a cruel eyebrow. "A dog's only talent is following orders."

Before Kylo has a chance to reply, Hux sweeps around and saunters down the hall to the elevator. He lopes after him, shoulders heaving with murderous breaths.

The elevator ride down to the parking garage is infinitely more suffocating with Kylo deliberately standing in Hux's space again, watching his reflection in the elevator doors. Hux does much the same, his eyes pretending to be everywhere but Kylo's imposing shadow.

The Supremacy, a sprawling estate in the rural mountainous range away from the writhing metropolis where few humans tend to frequent. Unless of course, they do so at their own peril. Kylo once questioned himself why, if he hates the city so, would he purchase an apartment at the very heart of it. Out here, the world is quiet, serene. But he had deduced that it was the distance—the noise, in fact, that drew him.

Breathing in the fresh mountain scents, his chest aches with the hunger for moist earth between his toes, his body chilled by the night air and his eyes sharp in the moonlight. He misses this place.

Still, the noise of the city lured him, like a flame.

And that's when the thoughts began. Traitorous things.

Inside, a sea of shining monsters part for them, eyes cutting down pale, arrogant noses as Kylo glares beyond them, head held high. They know better than to utter a word in his presence. Better to utter it behind his back. Still ill-advised, but a safer route, nonetheless. Hux waves his hand dismissively to an approaching subordinate and continues through to a yawning corridor, and then on to a long descending flight of stairs. Kylo remains close at his back, smirking as he sees the general's chin turn ever-so-slightly in his direction, eyes crawling over a rigid shoulder.

Simple delights are a hard thing to come by in this life. Kylo makes damn sure to take them where he can.

There are three sub-levels below the mansion: a military level complete with barracks, showers,
training rooms and weapons vaults, a prisoner level and the deepest level, the supreme leader's sepulcher. Only the most trusted are allowed to enter.

Kylo does not pause as they pass the prison cells, his nostrils flaring at the odor of blood. Werewolf blood.

"General Hux. Kylo Ren." Snoke intones as they enter the throne room, the heavy doors slamming shut behind them. "What news, general. I do hope you have something more productive to tell me this time."

Hux flourishes his hand with a half bow. "Supreme leader, we have garnered recent information on the location where the exchange will take place."

"Where?" Snoke whispers, tendrils of his voice creeping over the walls.

"Hazel Street Station. Platform 3."

The supreme leader chuckles lowly, his arctic eyes probing into the only occupant of the room who has yet to speak. "Excellent, my good general. Well done. You may leave us."

Hux's sneer does not go unnoticed as he about-faces and disappears out the double doors, allowing them to punctuate his exit with a thundering crack. Kylo ignores the flamboyant display of rivalry, bowing to his knees with his gaze fixed on the marble floor. The supreme leader watches him, posture inhumanly still, eerily long fingers curled over the throne's armrests. Kylo doesn't need to look up at him to know the ugly, exposed vein of his neck pulses with a patient anticipation, tendons gone rigid along his crooked jaw.

"The war is shifting. Have you felt it?"

Kylo answers without hesitation. "Yes."

Snoke rises from his throne, tall and ancient. "The mighty Kylo Ren. Such a curious creature you are, to hunt your own kind." He stops in front of Kylo, towering. "I've tried for generations to stamp out the werewolf menace, but when I found you, I knew you were special."

Silence weighs heavy in the air.

"The object we seek will be delivered tomorrow night." his finally continues, voice darkening with promise. "Make sure we do not suffer another loss."

"I would permit no such inadequacies." Kylo bows lower, leaning his shoulders forward.

Snoke considers his response for a long time, knife-like gaze penetrating his mind, delving deep, rooting out something hidden. "We shall see."
His knights greet him near the barracks before he ascends above ground. The Knights of Ren have been his companions for decades, centuries in some cases. One of the knights he even turned himself. Ruelle. She stands proudly with the others, small face pale except for the shock of thin rose lips and eyes dancing with excitement. Silas steps in front of her, nodding curtly. Silas has been with Kylo since the beginning, a cunning and formidable combatant.

"Master Ren." he addresses him.

"Caught your scent the second you stepped on the property." Ruelle pipes up, unable to contain herself. "Rumors are circulating. You went to see the supreme leader?"

Kylo looks over all of them, allowing the silence to be his answer. "We move tomorrow night."

"A hunt?" Ruelle pants.

Kylo glares at her and she averts her eyes, instantly dropping her head. The stiff quiet which follows sees that all his knights turn their faces away, each gaze respectfully on the floor.

"Meet me at Hazel Street Station." Kylo asserts crisply and departs.

Their eyes lift from the floor and follow him up the steps, their thoughts hot on his heels as he exits the mansion, the previous shiny monstrosities glowering at him from lavish balconies and festooned couches, glittering wine glasses of blood in their hands. He inhales a needed breath of fresh air the second the doors slip shut behind him and lingers beneath the ghostly crescent moon, angling his face to the stars unsure of why, in that particular moment, he seeks something.

They hadn't offered to drive him back. No need, he thinks. He'd rather walk, anyway.

Across the cityscape a young woman sits silently aboard a train, heart beating strongly as she grips her weathered coat to her body, hair pulled messily atop her head. She glances out at the blurry city line as the first morning light pierces through the haze, lips parting.

What hath night to do with sleep, she recites bitterly, lips moving with the words. Dry lips; she wets them. The lonely never sleep.
Chapter End Notes

PLEASE REMEMBER TO REVIEW, REVIEW, REVIEW!
CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM IS WELCOME!
Chapter Notes

A/N: The Killing Moon - Echo & the Bunnymen sets the mood for this introduction to Rey's POV. I'd originally wanted to name Rey's dog BB, but I didn't feel it matched the look of what I saw in my head (a sable German Shepherd), so I chose a name that means awakening for the sake of symbolism. :p

WARNINGS: cursing, offensive language, action violence, blood, descriptions of emesis and nausea

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

"I fucked with the forces that our eyes can't see,
Now the darkness got a hold on me."

- Lord Huron

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Waking with a migraine headache isn't exactly how she hoped to begin her day, or more aptly put, her night. This new schedule isn't her cup of tea, either. She's a day person, rain or shine, early or late. Night is for sleeping... if one can sleep. For her, let's just say that some sleep is better than none at all.

Still, the pay for this job is decent enough. It puts food on her table and clothes on her back. The rundown flat she moved into a month ago would normally be out of her price range, but her boss owns these warehouse apartments. A blessing? Sometimes, she surmises, but a curse more often than not.

She remains wrapped in the blankets for a while longer, massaging her temples and pushing her face into her pillow, wishing she could squash the pain away. It radiates out over the expanse of her skull, pulsing with all the civility of an ice-pick stabbing into her right eye. Missing work tonight is not an option. Taking a deep breath, she rises to her feet and grasps at the brick wall, her equilibrium swirling.

I can do this, she murmurs inwardly. It's just a little migraine. No big deal.

Bodhi hops down beside her, tail wagging low to the floor and heavy ears pricked forward. His favorite spot was usually the foot of her air mattress, but he had curled up beside her while she slept, no doubt sensing the migraine before it woke her. She absently pats his head to calm him and makes for the alarm clock across the room, keeping one of her hands skimming along the wall.

She's an hour early. Brilliant. That's one lost hour of sleep I won't get back.

Bodhi huffs and presses his nose into the back of her knee as she pauses, staring uncertainly at the doorway across the open expanse of the apartment. As if to confirm her worry, the pounding in her skull intensifies and the world dims. She swallows involuntarily and her throat rejects her command, forcing the saliva back into her mouth along with something far less pleasant. Clamping her teeth shut, she stumbles for the bathroom, barely making it in time and wrenching the toilet set up before vomiting.

The acid burns her tongue, her throat. The dry cracks of her lips also sting. She grips at the lip of the toilet to keep her balance and tries to force the muscles of her diaphragm to relax, but she continues to dry heave until her body finally eases. Shivering uncontrollably, she wipes the cold, clammy sweat from her forehead and sits back on the edge of her tub. It's an old fashioned, rusty piece of junk, the claw feet an ugly black-green instead of their once shiny gold finish. Calcium and filth stains circle the inside porcelain and the flimsy chain which should possess a stopper for the bath has long since disappeared.

At least it has a shower head.

Bodhi walks up and lays his chin on her thigh, doleful brown eyes looking up at her.

She leans forward, pressing her face into his sable fur. "I'm okay." she whispers. A lie, of course, but one that will have to do.

Moving cautiously, she takes a quick shower, electing not to wash her hair and ties it up into three messy buns instead. Bodhi watches diligently as she creeps around the apartment getting ready, her socks mismatched and a toothbrush hanging from her mouth. Toothpaste dribbles down her chin and she wipes it off with the sleeve of her sweater, forgetting that she's wearing faded navy. She glares down at the flaking white smear with contempt before rasping it against her pants.
The chill from outside seeps in through the large windows, giving her migraine some needed relief. She lingers at them for a while, staring down on the empty street below. Over the counter drugs never worked on her headaches. Though far and in-between, they were always intense, always long-lasting, but she'd grown used to operating around them. Pain is pain, nothing more, nothing less.

At least she has a roof over her head and she lives on her own without issue from anyone else... aside from her boss. A much better place than where she started. In time, she will be independent, no strings, no boss. Just her and Bodhi. Patience.

Memories of her first teen years suddenly resurface and she bites her tongue. If Niima Children's Center, or Niima as it's also known, was anything it was the floor you couldn't fall below. Foster homes were either false dreams or fatal nightmares, parents who turned out even more damaged than you, or nefarious partners looking to cash in on the flesh trade. Niima was another animal altogether. Some would argue a more toxic animal and she wouldn't disagree.

The environment of Niima left no room for the daunted, either you fought and gained scars, or you lost and gained scars. No matter the ending, you were in for a confrontation, one way or another. She'd had long hair before her first round at Niima. She'd cut it her second night in. A hard lesson learned.

"Rey." Plutt greets her at the entry. "You're late."

She meets his stare head on. "Apologies. It won't happen again."

He steps closer, his quivering jowls making her insides twist with revulsion. "It better not." He pauses, looking hard at her. "You might be my best worker, but how many other starving children need a job, a place to live, I wonder."

Rey nods curtly once and slips passed him, not needing to be told twice. Regardless of the woman aboard her 8:00 train whose water had broke, her tardiness falls on her alone. Why on earth would a pregnant woman be traveling the night trains, anyway? An irrelevant question, really. Sometimes, one has no other choice.

"Rey!" a voice hisses from between a pair of scrap racks ahead of her.

She stops, attempting a smile. "Rose."

"You look like shit." Rose remarks bluntly. "Should I even ask why you're late?"

Rey shrugs, whispering. "You don't wanna know."

Rose studies her, eyes sharpening. "Are you okay?"

"Just a headache. Nothing major." Her assurance sounds as weak as she feels, but she turns and
continues into the back of the shop, the loud noises and lights doing little to appease her throbbing skull.

Unkar Plutt runs several not-too-legal business ventures, this chop shop being one of them. It sits along the harbor at the south side of the city nestled within a dilapidated horde of other abandoned warehouses—well, mostly abandoned. Save for the drug smuggling. Plenty of stolen merchandise runs through this place, but mostly cars, expensive cars. Some cars are broken down, others built up, most are shipped as is to clients overseas.

Rey and Rose do the breaking down or building up gig. Mechanic work, in Rey's opinion, is the pleasant job in this trade. No extra hassle with theft, or dealing with unsavory characters. Just sleek chassis, busted V-type engines, or worn brake pads. Nothing fancy. Most of her work clothes are stained with grease or engine oil, which basically means all her clothes. She'd wondered the glitzier side of the city once, watching the glamorous women and men in loud suits with cigars in their mouths smiling. She hadn't felt spite for them like she thought she would, just a distant sadness, a longing.

It would be nice to walk without a care like that. To just be.

Some of the other workers greet her, but Rey scarcely acknowledges them, caring little tonight if they are offended. She'll deal with it another night.

Rose hurries up beside her and they slide under their allotted tasks and begin. Tool boxes lie open and various wrenches or screw drivers are scattered over the floor, something Rey has always found tediously annoying, but she remains focused on her work. Whoever had owned this hotrod had worn the brake pads to the bone. The brake rotors themselves are cracked, too. They apparently played at being a drag racer when, in reality, they didn't know the first thing about racing, or cars for that matter.

Rey rolls her eyes and wipes sweat from her forehead. Plutt won't be happy that he has to replace the rotors. He'd expected to get this car on freighter last night.

"You ready for tomorrow?" Rose asks from beneath the car beside hers.

Rey smiles for the first time tonight, a real smile. "Of course."

"Good." Rose is, too. Rey can hear it in her voice. "There's this new club, Heaven's Night."

"The strip joint?" Rey blurts incredulously.

"It's not a strip joint." Rose argues.

"It's in the seedier part of town." Rey fires back. "Playing it a little on the dangerous side, are we?"

An impatient huff. "Paige knows a bouncer who works there. Says it's a fun place. Stop being such a killjoy."

"Kill and joy should never go together." Rey drawls, the dull thump of her head making her words come out harsher than she intends. "Sorry." she mumbles.

"You sure you're okay?" Rose presses.

"Yeah." Rey sighs. "Tomorrow night will be great."

They continue on in companionable silence as the hammering, screeching sounds of the shop blare
on. A few hours later, they are outside along the dock on break. Rose munches contentedly at a peanut butter and jelly sandwich while Rey sits with her legs dangling over the pier, head angled up to the sky. She can see a couple stars tonight. It’s nice and the breeze is chilly on her hot skin.

A distant pang suddenly echoes in her heart and she tucks her lip between her teeth, not exactly sure of its origin, but it lingers. *Those stars...*

"You should really slow down, you know." Rose pipes up between her ravenous nibbling.

"I'm fine." Rey bristles. *So much for companionable silence.*

"I'm just saying for tonight." She explains. "You don't have to prove that you can work while you're like this. No one is questioning that you can."

Rey doesn't answer, instead getting to her feet and walking back into the shop. Rose calls after her, though she's too angry to have civil discussion. People questioning her abilities always makes her overreact. It’s best she just walks away.

Plutt’s wide body abruptly appears in the entryway. Without looking up, she attempts to step passed him, but he moves with her. She tries a third time. Fails.

“Go home.” he rumbles bitterly.

Rey finally glares up into his eyes, defiant. “What?”

“I said, go home.” He repeats, wide mouth parted over obnoxious teeth.

“I have to get back to work.” Rey tries to slip passed him a fourth time, but he grabs her arm.

“You will work tomorrow. You take the rest of the night off.”

She bites her tongue, blood boiling. Tomorrow is her day off, the first one she’s had since she started this job. It's a night out with her friends, regardless if she thinks going to a club in a seedier part of town is foolish. It's one night where she can simply *be* for a while.

“I work tonight. I'm off tomorrow.” Rey challenges, her voice low and brimming with ire.

Plutt’s fingers tighten around her arm. "You will go home, rest and come back tomorrow night. Or you will find yourself without a job and without a place to stay."

She is not weak. *Manipulative fuck!* She is not weak. She can handle herself. *It's just a migraine!* But his expression brooks no argument as he turns away and disappears back into his office. Rey drops her gaze to the floor, feeling exposed and raw. Things like this strike a personal chord in her, a chord she prefers to keep hidden, safely wrapped away in her subconscious. *She is not weak.*

"He's right." Rose says from behind her. "You should go home."

Rey scoffs. "Don't act dumb. You’re smarter than that. He’s playing games. He’s only doing this to make things worse."

“That may be true, but he’s still right. You go home and rest. Work tomorrow.”

Rey shakes her head tiredly. “Tomorrow was supposed to be—
“I know.” Rose wraps an arm around her shoulders. "Soon, Paige and I will have enough money to buy a two bedroom apartment and you and I will share a room, just like we've talked about. You'll find a better job, too."

She nods tacitly. "But until then I have to make this work."

Rose departs back into the shop leaving Rey to herself. She might not admit it, but this upsets Rose equally if not more. Rose has been planning this event for weeks and Rey had been tentative to even ask Plutt for the night off.

Others in the shop have already noticed the difference in attitude Plutt shows her… and her alone. Tension coils around her bones like thorny vines and she exhales a hard breath. After tonight, not only will she look weak to her coworkers, but Plutt’s game of favorites is palpable now. Everyone will know.

And likely start nasty rumors, unless such things already churn around the rumor mill.

What’s worse, Plutt started her out at higher pay than normal. She honestly doubts it's only because he finds her physically attractive. Most in power like to make life a living hell for those beneath them… and they can get creative.

Sick fucker.

And if the goddamn train isn't late, too! If it isn't one thing, it's another. She bites furiously at her lip, trying to burn holes into the ground with her eyes. Can fate get any worse for her tonight?

Something tells her it can.

Morbid...

She immediately quells the thought and refocuses on twiddling her thumbs, rotating them faster and faster in circles until the ball of energy inside her binds so tight she can hardly stand it.

She stops only to check her wristwatch again. Exactly thirty-seven minutes and fourteen seconds behind. Her eyes linger a moment on its cracked face. It still works. After all this ragged timepiece has seen, its still as precise as the day she'd found it.

Curiously, she has never been able to bring herself to get rid of it. It still ticks. She can appreciate that.

Clouds fester above ground, swelling in from the south. Strong weather blowing off the gulf always makes for unrelenting lightning storms, the rain lasting for days at a time. She’d noticed them gathering while sitting with Rose on the dock.
By now, all the stars are obscured from view.

Rey breathes in the moisture of the air and the dank underground stink of the subway as she stands from the metal bench she currently occupies to stretch before sitting down again. She doesn’t twiddle her thumbs this time, staring out at the crowd as more come pouring in from the world above.

People with dreary faces muddle past her, aiming to get on her train first before all the others. Like cattle in a slaughter chute, she muses and quickly blames her ghoulish humor on her migraine. In truth, the whole world tonight dons a monochrome finish, no color, just sharp light and dipping shadows. She sometimes can’t tell which is worse.

*Color or no color?*

Near the edge of the platform, standing not far from an emergency exit, a quiet couple catches her attention. Their dress is painfully mundane. The man, very close to her own age, surveys the occupants of the station, searching for someone. The young woman leans against a pillar, eyes directed at the floor, but Rey can tell that she knows everything happening around her.

They are too aware compared to the other faces. She can see it in the hard lines of concentration angling their features.

As if sensing her, the girl’s head snaps in her direction and Rey finds herself momentarily puzzled. The eyes—they stand out like two smoldering coins, vivid and etched sharply within her pixie face.

‘*Who are you looking for?’* Rey wonders.

The girl breaks eye contact and leans close to her partner, whispering to him. They circle around the pillar as Rey’s eyes follow after them. Her gaze sweeps to the other side of the pillar, expecting to see them, but they are gone. She blinks, scanning the other blank faces for that shock of hard gold and blonde hair.

She sighs after a moment, mumbling to herself. “Talk about Houdini.”

No way someone could just up and disappear like that. She’d simply missed them is all. They used the opportunity of a big crowd to disappear. *I’ve used that trick more than once in the past, myself.*

She glances down at her beat-up sneakers, the throbbing of her skull mounting again, reminding her that she should not be in such a bright setting. Rising to her feet, she walks out of the glaze to an area near where the couple had stood. The overhead light for this sector is out, flickering seldomly. To be honest, she’s surprised any of these old lights still burn. Most of the fixtures are considered vintage, or downright ancient.

Suddenly, the ear splitting screech of her train slices through the tube and she grits her teeth at the sound. *About time, though.* People bustle about, occasionally shoving one another to be the first through the doors and Rey shakes her head. At the very least, she will go back to her air mattress with Bodhi and suffer there instead of here.

But before she can make it to the open doors, something solid bumps into her, knocking her off balance. She gasps, whirling to find a broad, black-clad chest. Just as her eyes reach the offender’s chin, another set of shoulders brush past her, effectively spinning her a full one-eighty into the stone pillar.

She grips at the concrete as her head rolls unsteadily, the awful pulse of her skull seeming to slosh
and tumble like an ocean, and thunder suddenly roars from above, vibrating the tunnel as if drum. She clamps her eyes shut as her teeth rattle and pushes herself off the pillar.

People are already flocking through the doors. She’ll need to hurry, but her attention seems aimed at something else, something in front of her and to her left. She finds it, a tall shade of black rippling into the crowd. He turns, wide shoulders brushing others aside, and she halts, all at once ensnared by a pair whiskey dark eyes. His expression is cold, nose long and wide lips set in a static frown. He stares right into her.

Dangerous is the first word that comes to mind. Unpleasant is another.

She notes several other blurs of shadow out of her periphery when the man’s electric eyes shift to something behind her. She frowns, pivoting to find what draws his attention.

“Rebels!” someone shouts.

And the world is swiftly transformed into a chaos of screams and thunder, or she first assumes it’s thunder. People scatter in all directions as the mass of black-clad figures move on her. It isn’t thunder; it’s gunfire, her mind whispers numbly, body frozen in shock. And they are coming at me.

Without warning, a pair of strong arms yank her backwards and she reacts on instinct, wriggling her body down and biting into the exposed forearm.

A hiss cuts passed her shoulder. “I’m not gonna to hurt you!”

More rapid gunfire reverberates through the tunnel, slamming into her senses, making her head spin. Rey struggles, but her captor’s grip is unrelenting. Bullets penetrate the pillar next to them and she is quickly wrenched away from the flying chips of concrete.

She cranes her neck around to see that her captor is none other than the man she’d spotted earlier, dark, warm skin and square jaw, attire painfully mundane. Where is his partner?

As she opens her mouth to speak a bullet clips her arm and she cries out in surprise. Her captor quickly drags her behind a set of vending machines and rips aside the shoulder of her jacket, assessing her injury.

“It’s only a flesh wound.” he pants, dark eyes glittering with adrenaline. “The bullet only grazed the skin. You’re gonna be okay.”

Rey stares up at him, bewildered. “What?”

This must be some kind of turf war between rival gangs and somehow it had to happen right here, right now, on this very platform… with her here. Tonight. Lovely.

“Just stay low.” he commands and draws his own weapon.

“Finn!” a distant voice yells.

“Where’s Jessika?” the man—Finn—yells back.

His partner, the blonde girl, darts over to them and crouches low at Rey’s opposite side. “You need to get out of here!” she snarls.

“I’m not leaving—

“Don’t argue. Get out of here! Now!”
Finn fires at someone approaching, the hate in his face terrifying. “No.”

“Fuck!” the girl blasts off several rounds herself. “Stop being a fucking hero and get that piece back to Leia! We’ve come too far!”

“Kay, I’ve got a plan!”

“It better involve you leaving!”

“Just trust me!” he snaps and glances over to Rey.

She stares at him with wide eyes as he pulls something from his jacket pocket and stuffs it into hers. It feels heavy, whatever it is.

“Keep it safe for me.”

Rey scowls distrustfully. “Why should I?”

“Cause you owe me one for saving you.” he smirks.

“Finn what are you—

A rush of black suddenly sweeps in from the right and Kay is jerking in front of Rey, firing her weapon with a menacing grimace. The shadow spins like liquid and moves on Finn in an instant. The two crash onto the tracks, dragging Rey with them.

She only has a split second curl her arms around her head before she slams into the metal framework. Pain barks up her side from her hip and her consciousness floats, faraway for one harrowing moment, and then she is ripped back down to reality and the scuffling men in front of her.

They move like water, twisting and snarling. Two rabid dogs aiming for one another’s throats. She can see that the attacker is the man who bumped into her, the tall curious shade with electric eyes. Their guns are gone, knocked out of each other’s hands in the fray. More bullets echo overhead and Rey carefully pushes herself up onto her knees, swallowing back nausea.

She needs to get out of here. Fast.

The man lands a clean uppercut and Finn is flying backwards, landing in an unconscious heap behind her. Fear seizes her heart and she stands unsteadily, eyes darting in all directions, seeking an escape as the man advances on her, features betraying an inquisitiveness, a hesitation. His body seems to take up the tunnel, growing in size with the shadows.

“You’re the contact.” he muses, not quite a statement, nor a question.

Rey trembles uncontrollably. “I don’t know who you are, or who he is! I’m not a part of anything! I’m no one. I just…” her chest rises erratically as he towers over her.

Such vivid eyes, like the girl’s, but deeper, a devil’s gold, and his presence is utterly overpowering, dragging her in with all the crushing gravity of a star. She attempts to breathe, yet his musk surrounds her, an exotic mix of heat, dark earth and leather.

Rey swallows, throat dry and heart hammering. “I’m no one.” she repeats in a whisper.

“Somehow, I doubt that.” he murmurs as he leans closer, nostrils flaring, breaths sharpening.
She tries to stand defiant, face hard and teeth bared. A voice yells through the fog of her brain, reminding her to run, but she cannot move, cannot see past this hulking figure eclipsing the light. His lips twitch and the look of his eyes summons a strange feeling deep within her gut, an anticipation for... *something*.

“Who are—

He never gets to finish. From behind them, a bone-shattering roar explodes through the tunnel and Rey jerks around to find Finn rising up, mouth agape, skin seeming to crawl... and he *keeps* rising. The muscles of his forearms bulge and writhe as his jaw protrudes, *pushing* against his skin, stretching it into something like a snout.

*What the fuck?!* Her hand goes to her mouth. She’s dreaming. She’s fucking dreaming. *This can’t be real!*

Fur sprouts along his flesh and his ears grow to tuft points at the crown of his head. His clothes rip and fall away, leaving only muscle, teeth and claws. Rey’s heart stops, flatlining in her chest, and she thinks for a moment that she has indeed died... and gone straight to *hell*.

“This isn’t real.” she utters dumbly. “Can’t be...”
PLEASE REMEMBER TO REVIEW, REVIEW, REVIEW!
CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM IS WELCOME!
A/N: So sorry for the late update! Made up for it with the length of this chapter. :) Also, I just finished one of my first multi-chapter Reylo projects! \o/ Now I can focus on this project and Spellbound, another Reylo AU based on The Last Unicorn with a very dark, mature twist.

**SONG INSPIRATION:** Cold - Static X & A Forest - The Cure

**WARNINGS:** depictions of violence, physical abuse and emotional humiliation, blood, cursing, etc.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

"There are some eyes that can eat you."

- The Bloody Chamber and Other Stories / Angela Carter
In the coming months, Kylo will look back on this moment as the moment everything changed.

The idea that some nondescript girl—some curious little urchin likely from the harbor by the smell of salt on her skin with tired, frizzy hair, bruises under her eyes and a lack of nutrition in her cheeks—could snatch away his chance of vengeance against Skywalker had never crossed his mind. That anyone could steal it from him seemed utterly preposterous.

He will look back upon this moment with both loathing and wonder.

Her fragrance settles upon him as he approaches, a light wash of something spicy and floral. Like summer.

"Who are—

Suddenly, a rending howl tears his attention away and he watches with grim fascination as the traitor stands at his full height, his body twisting with the change, defying the sway of the moon—she won't be full another week yet. Kylo grins as pride swells in his chest, poisoned surely by their shared enmity, but pride nonetheless. Of all his knights, only Finn had ever mastered the ability to call the wolf at will.

Such a shame. Traitor.

Out of his periphery he sees the girl stumble away, scrambling up onto the platform and disappearing in a blur of shapeless brown as shots fill the air from above. No! his mind snarls and he turns, meaning to pursue her—the mere idea of it humming seductively along his bones, tempting the wolf inside him—but the traitor pounces at that exact moment, aiming a wide slashing arc of claws at his neck. Kylo dodges it with ease, twisting to the side and bounding back, feet landing soundlessly on the tracks.

Halfhearted, Kylo muses, a challenge to shift. He desires Kylo to become wolf, to meet him as a fellow combatant. He scoffs; such an honor would never be afforded to a traitor, let alone a pup.

Moving toward Kylo again Finn bares his fangs, eyes brimming and massive body rolling with muscle. Kylo grins a full flash of teeth, contorting his long features, lips drawn to the edges of his face and dark gaze glittering. They circle one another. Once. Twice. Three times.

A scream abruptly explodes from overhead—one of Hux's men. Kylo sneers at that.

"After them!" someone yells.

"We have to get out of here!" another counters. Ruelle.

Kylo listens carefully. Then, he hears it in the far distance, faint against the storm. Police sirens. Tonight has already become quite the spectacle and neither Snoke nor he would want any more attention than what Hux's men have accumulated. Thankfully, his knights have fled. He can end this quickly and without fanfare.

Finn growls impatiently and rockets toward him with renewed fervor, more vicious and this time actually aiming to tear out his jugular. The pup's lack of restraint is one thing both he and Kylo share, and Kylo recognizes it before Finn even moves. He sidesteps him, drawing a hidden dagger at his belt and pistoning out his arm in a violent slash along the werewolf's belly in one fluid motion.
The traitor cries out and withdraws, a fresh streak of dark blood weeping from a gruesome smile above his navel.

Kylo flashes the knife at him. It is a blasphemous weapon to his kind, but what is he if not wicked.

The blade winks in the low light as if tasting the air around it with greedy abandon and Finn crouches low, his chest brushing the metal skeleton of the railway and his jowls shivering with a snarl of outrage. Drool glistens from his chin, a froth of white, and Kylo angles the blade along the length of his forearm as the ground vibrates beneath them with the storm.

The lights go out. And stay out.

The sirens grow louder.

Faint shapes of geometric edges outline the gloom. Kylo keeps his eyes on his adversary. Humans could never see in this kind of darkness, and though a werewolf's eyes are not as sharp as a vampire's, darkness is still their element. He notes how the traitor's shoulders rise and fall with his breathing, how the slick of blood on his abdomen looks a shade deeper than black and how the creature's clawed hands clench, unclench, clench.

Kylo then notes the conspicuous change in the traitor's panting breaths. They become shallower, more rapid; no longer deep and focused.

*He means to run.*

With a speed that surprises Kylo himself, Finn about-faces and hurtles down the tunnel, his dark shape melting into the stygian blackness. Bile instantly rises in Kylo's throat, his anger singing at his nerve-endings and his fists trembling. *Not only is he a traitor, but also a coward!* Kylo had never taught his knights to behave with such a shameful display of weakness. *Never.* Kylo's anger swells rapidly into an electric maelstrom of wrath and he surges after him, fingers strangling the hilt of his dagger and a grimace distorting his face.

It eats away at him in a way it shouldn't. This werewolf that had once been one of his knights... ran away.

The metal clangs under his boots as the tunnel curls in a slow, wide arc, the double sets of tracks dyed red in the faint back-up lights and the sound of the sirens finally reaching the station. They fade as he follows the traitor deeper down the tunnel, the heavy musk of his fur making him easy to track. Vampires may have the advantage of superior eye-sight, but werewolves are unrivaled when it comes to their sense of smell. And being supernatural in addition—well, let's just say it adds extra icing to the cake.

Finn suddenly disappears from in front of him, his silhouette there and then gone.

Kylo pushes forward, his long legs gaining momentum as he cuts around the bend and leaps over to the opposite set of tracks. He comes to a sharp halt when he reaches the last point he saw Finn and sniffs eagerly at the air. To his left is a small domed alcove with a heavy metal door leading to one of the escape shafts up to the surface in case of emergency, but even in this low light, Kylo can see that it remains untouched.

The traitor's scent is stronger, too. *He's still right here.*

As if to punctuate Kylo's thoughts a hulking body collides into him, nearly knocking him off his feet if not for the warning chill that surges up his spine and the instinctive dip of his shoulder, the angled thrust of his blade—centuries worth of sword training honed into his muscle memory like
beautiful, ugly clockwork. The precision of his strike rings in his ears as the traitor howls in agony and collapses to the ground, the hilt of the silver dagger protruding from his side a few inches below his armpit. A nasty wound; not a fatal one, but...

*Such a shame,* he thinks once more, the vestiges of real contrition whispering through the hollows in his chest.

This is a man who had once been a boy, a boy who had suffered Kylo's bite and became a fellow knight within his circle. *A comrade.* The reminder burns like acid in Kylo's throat and he grits his teeth, towering over Finn, meaning to kill him and simply take the object hidden in his clutches.

And then, Kylo can finally, *finally* pursue his vengeance.

*Yet.*

He hesitates, glaring down at the bleeding mess before him. Not exactly sure what possesses him to do so, he steps back and softens his stance. He cannot kill Finn, not this way and not tonight. Perhaps when they meet again in battle, but not tonight.

*Yes, he is a traitor, but he was also a comrade.* Once...

The silence stretches like a band around them as sounds of the city above beat like an orchestra of drums.

"Give it to me and I will let you live." Kylo offers at last, his expression cold steel as his voice echoes off the walls with a strange and almost spiritual resonance.

Finn huffs a snarl of bitter laughter, the sound edging out of his snout like the sound of a gutting saw.

"It's more than you deserve, traitor!" Kylo barks callously.

*Likely so,* Finn's eyes tell him. *Definitely so.*

And it's that lack of luster in his eyes that finally gives it away, the resignation in his stare. It all clicks, like a violent clash of broken glass in Kylo's mind, a cacophony of stained brilliance that makes his nose throb with pain and his mind scream in understanding. Everything Finn has done was to distract him—*distract him from what?* No, not what; who.

*Her.*

The realization drops through Kylo's gut like a stone, dragging down his innards with a nauseating twist and he glares at Finn in shocked amazement. His once-apprentice looks back up at him with equal and opposite resolve, the choppy hitch of laughter tainting his lips again. Of course, the girl has it. Of course, Hux's men are chasing after Connix and the others and *not her,* the thought of the object being anywhere but in the hands of the Resistance not having ever crossed their minds. And the worst, part? Kylo had wanted to pursue her. Something had drawn him like a moth to a flame, but he let her go. He should have seen the truth, he should have known. Humiliation scalds him like boiling water and he moves on Finn without a second thought, aiming to tear out his—

The blaring cry of an oncoming train blasts into their ears and a beam of light floods the tunnel, blinding them. Kylo shields his vision against the light and against the pain as the train blares a second time, while Finn hurriedly lumbers to his feet, Kylo realizing only too late what he intends to do. The train hastens closer and before Kylo can reach him, Finn leaps out in front of the
speeding locomotive, disappearing onto the other side of the track as the machine barrels passed.

Kylo launches himself speedily in the opposite direction out of the train's path, the instinct the survive momentarily overriding his rage. By the time the final car passes, Kylo knows Finn is gone.

He follows after his scent in a rampage of violence, tracking him down into the sewers below the city, but Kylo loses him not long after that. He had trained his once-apprentice too well in the art of disappearing and, if nothing else, Finn had been the best at covering his tracks. Kylo had almost caught himself missing it over the last hundred years... until now.

A couple hours later he emerges to the surface, empty-handed, stinking and thoroughly livid.

The mission had failed. Failed. FAILED.

He rips into the mansion with no lack of ceremony, spine rigid and face set in stone, shoving past onlookers with the unmistakable rage of a man who has—

"Failed!" Snoke roars, slapping Kylo brutally across the cheek.

The impact echoes throughout the chamber and sends him sprawling backwards. He lands with an indignant thump on the throne room floor and slides several feet more. Through the haze of humiliation, he attempts to right himself, cheeks flaming as he gets back to his bent knee. Hux peers down at him with the ghost of a leer now that Kylo is beside him, not in front, and he does everything in his power to keep the wolf howling in his chest at bay.

This was Hux's fault after all. He might not have planned this outcome, but he's an opportunist. One without morals, without code or any semblance of honor, but he is an opportunist all the same.

Kylo bites the dribble of blood off his lip and kneels statue still, the tendons of his jaw rigid.

Snoke's arctic eyes pierce into him, weighing his every thought. "Leave us." the gnarled white hand motions to Hux.

Hux obeys, sparing a fleeting smirk in Kylo's direction before disappearing smoothly out the chamber.

A long silence.

Kylo breathes, closing his eyes for the briefest moment to compose himself.

Then, the click of a tongue in the silence, thoughtful, almost impassive.

"Tell me, Kylo Ren," Snoke begins, his basso voice polite and conversational once again. "Why are you here?"
Kylo swallows, considering his response. "Because it's where I belong."

The answer is simple, inelegant, completely naked in its honesty; and Kylo knows its no real answer at all. Not really.

Snoke watches him for a long time, face cast in shadow, but his eyes—they gleam. "Is it." he ponders aloud, a rhetorical statement.

Kylo knows better than to reply to what is not a question. He keeps his gaze focused hard on the floor, the coppery taste of blood still on his tongue.

Snoke eventually sighs and approaches him, arms sweeping outward in a manner of presentation. "So much potential, so much power." He towers above Kylo, stopping only inches from him. "How many centuries have you prospered under my tutelage, Kylo Ren?"

"Six." That answer is straightforward.

"Yes. Six hundred years of my wisdom..." his pause orders Kylo to look up at him, to peer deeply into his eyes, and Snoke's voice goes flat," that you have squandered."

Kylo's heart twists. "Supreme leader I—

"I'd thought you would be the one to change this war. Alas, you're nothing more than a child."

The statement skewers his chest like a javelin and his already clenched fists tremble uncontrollably. He's rising before his consciousness can catch up, the sleeping part of him desiring to tear, to kill, and a set of venomous claws abruptly plunge into his shoulder, wrenching a howl from his throat so violently he tastes blood. I bit my tongue, he thinks offhandedly. The claws stir darkness under Kylo's skin like a swarm of skittering insects, crawling, crawling... crawling.

"You have too much of your father's heart in you, young Solo." Snoke's grip tightens and Kylo stifles a shameful whimper. "I am afraid it is a weakness I cannot cure. I'd had such hopes for you." his tone weighs heavy with disappointment.

A memory flashes behind Kylo's eyes, a face he has spent centuries trying to forget. He shoves at it violently, but it refuses to yield, maliciously taunting him with that devil-may-care grin. Snoke has not mentioned his father since that fateful night so long ago. Kylo himself has not openly thought of him in decades, at least not on purpose. Doing so did damning things to his emotions—like now—and Snoke's words... Snoke's words burrow into his meticulous facade, snapping invisible seams behind his ribs.

The mask of indifference finally crumbles. "I've given everything I have to you." Kylo utters nakedly as heat gathers behind his eyes, his chest choking with anguish, and he does everything in his power to swallow them back down, to bury them deep in the pit of his stomach.

Let them eat away his insides, but by the gods, don't let them brand his cheeks.

Please.

"What is it you've given me?" Snoke intones quietly. "What is it exactly you've given me, Ben Solo, other than a child who can do no more than fail?"

They fall, hot and humiliating down his face. After everything, after all he has sacrificed, all the anguish he has endured, turning away from all he ever knew...
Snoke reaches forward with his free hand, a single sharpened nail following the trail down Kylo's cheek, drawing blood. "Let the salt of these useless things remind you."

Kylo attempts to swallow the lump sticking in his throat. Fails.

"Go now." Snoke drawls. "I cannot stand another moment of you in my presence."

He disengages his hand from Kylo's shoulder with a painful jerk and Kylo crumples to the ground, his hot cheek pressed to the icy floor. The moisture of his breath shivers across the surface, turning it a misty gray.

"And tell Hux to pursue this... girl." Snoke calls from the shadows. "I leave it in his hands for now."

Kylo peels himself off the floor and leaves the chamber in a rush, fury burning at his insides. He does not speak to his pack. He does not speak to Hux. He leaves the mansion with a single purpose. _He_ will find the girl.

He pulls his hood farther over his head as he walks along the docks, the fresh set of clothes a damn sight better than his previous ensemble. Of course, trudging through the sewers and being at the mercy of Snoke's unforgiving claws will do that every time. He huffs at the image of his favorite jacket, stinking, stained with blood and nasty tears along the fabric from Snoke's grip. _Ruined._

The fucking thing had easily cost a thousand dollars. _Minimum._ Vintage, double breasted shearling sheepskin; ruined. He shoves his hands deeper into the hoodie's pockets with moody sharpness and glares out across the dancing waters of the harbor. Cargo ships enter and exit as reflections of the filthy golden lights break along the surface like thousands of hazy eyes winking sleepily.

_Ocean is more ancient than the mountains, and freighted with the memories and the dreams of Time._

Kylo smirks. A quote from the infamous H. P. Lovecraft. A true statement, as well; but then again, those who delve too deeply into the darkness' shadow often do speak truth, even as the shadow eats their sanity alive. Does he himself not know these things.

He pushes the thought away and halts to taste the air. Her scent is thin, nearly drown out by an overabundance of raw fish, salt, diesel fuel and the conspicuous richness of death somewhere under the warehouses lining the harbor. Killing happens often here. Easy for the ocean to sweep away the body and let the swimming things eat the evidence.

He continues walking. In the distance, a cargo ship sounds its horn.

The girl's memory creeps up unexpectedly into his mind and he is perplexed again. She stares at him with her frizzy halo of chestnut hair, shoulders engulfed in an over-sized coat, lips parted and her eyes—they were a curious tinge of ochre. _No, gray._
He glances out across the water, remembering how she had gaped up at him, wide and unfurled, like a naked flower.

_Hazel, her eyes were hazel. A greenish hazel that sometimes resembles storms and gray thunder in the right light._

Kylo draws in a deep breath, letting it out slowly. The lingering drizzle of rain makes it impossible to see the moon, but the low light in the eastern sky tells him another hour or two and the sun will crest the horizon.

He follows the scant ribbon of her scent to a large warehouse modeled into what appears to be a chop shop. He enters it.

Sounds assail him, painful white light, bodies moving, dank sweat so thick in the air it taints his taste buds. Glancing around, he finds a grossly porcine man sitting in the doorway of a small room—_his office_, Kylo surmises—the rolling stool he sits upon sagging beneath his weight with an impressive pair of drooping jowls. _Was the man even born having a neck?_

_Not likely._

His head turns in Kylo's direction. "Who the hell are you? What the fuck you want?"

Movement out of his periphery tells Kylo that the man owns a troop of thugs. _Unsurprising._

Ignoring the the man's rude tone—at the moment, anyway—Kylo asks in an even voice. "Do you have a girl working here? Brunette, about five-foot-six, has a ratty brown—"

"What do you want with her?" The man mutters, already appearing bored. His thugs relax a bit.

"That's none of your concern." Kylo snaps. _So much for playing it neutral_, he grumbles to himself.

The thugs reinstitute their previous tension, one of the men meaning to approach Kylo. He holds a weapon behind his back, a riot baton. Kylo grins knowingly at him and a flicker of unease passes over his eyes.

The owner rises from his stool with a metal squawk, meaty arms crossing over his chest. "She is my best mechanic, so yes, I would say it's my concern."

Kylo assesses the other men, sizing them up, and then he's moving, a streak of black as his last vestige of patience goes out with the cry of surprise from the owner. The first underling sails out the door, breaking it off its hinges. The second—the man with the riot baton—swings his weapon viciously, but Kylo is faster, dodging and snapping his neck with a savage crack, then grabbing the riot baton and taking out the final three.

He turns to the owner who has yet to draw his gun tucked at his back. Kylo is instantly upon him, cinching down on his wrist in a bone-crushing grip before he can pull the pistol from the crack of his ass. "That won't be necessary." Kylo says silkily, tightening his hold.

"What do you want?" the man groans, fear spiking in the obscene odor of his sweat.

"The girl. Her name. Where she lives."

"I'm not gonna—"

Kylo gives a more convincing twist and the man bites back a cry. "You're in no position to dictate
anything to me. Now, I want her name."

All eyes are on them now, all work in the shop ceased.

"Rey." the owner huffs out.

"Rey what?"

"Rey, Queen of England. Who the fuck cares?! She's an orphan!"

_No family._ He files that away for later. "Where does she live?"

"Daisy Villa Apartments." he replies, spittle shining on his lips. "I own it. It's downtown. 2nd street. You can—"

"I know it." Kylo cuts him off.

_So the girl lives in one of the dodgiest neighborhoods in the city._

"Are you..." the man hesitates, body shuddering with pain.

"What?" Kylo snarls.

"Are you with the other one?"

Kylo jerks him closer, eyes blazing. "Other one?"

"Short, blonde, said she wanted to talk to me about a possible job opening. Said Rey told her about it or something." He grimaces and drags in a labored breath. "Should have known the bitch was lying."

_Connix. It had to be Connix._ "When did she come here?"

"Who the fuck are you guys and why are you so interested in a street ra—"

"When?!" Kylo snaps, wrestling the man's arm so hard there is a very audible pop. Not quite a break, but close.

He shouts, his low voice choppy and ragged. "Half and hour ago! Give or take."

_Shit!"

"She asked where Rey lived. You told her." It isn't a question.

"Yes." the man half grumbles, half whines.

Kylo releases him with a violent thrust, causing another pop in the man's wrist and he slinks away miserably, nursing his injured arm. Turning to leave, Kylo pauses, something have caught his eye. A set of eyes among all the others. This set stares a little too long, a little too hard. He glares in their direction, but the owner has already turned, her black ponytail bouncing as she walks away. He notes the faint tendril of her scent in the air, a hint of lemons and worn denim.

Then, he departs for 2nd Street.
A werewolf has been here. Kylo scents the air again warily. The musk is foreign to him. It could be Connix, or another Rebel wolf. Either option is equally damning.

He looks up along the three-story windows. Rey lives on the third floor. Somehow, he simply knows this to be true and it unsettles him. The old walls are dressed with hardened gum, graffiti, a couple busted windows on the first floor and a meager terrace along the third. He marks the silhouette of a dog near the terrace doors, its eyes fixated on him.

At least she has a guard, Kylo muses, not exactly sure why he feels a sudden pang of... jealousy?

He runs a hand through his hair. The unfortunate reality that he could be too late crosses his mind, though he tamps it down. He isn't. But that dog continues to stare at him, anxious, standing every few seconds, then sitting again.

She isn't here. Hasn't been here since she left for her work.

He inhales the banquet of smells around him. The girl's scent is definitely present, inlaid into the environment like the grass, or the rank of the apartment dumpster located at the back of the apartment building. A part of this place, but it's not fresh like the unknown musk of the werewolf.

She didn't come back here.

Momental relief floods through him. Now, the most important question. "Where did you go?" he wonders aloud.

'The best place to hide, kid, is right under their nose,' a gruff voice whispers slyly. He instantly wishes it hadn't, the old and festered scar in his heart throbbing. Yet, it speaks a kernel of truth.

"Right under my nose." Kylo murmurs.

An ebony ponytail floats into his mind, bouncing with the rhythm of a walk. You... he ponders, recalling the one who had paid a little too much attention to his exchange with the chop shop's owner. You know something.

The ponytail bounces cheerfully with her stride, but there is nothing cheerful about her expression as she exits the shop from a rear entrance and proceeds down one of the docks. Her keen eyes are everywhere, checking every shadow, even the water.

Kylo surveys her from a distance. She enters a storage house at the end of the dock in conspiratorial fashion, opening the door hastily, with a yet another look at her surroundings, then closing it quietly behind her. No lights flick on; the small windows of the building remain dark.
Nothing outside the storage building moves. That's not to say the werewolf isn't somewhere close, or Hux's men for that matter. And Hux's men will probably be expecting him. Snoke won't be too thrilled to hear about his disobedience, but once Kylo brings the object to him Snoke will see reason. He will renounce the things he said and never again mention the name Ben Solo.

Feeling it safe, Kylo creeps out from his hiding place and ghosts across the dock. He picks up a tinge of Gardenia as he approaches the storage house. Right under my nose, he says to himself, slipping through the door without a sound. He finds the building littered with shelves, shelves atop more shelves. To his immediate left an open square is cut into the flooring and wall where a small boat can be hitched. The place is cramped and reeks of slime, barnacles and mold.

"Rey, you have to tell me something, or I can't help you." a voice hisses.

Kylo quickly ducks behind a set of corner shelves.

"I'm shooting in the dark here." the voice continues. "You show up looking like that and you won't talk to me. What am I supposed to think?"

"Rose I—"

"You can start with why you're bleeding."

So the other girl's name is Rose. Kylo edges closer, though he does not risk a peak around the shelves. Not just yet.

"Look... it's crazy. You won't believe it. Hell, I don't even believe it and I was there. I mean—I saw—I saw this man..." Rey trails off.

"Rey, you have to call the cops, or get help from someone."

"They won't believe me."

Rose makes an exasperated sigh. "Fine. If you aren't going to tell someone at least stay here until I finish out my shift. You will crash at my place and we'll figure something out then, okay?"

"No."

"Rey."

"No." she repeats. "You said it yourself, I've got people looking for me."

"Why do you have to be so diffic—"

The door of the storage building suddenly crashes open and three dark shapes rocket passed Kylo. Hux's men. There is a shocked yelp, then a scream.

Kylo abandons concealment and rushes in, finding the two women near the water's edge, detained and struggling. The two vampires holding them are unknown to Kylo, fledglings no doubt, but the third, the one watching him with the silver-studded whip at his belt, Kylo knows well enough. Perhaps not on a personal level—personal level being the receiving end of that whip. If this were the case, the sadistic bastard would have met his death ages ago, but he prefers to pick on the weaker of Kylo's species, so naturally, he has never dared to cross the Master of the Knights of Ren.

It is a rare thing, but, on occasion, Fate has a tasteful since of irony.
"This doesn't concern you, Master Ren. The supreme leader gave our general strict orders and you are to return to the Supremacy posthaste." An undercurrent of fear lies beneath his words.

Good. "Craven." Kylo's tone borders on charitable. "I suggest you leave posthaste and report to your general on your failure to apprehend the girl."

He scoffs, feet shifting. "Your supreme leader has requested your presence. You are to leave the handling of this girl to us."

"Am I?" Kylo tilts his head, flicking his gaze away from Craven.

He focuses on her—Rey—and she stills in her captor's arms at once, hazel eyes settling on Kylo slowly, anxiously. Their spectrum of color is lost in the gloom, but he can see that they have darkened somehow. In fear, or a primal sense of... what—he does not know, but recognition eventually flickers over her features, a languid blink of lashes against the pallid blue of her cheeks and a parting of lips that sparks an eerily pleasant tingle up Kylo's spine.

He draws a shuddering breath.

"You are to stay out of this, Master Ren!" Craven barks unsteadily as he hand shoots to his belt, the whip tinkling with the movement.

The other two vampires exchange nervous glances.

Kylo squares his shoulders. "Last chance, lieutenant."

A beat of silence.

Then...

All hell breaks lose.

Kylo pounces, Craven frees his whip and a hidden fourth comes up from behind, aiming to strike Kylo over the head. The silver truncheon misses Kylo by millimeters as he crouches low, a step ahead of Craven who is throwing his arm back, his whip coiling like a snake. The braided leather cuts a line straight for Kylo's face and he snatches it in the air, his gloved hand safe from the spiny studs, and then yanks viciously.

Caught off guard, Craven stumbles; however, before Kylo can attack, the fourth kicks him in the back, sending him off balance and careening for the edge of the dock. Craven twists his stance, planting his feet, and pushes Kylo, nearly sending him into the brackish water if not for the rotting piling. Kylo collides into it with a snapping creak, knocking the wind out of him and a snarl tears at his lips. He whirls around, blood-lust singing in his veins.

The fourth has drawn a gun along with his truncheon, but he will not use it, Kylo knows. Snoke would be most displeased with such a development.

Craven has angled himself between Kylo and the two women, while the women themselves are attempting to take advantage of the distraction he's created. Unfortunately though, with little reward. They thrash and buck against their captors, both of them screaming and tearing with their hands, their nails, grabbing at eyes, mouths, anything.

Kylo makes to press forward again when the flicker of metal catches his eye. He watches with delighted fascination as Rey takes a concealed switchblade from her boot and plunges it hilt-deep into her captor's throat. The vampire gasps in pained shock, drawing the attention of the others, and
Kylo is already moving. He takes out the fourth with a fluid snap of the neck, twisting so hard he nearly wrenches the head from the vampire's shoulders.

Craven staggers back and lashes out, but Kylo disregards his attack, even as the end of the whip cuts a clean line down his chin. Faster than Craven can recover, Kylo lunges for his throat, ripping out his trachea and driving his fist down the fresh opening to remove his heart. He tosses the organ casually into the sea as Craven falls lifelessly to the floor.

Finally, Kylo turns his attention to the others, though he is not prepared for what happens next.

Rose breaks free in a startling burst of anger and her captor, who is too busy focusing on the struggle between Rey and his partner, misses Rose's own hidden switchblade. She drives it ruthlessly into his heart and the vampire's eyes go wide, amazement wiping all other expression from his face and he collapses, but before his body hits the floor a strangled wail comes from Rey's direction.

The fledgling holds her tightly to him, her head pulled to the side and his lips latched at her throat. Kylo's fists fall dumbly to his sides as he watches fresh blood spill down her clavicle. He's bitten her. She's been bitten. Kylo blinks, unbelieving. She has been marked. The wolf in him growls lowly, a building rumble of thunder in his chest. Red—red is all he sees.

Rose's yell jolts him from his initial shock and he looks just in time to see her throwing herself on them, taking all three of them down into the water. Without a second thought he dives in after Rey, plunging into the icy darkness.
Chapter End Notes

PLEASE REMEMBER TO REVIEW, REVIEW, REVIEW!
CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM IS WELCOME!

Extra Notes & Links:
Kylo's expensive (now destroyed) trench coat
(He should totally get another one, honestly.)
A/N: This project is such an excuse for my 80s Goth obsession, tbh, but thanks so much for all the support! It really helps immensely with inspiration. I've been receiving several comments on some confusion as to Snoke, the First Order and Kylo's position among their faction as a werewolf, so I'll be clearing some of that up this chapter and the next. Also, you won't have to wait that much longer for the smut. Some major teasing in the next few chapters, though, but Rey's a thirsty girl and Kylo ain't much better.

**SONG INSPIRATION:** Stripped - Depeche Mode

**WARNINGS:** Rey in restraints, dark room, profanity, nausea descriptions, panic attacks and mentions of a character watching/liking porn

See the end of the chapter for more [notes](#).
Sleep clutches at her, holding fast in its embrace as her brain fumbles hazily in the darkened room of her skull. Thoughts flicker like fireflies in the distance, faraway things she cannot process; however, there are things she can remember, but whether or not these things are real is another matter entirely.

The cold, the liquid gloom... the taste.

*Filthy salt.*

Her skin prickles at the memory.

The harbor—she had fallen into the harbor? How? When? Had Rose teased her and, for some unknown and totally incongruous reason, thought it a splendid idea to send her swimming in that horrid slush of human waste. Both of them have seen the fires set on the water from time to time. Some blazes didn't wear down for hours and on one rare occasion the whole east edge of the city had been threatened by the largest fire ever set. It had taken days to put out the flames. Weeks more to repair the damage done to the warehouses. Some still sat on the now unused sections of the harbor, charred and haunted.

Needless to say, the water is a little too polluted to be taking a dip.

When she sees Rose again she's going to throw her in the harbor, see how she likes freezing her tits off in that putrid mess.

Unless, of course, all of this has been some unpleasant dream. She reaches for a waypoint within her memory time line, a dreary face along the train ride, a conversation with Rose, or Paige; maybe even a way she looked up at the night sky, the angled sweep of her eyes—anything—but nothing else comes. Only that brackish eternity of black.

Rey extends her consciousness deeper, straining against the confines of sleep and rousing herself further, the numbness of her limbs slowly dissipating. She feels so heavy. In the distant horizon of her mind she can sense the rumbling of thunder as a storm swallows the world; there had been a storm, she surmises. Must have been. *They have blown in early this year,* Rose was saying. *All Hallows Eve will be a frigid one,* she'd said.

*When was that?*

Under the hotrod with the cracked brake rotors.

She seizes the memory, unwilling to let it slip from her grasp. Following its string, she sees the harbor out before her as her feet dangle over the dock and two stars visible through the smoggy sky. The smell of a PB and J sandwich. The rhythmic sound of Rose's contented humming.

They are supposed to go out tomorrow night, some club—

*Heaven's Night.*
All at once, a dreadful pain not unlike her migraine—she'd suffered one recently, hadn't she—but undeniably different cuts through the amnesia like the crack of a whip and her eyes wrench open. The world around is nothing but blackness. She attempts to sit up with a jerk, but something stops her, a snake of thick material strapped over her chest. *Her wrists and ankles, too!* With her heart hammering, she struggles, but the binds holding her are too strong.

Her head spins... and spins.

She swallows, instantly regretting it as bile climbs up her throat, but having little other choice, she continues to swallow, again and again. The action causes a strange itch that spreads out from her throat to her jaw, making her teeth *tingle*. The sensation triggers something else in her, too, an image of a gargantuan silhouette of fur, glowing eyes and terrifying claws.

It had howled—*no*—he had howled. It had been a man and this *man* had shoved a bizarre talisman into her coat pocket before transforming into some bipedal monstrosity straight out of a Little Red Riding Hood folktale. *A werewolf. A fucking werewolf.*

Maybe she was crazy, maybe she'd gone fucking bonkers with that migraine and conjured up the whole episode like some waking hallucination, or maybe she'd had a stroke. It didn't matter, though. No one in their right mind would have lingered, so she sure as hell didn't. She'd run, bullets whizzing passed her and her sanity screaming. When her legs could go no more, she'd nearly collapsed against the concrete wall of an underpass, lungs burning and muscles quivering.

She had drawn the talisman from her pocket here, studying it. The pale blue stone at its center had glowed in the sodium-orange halo of a streetlight, the curious geometric lines surrounding the stone making her think of marked constellations on Paige's star map. For a long breath she'd contemplated hurling it into the concrete channel near her, but quickly reconsidered. Hallucinations or not, someone would come looking for it. And if she didn't have it...

*Does she still have it?*

Blood pounds in her ears as the rush of liquid gloom overtakes her mind again and she shivers. *What the hell happened?*

"You're fever has started."

Her heart stops; muscles in her body go rigid like stone.

The voice comes from across the room, a calming baritone.

Seconds pass.

Then: "Shut your eyes. The light will hurt."

"I'd rather keep them open." she grounds out.

A pause. "Suit yourself."

It's all the warning she receives before the room is bathed in brilliant radiance... and his comment feels every bit a deliberate and callous understatement. She nearly shrieks at the searing intensity and clamps her eyes shut, which does little to relieve the pain. The light invades past the thin layer of her eye lids, painting shadows in stabbing red.

"Give it a moment. Some of the sensitivity will subside." he says.
She bites into her lower lip, wrestling against the restraints as a snarl utterly alien to her ears rips from her own throat. She chokes back a gasp. *What was that?*

*Breathe! I have to breathe.*

*Steady.*

*Focus.*

Inhaling carefully through her nostrils, Rey centers on her raging heartbeat and wills it to slow, but her attempts do little more than make her heart's cadence stutter before hammering on its melody and she frantically drags in a fresh hit of oxygen. She tries a second time with some success. Then, a third. Finally, she opens her eyes. The voice is right. Some of the sensitivity does subside, yet not all. She squints painfully at her surroundings.

Things come into focus as though she has spent *hours* under the thick blanket of sleep. And what if she has? How long has she been out *exactly?*

The room is small, perfectly square with what appears to be a nightstand near the foot of the bed she is currently strapped to and a single overhead light. It's naked glare digs into the soft flesh of her eyes and she blinks back tears. The walls are a blessed night shade of wine and she inwardly thanks the stars above. With a few more blinks, her eyes at last fall upon the owner of the voice.

*Tall,* is her first thought. *Broad,* is her second. Then—

*Him!*

The man with devil's gold in his eyes.

He leans casually against the wall, a towering mass swathed in varying shades of black with his plush mouth puckered into a near scowl. The saturation of his lips stands out against the rest of his chromatic spectrum as a flagrant pink. They look *kiss-bruised* as Rose would say.

Rey swallows, the tingling in her upper gum intensifying, and she suddenly wishes she had a free hand to scratch the inside of her mouth. What she wouldn't give...

It takes her a moment to realize he is waiting for her. *To what? To speak?*

She frowns.

More waiting.

The intensity of his gaze makes hers falter, though briefly, and she glares back at him, determined. "*Where am I?"

"Safe."

The reply is unexpected and Rey gapes at him, scrutinizing the word. It holds no malice, no veiled undercurrent, but there is one very obvious catch. She glances down at her restraints, testing them.

The stranger's mouth presses tightly together, tongue working, then the emotion swirling in his eyes vanishes. Still, he waits, daring her to speak first.

She eventually relents, unable to withstand the silence. "*Who are you? Where is Rose?"

"I'm not your enemy," he pauses, eyes sharpening, "unless you make me."
She bristles at that; however, he hasn't answered the more important question. "Where is my friend?"

His stare flickers along her figure, lingering on something just below her chin. "I have no idea, but you'll be relieved to hear she isn't dead."

The vice strangling Rey's heart allows a moment of relief and she inhales a shaky breath. Her throat stings. Still—

"How do I know you're not lying?"

His lips twitch at this, the most minute quirk at the corner of his mouth. "You don't, but you can trust in your friend's strength. She isn't the type to die easily."

"Did you do something to her?" Rey's voice shakes with fury.

He raises his eyebrows. "She wasn't my quarry and her actions actually helped me capture what I was hunting."

The intensity of his gaze heightens and her mouth goes dry. She knows, somehow she knows he means *her*. Or, at least, she believes so. Her lungs tremble with the static charge of the situation. If he had wanted to kill her, he would have done it outright, but he has her strapped to a bed in God knows where and he had called her 'the contact' in the subway.

"You want what the other man gave me." she states bluntly.

Hadn't he taken it from her pocket? Her jacket is gone, leaving her only with her off-white turtleneck, and she finds that her neck aches too much to gaze any lower down her body. She looks back at him, weighing his expression. He mirrors her, his scowl deepening.

"Where is it?" he finally asks.

She blinks, the action causing discomfort. "I..."

"Did you get rid of it? Toss it as soon as you left the tunnel?" The first hints of emotion tinge his voice... and they frighten her.

"I just want to go home." She hates herself for sounding weak, terrified, but it's the truth. Biting back a sob, she continues before he can reply. "It was in my pocket. Some kind of talisman, or amulet—I don't know. I was going to throw it away, but I thought..." she trails off.

His posture straightens, adding more height to him, but he remains against the wall. The coiling energy of his muscles, however, betrays him. He is angry, or frustrated, or likely both. Maybe even a bit maniacal. She can't be sure.

"You knew someone would come looking for it."

She nods mutely.

He breaks eye contact for the first time, glancing up to the ceiling, then the floor, then to her again. "Do you remember what happened to you?"

She shakes her head.

"Do you remember the subway?"
"Yes." She looks away, incapable of holding his gaze any longer.

The sound of his footsteps signal his approach and her fingers curl into her palm, nails biting skin. His movements are slow, deliberate. He stops just at the outskirts of her periphery, his shadow blotting out the light above them.

"Do you remember..." he hesitates and her eyes dart to him on instinct. She watches while he licks his lips, the corner side of his mouth quivering as if to tame a snarl, and his left eye twitches. He inhales, nostrils flaring, then says in a voice too low to be formal. "Do you remember being bitten?"

Her jaw falls slack. "What?"

At once she registers the brown flecks on the material of her top, somehow having missed them earlier. Bitten? What kind of fucked up—

"Not many humans survive the bite from an immortal. Most die within hours. You've survived two days."

"What?" she parrots again, struck helplessly dumb by the declaration.

He's crazy. Or she's crazy. She's hallucinating, or dreaming or whatever the hell this migraine has caused. Right? Right?! RIGHT?!

A stroke. That's it. In the middle of an abnormally cold October, she's suffered a severe cerebrovascular accident and is out on the street somewhere, delirious and dying. Scavengers have already pick-pocketed what meager belongings she carries and only that if she's lucky. But she's never lucky.

Two days?

Images of the werewolf surface in her mind anew and she clamps her teeth shut, causing pain to blossom through her jaw and the itch to become near unbearable. With these images come fresher ones, ones of a face contorted with agony, the hilt of a blade, and teeth. Pain. Warmth. It had trickled down her collarbone.

She groans, tearing at her restraints.

"It will get worse before it gets better." he murmurs.

Her heart thuds in her chest as she succumbs to panic.

Something brushes next to her ear and she wants to shy away, but his voice stops her. "Don't be afraid."

"Wh—what—happening—me?" she chokes, her breathing shallow and ragged.

"This isn't what I wanted." he whispers, his exhale warm on her skin. "Just breathe, Rey. Breathe."

The shift of his tone makes her turn her head, facing him. Through her bleary vision she distinguishes the movement of his lips.

They utter a single word. Over and over.
She isn't sure when she wakes again, but her stomach growls indignantly in the dark. She's hungry. *God!* Has she ever felt this species of hunger before? Maybe once, when she'd hidden away from the Niima cafeteria for fear of being beaten by the older girls. She had eventually acquiesced to her need, though, and the thrashing was one she never forgot, full stomach or not.

"Hello?" she croaks.

Nothing.

"Hello?" she tries a little louder, but her voice breaks.

Movement in the other room captures her attention and she stills. The door opens quickly and shuts, her eyes spared most of the agony caused by the light. Footsteps reach her side and she jolts when a warm hand touches her forehead. She is sweating profusely.

Something cool and hard touches her lips and she cringes away.

"Drink." the stranger says softly. "It's only water."

She opens her mouth and the cool liquid is heaven on her tongue. She takes a long swallow. Then another, and another, and another.

"Slow." he pulls the rim of the glass from her mouth. "You can barely keep anything down."

Rey ignores him, angling up and grabbing the rim with her teeth, nearly pulling it out of his hand. After the fourth swig her stomach abruptly revolts and she whimpers, trying with all her might to keep the liquid down. Her throat feels exhausted, raw and thoroughly unwilling to cooperate. Losing the battle, she quickly turns away from his presence and vomits against the side of her arm, tears streaming down her face.

A sigh blows across her hair. "I told you to slow down."

"I want to go home." she asserts miserably. "Let me go."

A wet towel dabs at her arm and cheeks. "I... can't... do that."

"Why are you keeping me alive, then?" Rey snaps, voice hoarse. "Just kill me already. I don't have your talisman. I don't even know where it is."

"I never planned on killing you." his remarks tersely.

*Has she offended him?* "Then what do you want?"

He doesn't answer. Instead, he changes the subject. "I will remove these restraints, but you have to promise to stay here."

Rey snorts. "And you'd believe my promise if I gave it to you?"
"No." She can hear the ghost of something pleasant in his voice. "That is why you won't be alone."

The door opens and closes again and Rey finds for the first time that she can distinguish small features in the darkness. Two figures.

"This is a bad idea, Kylo." a female voice claims warily.

_The stranger's name is Kylo._

Kylo's shadow rises from Rey's bedside and turns to the girl. "You will keep this from the others, from Hux and especially from the supreme leader."

A huff. "I will do anything you ask, master, but this—"

"Then, do it."

With that, she feels hands rustling at her restraints, undoing her chest strap first, then her ankles and finally her wrists. Before she can attempt to sit up, however, one of the hands presses on her shoulder.

"Not yet." Kylo murmurs.

"Why are you even keeping her alive?" the girl inquires hotly, though there is a level of restraint to her words. Or maybe submission.

No response.

"If you want, I can go and look for the object without Hux's men knowing, but keeping this fledgling alive is dangerous!"

Rey feels sharp movement and then hears a shocked gasp near the door.

"I... I was only pointing out how dangerous this is." the girl whispers, panic coloring her tone.

"Duly noted." Kylo's words drip finality. "Now, I will be gone for a few hours. Attend to her until I get back."

"We won't be able to keep this from the First Order for long, let alone the pack." the girl says.

Rey gathers the information and tucks it away.

"I'll worry about that. You worry about her."

The door opens and Kylo's hulking shadow exits, the door shutting behind him with a resounding click. Rey waits, sitting up and rubbing her shoulders. The girl is still here, near the far corner with her eyes on Rey. She can smell her more than see her and anyone would be able to feel the contempt in her glare. Renewed fear spikes in Rey's chest and she clenches her jaw, instantly regretting the action as pain resurfaces.

It momentarily shocks Rey how _well_ she can smell the girl, the scent of cigarette smoke on her blouse, her perfume—something like patchouli and vanilla—and a distinct musk that's too powerful to be an undertone. Rey's nose wrinkles on impulse and her lips peel back in a grimace. _What is that?_

The frail ghost of what Rey assumes is Kylo's scent lingers, too, but before Rey can decipher it, the girl's voice cuts through the silence.
"It's sunset. Your eyes should be able to deal with the light now." she announces brusquely.

"Why are you keeping me alive?" Rey asks, tone guarded. "Is this some kind of sick game?"

The girl scoffs. "I don't presume to know my master's reasoning. I'm just here to keep him out of trouble."

Rey intends to reply; however, the door is abruptly thrust open and she hastily scrambles to shield her face, anxious of the light on her eyes, which does cause her moderate pain, but nothing like it was before. She breathes a steadying breath.

"You need to eat." The girl's departing words leave Rey staring after her, absorbing her wild pink hair and lithe legs.

Beyond the doorway, Rey finds a king-sized bed, its dark wine duvet carefully undisturbed. On the ceiling above the bed is a weapon plaque with a monstrous sword, hilt wrapped with blackened leather and whetted edge glinting in the sun's last radiance. It looks ancient, the rounded pommel set with a crimson orb that glares at her like a seething eye and a cross guard carved into some kind of animal skull.

She risks stepping off the bed, trying out her legs. Dizziness ripples up from her toes, but she checks it before it can cloud her mind, swallowing hard, and shuffles out into the next room. The bedroom is easily the size of her entire flat and it has a better balcony, too. With a momentary flare of jealousy, she turns to find the girl standing in the doorway to the living area, her expression even less welcoming than her attitude.

"You can't escape. We're on the thirtieth floor."

She says this as if heights should frighten Rey. Rey squares her shoulders.

"Eating will help to ease the symptoms for a while." the girl continues. "Come on."

Rey follows, albeit reluctantly. She is hungry.

Her footfalls stutter to a stop the second she enters the living area. Nothing appears out of the norm; no macabre scene of gory bodies or collection of skulls lining the walls tallying Kylo's kill count. Everything is normal...

... aside from the television.

A hot blush creeps up Rey's neck into her cheeks and she gawks stupidly at the screen. The TV displays a porn video in the thick—quite literally—of the fun. Her flush deepens and she turns her appalled stare onto the girl who gazes at her with measured eyes, a hint of humor behind them.

"I like voyeurism." she shrugs. "Kylo's stash isn't as good as mine, though. This one is a little too tame for me."

Clearing her throat and instantly regretting that bothersome itch, Rey heads deliberately into the kitchen, not needing the girl to lead the way. Once able to look around the walls without her eyes dragging back to the television screen, Rey relaxes a fraction.

*Thank God it's muted.*

The girl enters and motions to a stool at the kitchen island. "Sit."
"I can make my own—"

In a flash her face hovers centimeters from Rey's, the curiously gray-gold of her eyes kindling like coals on a fire. "I. Said. Sit."

The instinct to recoil spears through Rey's gut, but she holds her ground, tilting her chin up defiantly.

An ambulance siren blares from below them in the streets.

Horns honk.

The low rumble of a base stereo.

And the girl's mouth suddenly breaks into a wolfish grin. "Maybe it isn't surprising after all that my master kept you alive." She pauses to sniff Rey. "I think I'm beginning to like you a little. What's your name?"

"Yours first." Rey counters tightly.

She laughs, stepping back and crossing her arms. "Ruelle."

"Rey."

Ruelle clicks her tongue almost approvingly and busies herself around the kitchen, pulling out silverware, a loaf of bread, a package of lunch meat from the refrigerator. Rey finally sits rigidly onto the stool, watching her.

"Human food isn't what you're craving, but it will do the trick for now." Ruelle says conversationally. "Drink that water, too." She points to a glass on the island.

Kylo must have sit it there when he'd left.

Rey drains every drop.

A couple hours later the TV is thankfully black and Ruelle is slouching on one of the couches twiddling her thumbs as Rey leans against the doorway of Kylo's bedroom, her gaze drifting furtively now and again to the balcony. The room she'd woken in was a panic room, Ruelle had told her, an addition to the apartment Kylo had specifically requested in case of emergency. Ruelle had thought him overly paranoid at the time.

Not anymore.

"You said it would be safer if Kylo had just terminated me. That I was evidence of his
disobedience. What did you mean by that?"

Ruelle peers shrewdly at her. "Our master has his tendencies. The pack does what it can to keep him out of trouble. To protect him." She stops, eyes hardening on Rey. "But he doesn't listen to reason obviously."

Werewolves. Vampires. A war brewing underneath the world she thought she knew.

And now, she is becoming a part of that world. She is becoming a—

Shaking her head, she focuses on a more straightforward dilemma. "If Kylo is a werewolf, why did that other wolf attack him?"

"Finn." Ruelle hurls the name like a curse. "He's a traitor."

"You mean he was once on your side?"

She studies Rey, lips pressing into a thin line. "He was once in our pack."

Rey's lips form an 'o' and she glances away, suddenly feeling self-conscious for bringing it up, but her curiosity gets the better of her. "What does Kylo want with that talisman?"

Ruelle looks away distantly. "To finish what his uncle started."

"Uncle?"

Ruelle scowls at her. "That's enough questions for now."

Rey ignores her and switches direction instead. "The men that attacked me, the ones Kylo killed... They were on Finn's side?"

If she can glean enough information from this girl, maybe she can use it in the future. If she even has a future.

"No." Ruelle answers curtly.

"Then why—"

"Because they got in his way." she snarls, rising from the couch in a rush. The hatred she levels at Rey borders on revulsion, the kind of emotion designated for a rabid animal which must be put down. "Like I said, you're trouble, a loose end. It's only a matter of time before you fuck everything up. I'd hoped the fever would kill you, but Kylo is never that lucky... and he's shit at keeping secrets."

So he's got her locked away up here because that's exactly what she is. His little secret.

And what of Rose? Or Paige? Bodhi?

Will wolves or vampires go looking for them? Have they already? What if Kylo was lying? What if he killed Rose? Telling her a vague fairytale of Rose's survival would keep her more manageable wouldn't it? Her current state is answer enough. She turns her face away from Ruelle and glowers out to the skyline. If he has hurt Rose...

She has to get away.
Chapter End Notes

PLEASE REMEMBER TO REVIEW, REVIEW, REVIEW!
CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM IS WELCOME!

Extra Notes & Links:
Quote Translation -> "Knock knock, let me in. / Let me be your secret sin."
Ruelle Face Cast & Outfit Style (she flickers between many subcategories within Goth fashion)
Inspiration for the cross guard of Kylo's sword
Concrete channel reference (with viaduct)

** And if you're curious: A List of My Reylo Projects (completed, in-the-works & upcoming) **
A/N: Soooo, I was going to update a couple days sooner, but I got distracted by this little beauty, Sun, Sand and Stone. And wow! Thanks for all the love! This chapter is specifically to indulge my weaknesses. Just imagine all the world in stark shades of gray and black, drenched in glitter, illuminated by neon lights and thrumming with the steady pulse of club music. Picture it, Snoke's sepulcher awash with sparkles in the dark. Oh and I totally neglected to include this last chapter! I made a gifset for the story. Not the greatest, but it gets the point across. X3

**SONG INSPIRATION:** Grey Echoes - Dronny Darko (ambient track for Snoke's chamber), Lucretia My Reflection - The Sisters of Mercy & Call the Ships to Port - Covenant (this song plays during Kylo's and Rey's interaction at Heaven's Night)

**WARNINGS:** Rey seduces a stranger in a public restroom, blood, feeding, Kylo is not happy about it (our boy is hella jealous), sexual content (still PG-13 but we're getting closer to rated R territory), and lastly... I'm sooo sorry for this chapter's ending (I'll make up for it, I promise)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

"A single spark of passion,
Can change a man forever.
A moment in a lifetime,
Is all it takes to break him."

- Call Our Ships to Port / Covenant
The wind whips in from outside the car, crisp and knife-like as he barrels down the lonely interstate, farther from the city, farther from the current fixation on his mind—the girl—what she can give him, anyway. *Skywalker.* Or at the very least, a way to the traitorous old bastard. Kylo's grip tightens at the stirring wheel and he releases a pent-up sigh.

*But she no longer has the object, does she?* his mind taunts. And where is it now? At the bottom of the harbor?

*Likely,* another part of him grumbles.

Or worse... in the hands of the Resistance. He quashes this thought at conception, not allowing it the chance to grow.

The waxing moon peers down from above, half-lidded within a bed of night satin as the speedometer hits one hundred and fifty miles per hour. He loves the enthusiastic purr of the machine as the engine's previous gear crests, then switches over to the next gear, drawing in a low and smooth rumble of sound, and building again, building.

Once the girl has served her purpose, he can be rid of her. Whatever that entails. *It doesn't matter,* he convinces himself. The only thing that matters is *Skywalker* and proving to Snoke that he can perform his duties, that he is more than capable of being the Master of the Knights of Ren, but chiefly, that he can maintain the legacy borne in his blood.

*A potential which should not be wasted,* Snoke had often said.

The shadowy sea of trees impress upon him as the highway narrows and he turns off onto the private road to the *Supremacy.* After ten minutes of winding white rock, he comes to the main gate, still two miles out from the mansion itself. The gate's computer screen flickers to life and a slight man peers out at him, his mousy features drawing up in surprise and disquiet.

"Kylo Ren. Snoke is expecting you."

He grits his teeth, concealing the twitch of his jaw. Kylo had expected this meeting to be unpleasant. Now, all he has to do is gauge just *how* unpleasant.

"Open the gate, Mitaka."

Hesitation. "You never answered your cell."

A warning?

A suggestion?

Kylo's neglect of the offensive piece of technology is proving to be a growing problem, one he
must rectify if he wishes to survive these *meetings*. Nevertheless, "Does your general want to know when I take a piss, so he can hold it for me as well?"

The other man's eyes widen, first with shock at such audacity, then veiled amusement—very veiled. "General Hux waits in the second floor lounge."

Kylo waves his hand dismissively and the computer screen goes black, the gates swing open, and he spurs ahead, ignoring the proper speed and hastening down the remaining asphalt before twisting into his usual parking spot at the very front of the mansion. There's no need to park in the garage; he won't be here long and, if he is, he can use this meager stunt as a half-ass excuse to slip away.

A trickle of unease cascades down his spine and he blows out a sigh, forcing anger into the action. Fear will do him no favors here. He muzzles the distasteful sensation, throwing open his door and expecting Silas before the man even melts out of the darkness, expression set in stone and a high color staining his cheekbones. Four other figures trail after him as Kylo exits the vehicle and hurls the door shut. He turns to face them promptly, concealing his unease as best he can.

But they can all sense it. He shifts his focus, shooting a cursory glare at each of them and they drop their gaze like clockwork. Regardless of their curiosity and their own nervousness for their master's underlying distress, they will not disrespect an able-bodied alpha. So long as Kylo shows more strength than weakness, so long as he proves to them his brutality, he will remain their leader.

He has offhandedly wondered how his mother handles alphas among her Resistance. It cannot be easy, though as her son, he knows the cold and deadly precision of her leadership.

"*Being a leader is not an easy task, Ben. It requires a certain absence of emotion, something women are inherently compelled to suffer. So one such as myself must cut those inconvenient things from her chest, with a rusty knife if need be, and carry individuals unable to lead themselves, because leading requires a set of eyes willing to see the good of the many over the good of the one. That, my son, is the burden of a mother leader.*"

Her voice echoes through the chambers and corridors of his mind, beckoning him to old memories, but he instantly stifles them, casting them back into the countless crags and crevices where they belong. Slamming mental doors, locking them, tossing away keys. Haphazard silver and gold littered across the floors of his mind—reminders.

Thankfully, Silas breaks his train of thought as he stops before him. "Where is Ruelle?"

"Where I need her to be." Kylo answers lackadaisically.

"Of course, master. But your pack... is concerned." Silas chooses his words carefully as they begin their trek to the mansion entrance. "The vampires are abuzz with rumor and we've heard what has happened with this girl. The triplets sighted Rebel wolves still patrolling the harbor, which suggests she's slipped from the hands of the Resistance. Should Ruelle not have others in the pack with her? If you have given her the task of tracking down the girl, the pack would want the mission to be a success."

Kylo glances idly behind him at the four trailing faces, three of them identical, pale and emotionless. The triplets. Murderous jackals. *Efficient tools*. They were never human, really. The fourth is a stalwart man with more beard and brow than hair atop his head, scars littering his cheeks and a weathered eye patch over his right eye. Silas' father, Cadoc. Silas had turned him the night Ben Solo had died, all those centuries ago. So many lives lost that night, so much blood.
"Master?"

Silas' voice. What was he saying? Ah yes... "You will leave Ruelle to her task. For now. After my meeting with the supreme leader you and Cadoc will accompany me to the harbor."

Silas nods, holding his tongue; however, Kylo knows he wants to ask his questions. But that isn't how you conduct yourself before an alpha is it. He peers furtively at Silas' posture, his walk. He is angry, offended, in fact. He can also feel Cadoc's eyes burrowing into the back of his neck, openly egging him.

The triplets never speak, never ask questions. They never do. Murderous.

Kylo throws open the double doors, ignoring Mitaka who appears to have been waiting for him and strides right up the stairs. Silas and the others wait, watching him as he ascends with each heavy step, their submissive eyes pointed at his back, arrows trained on a red bulls-eye.

In the darkly silhouetted lounge, Hux stands with his arms clasped at his back, his razor-edged grimace outlined in the glass pane of one of the many floor-to-ceiling windows. He does not turn upon Kylo's approach and Kylo stops five paces from him, shoulders rolled back, fists held at his sides, expression schooled to indifference.

Minutes tick by.

Kylo does not move.

The lips of Hux's ghost reflection tremble at their corners, drawing lower.

More minutes go to waste, the silence blossoming into something electric and oppressive.

The agitation bubbling below Kylo's skin surfaces, coaxing his left eye to twitch. A dead give away...

And Hux sees it.

"Do you realize the mess you've made, Ren?" he inquires at last, his voice cool and measured.

Kylo has never fancied lying, so he doesn't. He sticks to what he's good at, deflecting and omitting information. "Your men were ill-prepared against a trained wolf. I assumed you took more pride in your soldiers."

'If you're ever in a bad situation, take your impatience and turn it onto other's. Make them lose their head first. Don't give them the opportunity to figure out you've never had one.'

His father's voice. Kylo pushes it angrily away. Of all the things to come to his mind, it had to be those words.

"How dare you—"

Kylo cuts him off. "I will ask then, what was your purpose, sending three fledglings and only one experienced vampire?" He even scoffs at the word experienced. "To a Rebel they wouldn't last five seconds, be that a lone wolf or a pack."

"I will not have you questioning my methods! Regardless of your place at the foot of Snoke's throne, you hold no authority over me or my coven!"

Kylo lets that jab go, though the abrupt urge to rip Hux's tongue from his mouth is tempting. He
focuses instead on leading Hux exactly where he needs him to go prior to entering Snoke's chamber. "Snoke's coven." he whispers.

The words weigh heavy in the air and Hux's mouth falls open, his skin blanching. "You dare to speak of your supreme leader after you've disobeyed his direct order and killed my soldiers!"

**Hux's own deflection.** After all, this is still Snoke's coven, but an ambitious man can dream. And Hux dreams.

"Did I kill your soldiers, general?"

Hux sputters, his cerulean eyes flashing. "You're unhinged, a liability! It wouldn't surprise me if you had!"

"Would Snoke come to your same conclusion?"

**Almost there.**

"That's right, son. Hold off for a few more—'

**Shut up!**

"You lost us the object! My men are dead, their bodies unaccounted for with the only piece of evidence left being no evidence at all and the dock completely sanitized. We've zero to go on save the human girl and she is now in the hands of the Resistance!"

**Yes, that evidence,** Kylo's wolf croons. **Craven's heart.** It was a pleasure cutting that miserable thing from his dead chest and driving into it a stake made of juniper wood, the marker of a Rebel wolf's kill. And the best part, Hux has convinced himself of Kylo's deception—or more aptly put, Kylo's lack of information—and he doesn't even know it yet.

**We all have our blind spots, general,** Kylo grins inwardly. "I knew your men didn't stand a chance at bringing the girl back. It seems I was right."

Hux whips around, fangs bared. "My soldiers are exceptionally trained, you filthy, mangy—"

Kylo's rage finally gets the better of him and he snaps forward at terrifying speed, sending Hux backwards on his heels as he attempts to maneuver his body for the attack. Only too late. Kylo closes his hand around the bastard's throat and pummels him into the window behind them, spider cracks radiating outward as Hux claws frantically at his gloved hand. Nails bite through the leather, burning lines into the skin of his wrist, but Kylo remains unfazed.

"Your soldiers were slaughtered by a wolf, general. We *filthy, mangy* wolves." Kylo grins at him. "Perhaps there is reason behind Snoke's decision to keep me at the foot of his throne, seeing as you and your men cannot apprehend a single human woman."

"Your fault." Hux mangles out, his scowling eyes red and watering.

Kylo releases him and he slides down the glass, clutching onto the frame with buckling knees. "That's not what you said, general. By all accounts, the way you described it sounds like I was the only one actually doing my job. And should I tell our supreme leader of your soldiers' incompetence at the subway station?" Kylo's eyes glint malevolently.

Hux lifts his chin, ginger hair falling in his face. "Your failure." His words are nothing but wind and sandpaper.
"Oh, I think we both shoulder that failure, general. Seeing as it was one of your men that gave away my packs' position. All of this could have been avoided had your soldiers used that exceptional training of theirs. The object would be ours, your men wouldn't be unaccounted for and the girl wouldn't even be a factor." The acidity of his attack loses some of its edge at the mention of the girl. He ignores it, keeping his mind in the present.

The wheels in Hux's mind turn and Kylo sees the exact moment he begrudgingly accepts what Kylo is saying, because Hux knows. He knows he has no other choice, at least for now. Kylo has outmaneuvered him—a rarity in this instance to be sure—and there is no time to counter it. With their second failure to acquire the object, Hux is now in a precarious position, especially if Kylo chooses to bring up the little stunt one of his men pulled at Hazel Street Station.

Hux will make him pay eventually. Kylo has no doubt of that.

The walk down to Snoke's crypt is uncomfortably silent for both of them, but Kylo must retain his air of superiority in this moment. He steels himself, encasing his baser emotions in a protective shell of snobbish insults aimed at his rival who trails after him with a calculating, sour expression. Hux being present will make the deception in some ways easier, if easy is even a possibility in the supreme leader's presence, but more difficult in others. Kylo's fear spikes.

Relax, his mind cautions. If you give yourself away, the girl will be lost to you. And the way to Skywalker, he vehemently reminds himself.

Hux won't let things flow smoothly, either. The asshole is cunning, a bloodthirsty jackal with no taste for honor—which Kylo himself finds thoroughly offensive—but cunning nonetheless. It isn't every day Kylo bests the man at his own game... and Kylo shouldn't let it go to waste.

Hux is a survivor. Like himself.

They enter with little fanfare, Hux trailing harmlessly behind Kylo, and the double doors slam shut after them, a cold rush of air bellowing at their coattails. Kylo musters all his willpower to keep the hair on the back of his neck from rising and he slips into a more self-assured stance, shoulders rolling back, spine straightening, eyes lowering to half mast and lips almost betraying a smirk.

"Kylo Ren. You come to my chamber with such presence. May I ask why?" Snoke bleeds out of the darkness from behind his throne, the arctic blue of his eyes glimmering, threatening.

Kylo kneels, gaze respectfully downcast, and does not reply.

"After your blatant disregard of my previous command, you dare come into this chamber with that presence?"

Hux's feet shift behind Kylo, eager to steal his chance, but the other man holds his tongue, knowing the volatile danger of Snoke's wrath.

Kylo ignores the smirk begging to dominate his lips, forcing a dead gleam over his eyes. "I have failed, supreme leader. You are wise and your guidance has taught me the folly of my kin. I did what I did not out of disobedience, but loyalty. To you. To all you have taught me." He says the words, believing them... and yet a part of him revolts. He quells this part, the wolf in him bearing down like a storm, snuffing out the renegade thoughts like candles in the wind.

Later perhaps, but not now.
"Loyalty?" Snoke purrs.

From behind him, Kylo can feel Hux's mouth twitching, eyes sharpening, that cunning mind racing for a single opening, just one—

But Kylo doesn't let him have it. Instead, he changes to a new tactic, one he deigns to utilize. "You are wise, supreme leader. I have trusted you for many centuries, remained loyal to you and to the cause. I've only done what is in the best interest for the future you envision."

Openly grovelling feels awkward and heavy to him, but he maintains his subdued temperament. If anything, Kylo's discomfort could work to his advantage. At least, he hopes it will.

Snoke's ruthless glare probes him, cataloging every minute detail, making Kylo feel as naked as the day he was born. Then: "Very well, explain yourself."

Hux's annoyed hiss behind him finally makes the smirk irresistible and Kylo's lips curls derisively. He raises his head, making direct eye-contact with Snoke as he speaks. "It is believed that the Resistance has captured the girl. That the object we seek is in their hands. I can say with some certainty that this is not the case."

"Oh?" Snoke settles into his throne, long sleeves draping over the stone.

"That cannot be confirmed, supreme leader." Hux cuts in.

"No it can't." Kylo agrees quickly, jumping ahead of Hux before he can say more. "However, my wolves have been down to the dock after my discovery of Hux's massacred team. They note that there are several Rebel wolves now patrolling the area."

_Not entirely a lie. But omissions always work better than lies, don't they..._

Snoke's attention turns to Hux. "It concerns me general that you failed to send a more adequate team for this little errand."

"I take full responsibility, supreme—"

"I did not permit you to speak." Snoke's low growl carries in the air like thunder and the veins at his temples pulse.

Silence.

Kylo averts his eyes back to the marbled floor and waits. The cogs of Hux's mind clank and whine so loudly Kylo fancies that his head might burst, but Kylo knows he would be allowed no such favors. Instead the two men remain in the stillness, both beneath the vulturous gaze of their sovereign like the proper vassals they are.

"You disobeyed my order, Kylo Ren."

Kylo bows his head lower. "Yes, supreme leader."

"You've come to believe that our enemy does not have the girl, nor the object." He asserts, his tone warning Kylo to hold his tongue.

The air grows heavy.

"Have you brought me anything else aside from this possibility?"
"The girl has been bitten, supreme leader. If she survives, she will come looking for protection."
Kylo isn't sure revealing this tidbit of information is wise, but he knows he has to give Snoke something more, or this little segment of the game is lost.

"A vampire." Snoke grins. "You saw this transpire, my loyal apprentice, and you did not intervene? What are a small number of Rebels to the Master of the Knights of Ren?"

Kylo glowers up at him, unable to retain his ire, but he decides to deflect from the question. Lying will only get him into trouble. "Supreme leader, I can find the girl. The object is what matters. We cannot allow the Resistance to find Skywalker."

Snoke's gnarled hands steeple in front of his chin, elbows resting on the hard armrests of the throne. "No. We cannot."

Hux steps forward, finally daring to speak out of turn. "With your permission, I can send another squad of men to remedy this situation. I can head the team myself, supreme leader."

"No. You and I will discuss your failure further, along with what happened at Hazel Street Station."
Snoke purrs, causing Hux's pale complexion to drain entirely. Snoke then turns his attention to Kylo. "You and your knights will find this child. You will recover the object. Afterwards, you will kill her."

"Supreme leader?" Kylo blurts in surprise.

"This has gotten far enough out of hand. Both of you have failed to bring this girl in and because of that, we are going on possibilities." Snoke's eyes flash with deadly finality. "Her death will be a certainty against the Resistance."

Kylo wants to argue with him, to tell him that the object is what matters. That the girl is of no consequence, but he isn't entirely sure Snoke wants the girl's death simply for certainty against the Resistance. He swallows, unnerved, and bows as the renegade thoughts surface again.

"Go now, Kylo Ren. See that you do not fail me this time."

Kylo leaves the chamber in a hot rush, his heart pounding and a strange uneasiness settling in his stomach. For now, he can't think on what just happened, only that he somehow maneuvered himself from one tight spot to another. Between Snoke's good graces and this girl. Rey.

He hadn't even bothered to savor the look of animal fear on Hux's face. Pity.

Halfway up the winding stairs, his cellphone vibrates against his hip. He pauses, glancing around himself conspiratorially as the uneasiness grows, and eventually pulls the device from his pocket.

The name glowing on its face reads: Ruelle.

"What?" he answers waspishly, still unsure as to why he abruptly feels... ill?

A drag of silence—
—and his churning stomach drops.

"Ruelle?"

"I swear I was only looking away for a moment."

His nostrils flare.
"She just... she just jumped. I don't—she's still transitioning. She shouldn't be able—but the bitch is as agile as a cat. She landed on the balcony a couple stories below and... She just moves so fast."

His eye twitches.

Ruelle's ragged breaths fill his ear.

He sets his jaw, doing all he can to compose his flare of rage. "Where are you?"

Her voice breaks unevenly—she's been running. "I've tracked her five blocks from your apartment, but she set a street patrol on me. I had to back off."

Kylo pinches the bridge of his nose. "I'll be there. Keep your eye on her. I know where she's headed."

"How the hell can you know—"

He kills the call without another word. The direction of her course is obvious.

*Daisy Villa Apartments.*

---

Silas and Cadoc had given him confused glances when he'd passed them through the foyer not an hour ago, shaking his head with a sharp jerk as they had attempted to follow him. The harbor could wait. Snoke's orders—if he ever actually meant to go through with them in the first place—*could wait.*

His cell vibrates again.

Ruelle's voice echoes over the line before he answers.

"She was heading to the south side of the city, but she's gotten sidetracked. She's hunting, Kylo. This is getting out of hand. I should—"

"No!" he snaps. "Stay on her. I'll be there shortly. Where are you?"

"Down Stranger Lane." A pause. "She just went into a club called *Heaven's Night.*"

He knows the place. It's on the seedier side of Stranger Lane, just past Galaxy Parkway. Most city goers like to call Stranger Lane the *Party Strip*. Countless nightclubs, hotels, strip lounges—depending on what side of Stranger you're on—and even a couple underground casinos posing as nice little restaurants populate the bustling avenue. *Heaven's Night* is an animal of many vices, including adult entertainment. It's not exactly a strip lounge, but one could argue that saying such a
thing is a simple play on semantics.

As it goes, *Heaven's Night* is the fresh novelty on the strip, and that always attracts good business. *Lots* of good business.

It's packed tonight.

Kylo parks his car in a vacant parking lot some blocks away and gets out, his skin pulsing with electric charge. Perhaps some of it is the music, but with the dancing lights and loud people his senses are bombarded with awareness. *And her.*

The wolf in him croons at the idea of hunting her.

Ruelle approaches inconspicuously, her untamed hair swaying with her walk and her nervous eyes downcast. Kylo walks passed her and she turns quickly to follow, falling in a couple paces from his shoulder. The two remain silent until they reach the entrance to *Heaven's Night*, packed to the brim with a gaggle of glittering people waiting outside. He wonders offhandedly how Rey was able to enter the club without cash. A thought comes to mind, but he instantly burns it to cinders. If such a thing transpired, then the situation has likely already spiraled out of control.

As if to confirm his suspicions, Ruelle whispers. "I saw her approach a human male in his thirties. He must have bought her way in."

Kylo bites his tongue, tastes blood. "She won't be thinking clearly." he remarks harshly, unable to curtail his mounting frustration. *It might be too late.* "When we find her, you get her back to my car. I'll handle whatever mess she's made."

Ruelle frowns. "What if we don't find her?"

He shakes his head, unwilling to accept that possibility. The meeting with Snoke was taxing enough. "She's still there."

"How do you know?"

He doesn't answer.

She huffs. "Well, we can't just linger back here twiddling our fucking thumbs until we get in. This line spans the entire city block."

Kylo nods, then immediately begins shoving people out of his way, cutting ahead of them and snaking through to the very front of the line. Ruelle follows hastily behind him before the line can close in front of her. Affronted gasps and curses follow after them, but Kylo isn't in the mood. His broad shoulders and twisted expression stifle any attempt at a confrontation until he reaches the doorman, a bouncer who appears to be more a wall of flesh and muscle than a man.

He glares down at Kylo, his bridge piercings glinting. "Back of the line, pal."

Kylo produces a wad of cash. "No."

The man hesitates, watching as Kylo pulls out two crisp one hundred dollar bills.

"Let us in." Kylo intones.

Ruelle steps closer to him and smiles appreciatively at the man. Kylo has to suppress the urge to kick her in the shin. Now is not the time for distractions, but her actions seem to thaw the man and
he takes the money, giving the two of them, especially Ruelle, another long glance before unhooking the velvet rope. Kylo stalks through the entrance corridor without looking back to see if she follows.

Upon entering the lobby, he halts at once. The scents are devastating tonight, the lights, the heat of the many bodies circulating everywhere. Or maybe it's him. The lobby is outfitted with black velvet love seats, sensual sculptures cast in neon light and translucent drapery that glitters and sways from AC vents above. Sweating bodies writhe and grind atop the plush cushions and Kylo deliberately jerks his attention from them to the main archway. His nerves grind against the underside of his skin like sandpaper and he swallows, throat dry.

Ruelle purrs from beside him, roving her hungry gaze over the scene. "Damn if this hot little toy of yours doesn't know how to find a good party."

"You take the left side. I'll take the right. We'll meet at the back." he commands, all business.

She notes his stiff demeanor and a mischievous flicker lights her eyes.

Kylo feels his chest expand, the anger in him nearly boiling over and he glares at her. She instantly remembers her place, averting her stare to the ground and allowing some distance between them. If he is completely honest with himself this check in hierarchy is unnecessary, but he needs something familiar to hold on to right now. The storm of emotions inside him has his wolf rioting and the subversive thoughts leading to images of the girl with another man does inconvenient things to his blood.

He inhales, closing his eyes.

"Oh no..."

Ruelle's voice brings Kylo back and his eyes snap open. She's looking to an annular bar situated in very the center of the dance floor, or dance pit more aptly put. His gaze follows hers and a cold chill breaks across his skin. Seated atop one of the backless stools is a vampire Kylo knows well. Phasma, Hux's second in command and a skilled executioner of his kind. Kylo learned first hand some decades ago that she keeps a special room full of trophy pieces from every Rebel wolf she kills. He'd be lying if he said it didn't anger him. It still does.

She downs a shot of what Kylo assumes is whiskey and demands another.

"What the hell is she doing here?!!" Ruelle hisses.

A very good question. Kylo worries inwardly, though there's no room to dwell on it now because, frankly, his mind is fucking shot. Can this night get any worse? Can this week get any worse?

He hopes to hell he wouldn't get an answer to those questions and motions to Ruelle. "Stay clear of the pit. Don't let her catch your scent. She can't know what the girl looks like."

Ruelle looks unconvinced, but complies. "If I find her?"

"Do as I said before." he murmurs, never taking his eyes off Phasma. "I'll take care of everything else."

"Yes master."

Ruelle melts swiftly into the crowd as she passes through the archway and Kylo follows, his face illuminated a lustful pink in the glimmering lights. The deep baseline of the music pulses through
the air, through the bodies, resonating over the walls as if over water and reverberates back to him, tickling his bones with pleasure. The wolf in him groans, dark, earthy purrs that make his veins burn with hunger. Too many warm bodies, too much sweat, the musk of sexual want from various couples on the dance floor making his own dick twitch.

He scans the crowd, hoping to see her, to catch her scent—anything. Ruelle glances at him from across the way, her look of disappointment evident as the stage lights sweep over the masses. Kylo also maintains a keen eye on Phasma as she rises from her seat and glides into the undulating crowd, her gleaming crop of blonde hair easy to spot in the mayhem of fluid shapes. He ducks quickly behind a group of men laughing loudly and clanking their beers.

Then, near the back of the room, a tendril of spice and summer. He peers down the narrow hallway leading to the rear restrooms. The hair at the nape of his neck stands at attention and he hastens forward, ignoring his own command to meet Ruelle before making their next move. He can't help himself, the wolf in him clamoring about like an angry bull.

Rey's scent grows stronger and his ears perk as he hears the muffled sound of a man's voice on the other side of the door to the men's lavatory—broken sentences, then a moan. Kylo's teeth grind like tectonic plates, his body worked up to a vibrating frenzy, and he practically shoves the door off its hinges.

On the opposite wall is Rey. In front of her is a man plastered to the floor-to-ceiling mirror that spans the entirety of the wall. The reflection reveals a chic glittering set of stalls, urinals and sinks, but Kylo only has eyes for the two occupants of the room. The neon green of the lights cast them in an eerie glow, draining the sunlight from Rey's skin, the warmth from her hair, which is a tortured mess of loose strands tumbling from her lopsided bun. The handy-work of this nameless schmuck in her arms, no doubt.

Kylo's blood finally boils over when his eyes fall past her waist, noting that her jeans, which have ridden below her pert little ass, revealing a pair of modest grey or blue panties. He can't really tell in this light. Not that it matters. He's already moving and the schmuck's trachea is in immediate danger.

"Fuck!" the man gasps, utterly unaware of the insane wolf closing in upon him.

Kylo rips them apart, shoving Rey aside and slamming the man to the ground, towering over him like the last shadow of his life and snarling. Kylo can feel the wolf within him winning, enticing the change, wanting to spring forward and rip this man's body into chaotic, bloody pieces and he almost does. He almost clamps his raging jaws around this man's neck until he notices the crimson crescent already imprinted into his skin.

Shit...

A lithe body suddenly slams into him and his shoulder cracks against the glass mirror. He barks out a curse of pain and whirls, catching Rey's arm and twirling her around before jerking her into his chest and cinching down on her waist with his opposite arm. She struggles, strong and driven by blood-lust, but he is older. He cranks the arm he holds up into an awkward angle until she stills, biting back a whimper.

The man on the ground has fallen unconscious from blood loss.

This has gotten way out of hand.

"We're not done yet." Kylo growls into her ear.
"I don't owe you anything." she fires back.

Snoke's words ring in his mind and he clamps his eyes shut, an odd emotion settling in his gut. 'You will kill her.'

Momentarily distracted, he misses Rey's actions until her elbow drives hard into his solar plexus and her wrist wrenches free from his hand. She snakes around, still in his hold, and aims for his throat with her fresh canines, red and glistening. He has only a split second to twist, pivoting Rey around and pressing her back into the mirror with his hand splayed across her clavicle. She pushes forward but he shoves her back down, some of the gentleness gone from his hold.

She'd almost bitten him. Such a thing would have been fatal.

The two glare at one another, breathing raggedly. Her eyes shift, like a moon overcome by the shadow of the earth, red eclipsing hazel. He can feel his own smoldering and in the reflection he sees his eyes peering back at him like two ghost lamps in the gloom. Rich, dark gold.

"We don't have to do this, Rey." he murmurs. "Don't be foolish."

She does not speak, the scowl on her face deepening. Her expression reminds him of his first hunt, centuries ago. His father had taken him and they'd found their quarry in the sleepy forests far from his home, a wild elk. The creature had been large and powerful, magnificent in its environment among the winter trees. What neither Kylo nor his father had realized was that they were not the only predators hunting that morning.

Staring into Rey's wild eyes he sees the thing that had nearly killed them. It had come out of the underbrush in a blur. A mountain lion, its shock of claws tearing into his father's leg and its lithe body roped with muscle. The elk had fled. Kylo remembers its burst of winter breath and the flurry of snow. He remembers being terrified... and human.

'Run Ben!'

But he didn't run...

'You will kill her.'

"I'm not your enemy." he whispers, ignoring the echo of Snoke's words. "I only want the object."

"I already told you I don't know where it is. I wasn't lying to you!" She bristles, a flicker of fear returning to her eyes.

"Your friend, Rose... you wouldn't have happened to give it to her?" There is a playful edge of sarcasm to his tone.

Rey bares her teeth, canines glinting. "You touch her and I'll rip your fucking heart out."

Her threat tugs at his lips, drawing them into a sly smirk as the blood in his veins ignites like gasoline. He leans forward, their noses brushing. "Will you know..."

It flashes in her glare before she moves, the intent to kill...

But something happens along the way—

—and her mouth crashes into his, open, panting; her fangs caressing his lower lip, savoring its fullness as she sucks. His brain short circuits, his heart stutters and the wolf in him falls flat on
its romp for five full seconds while all that gasoline blood reroutes, pumping with maddening speed down below his navel. He moves on instinct, arms encircling her tightly, hands sliding down her shoulders, over her waist and settling on her ass. He grips, tugs, working little circles over the material barring him from her skin as he tastes the blood on her lips, and she sighs possessively, taking hold of his hair and pulling with such ferocity that he almost whimpers.

In their delirious haze, he pins her flush to the wall, grinding, pulling, shoving, grinding. Her breath hitches in response and she parts her legs, tilting her pelvis up and forward at a damning angle that has him all but devouring her. She opens to him and he slips his tongue into her mouth with a low growl, the possibility of her biting it off not even entering his mind.

"Holy shit."

The voice startles them apart and Kylo jerks around, staggering clumsily. Ruelle stands with her hands on her hips and her stare flicking between them and the unconscious man on the floor. It takes a moment longer for the blood to return to his brain and Kylo's thoughts eventually clear. From beside him, Rey draws in heaving breaths, her gaze fixed deliberately on one of the stalls and high color staining her cheeks.

A distant part of him abruptly realizes just how dangerous that was. She could have bitten him. But more disturbing, this realization doesn't seem to concern him. At all.

"Ruelle," he says gruffly.

Her attention snaps to him, whatever playful comment she had perched on her tongue forgotten.

He points to the body. "Dispose of him."

"Dispose of him?" Rey parrots incredulously, her voice strangled with disbelief.

Kylo looks to her, face hardening. "You've bitten him. He will be dead in a matter of hours."

"I—I... I didn't..." Realization washes over her face and panic lights her gaze. "But he could survive! Like me!"

"And be the one who leads Hux, or the Rebels straight to you!" he snaps, all the patience bled out of him.

"But—"

"I told you to stay with Ruelle. You were warned. You're not a child. You know what you've become."

"But why should he pay the price?!" she yells.

Kylo invades her space, lowering his voice to a deadly whisper. "Because you're currently too valuable to me."

She falls silent, a hot rim of tears in her conflicted eyes.

Because of the talisman, he vehemently reminds himself. Because of Luke Skywalker.

But his gaze strays to the blanket of freckles dusting her nose and—

"It won't be easy sneaking him out with Phasma creeping around." Ruelle interrupts his thoughts.
"No." he agrees, taking a needed step away from Rey. "But we've little other choice."

The man finally stirs and Ruelle steps forward, aiding him to his feet. He sways drunkenly, eyes glazed as he grins at her with a single-minded kind of voracity that looks more pitiful than offensive. Ruelle peers sideways at him, her lips curling into a salacious grin. "He is cute. You sure know how to pick 'em." she directs her assertion at Rey.

Rey chews furiously at her lower lip and directs her gaze forcefully at the floor.

"Shut off your prurient wolf for a while and do as I say." Kylo grounds out.

"It is a shame." she opines, but says no more and departs, the door clanking shut behind them.

The vacuum of silence that follows leaves Kylo in a flurry of emotions as foreign as they are agitating. He glares at Rey, but she seems to scarcely notice his ire, her attention fixated on the tiled floor at her feet. She begins to shake, arms wrapping around her middle.

"What have I done?" she sobs, her voice small and strained.

Kylo watches her carefully, suddenly caught between a curious species of frustration and empathy. The humiliation on her face finds root in his heart and begins to twist, while the beat of the music outside batters at his skull like war drums. He has to get her out of here, somewhere safe.

'Kill her...'

"We have to move. Now."

She glares at him, but she isn't seeing him, her lips quavering and her focus swimming. "I want to go home."

He swallows, not knowing how to answer her demand, so he sticks to the basics. "Nowhere is safe for you, not anymore. My peoples' orders are to kill you, but if you come with me, I'll keep you hidden."

*What the fuck are you doing, Kylo?*

Something rash.

Something stupid.

The mountain lion in her flickers dimly to life again, but she's too exhausted, her emotions a raveled knot of chaos in her belly. He approaches carefully, putting out his hand to guide her ahead of him. She hesitates, looking down to the spot where the man had lain and clenches her fists.

He urges her to move, speaking as they exit the restroom. "Stay close to me. Do not leave my side. Someone is watching for you. We need to get you to my car without being noticed."

She nods mutely.

The music on the dancefloor pulses at a quickened pace, bodies jumping and swaying everywhere. Rey is pushed into him as a couple loses their balance and he clutches at her to keep her from falling. They apologize through inebriated giggles and continue on gyrating while Kylo hurries her forward, quick as shadows through the flow of movement. He searches the floor for Phasma, but doesn't see her. Dread builds in his chest and he hopes beyond hope that Phasma's sharp eyes don't see them, that their scents are lost under all the other pheromones polluting the air.
They make it successfully through one of the rear exits, but Kylo's unease only worsens as they enter a narrow alleyway. Rey puts a couple paces of distance between them now that they are alone and she smears her hands hatefully against her mouth, trying desperately to wipe all evidence of the blood away.

"We have to keep moving." Kylo murmurs, grabbing her arm.

She abruptly jerks it away. "I didn't want any part of this!" Her accusation whistles from her throat, strained and high-pitched.

"Life is cruel!" he snarls back.

Rey opens her mouth to fire off another volley of hostilities, but she never gets her chance.

Several silhouettes materialize out of the darkness, taking Kylo briefly by surprise, and he curses at his irrational behavior. He should have sensed this coming! Everything goes utterly wrong in that moment. Rey lashes out blindly and he turns to engage the combatant advancing behind him, but a cold shock of metal pierces through his chest and he gasps, crumbling in agony. *Silver!*

*His silver dagger...*
Chapter End Notes

PLEASE REMEMBER TO REVIEW, REVIEW, REVIEW!
CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM IS WELCOME!

Extra Notes & Links:
Ferrari LaFerrari / Black (Kylo's ride, because neither he nor I have any shame.)
Juniper Tree (if you're curious)

Discarded Songs That Also Matched the Club Aesthetic: Engel - Rammstein, Keine Macht - Terminal Choice & Dead Stars - Covenant
Chapter Notes

A/N: Thanks so much for all the wonderful feedback! I tried to get this chapter out sooner, but my RL is currently very hectic. My sincerest apologies for the delay!

**SONG INSPIRATION:** Forty Six & 2 - TOOL & The Ghost Woman and the Hunter - Lacuna Coil

**WARNINGS:** profanity, violence, character anxiety, possible claustrophobia elements, explicit sex dream sequence (sorta kinda not quite bestiality?)

**Finndel moodboard by yours truly.**

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

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"Down in the belly of the beast I lie
All I save is my..."

- Belly of the Beast / Danzig

---
"Let me out of here!"

Rey scream echoes, brittle and hoarse off the cramped walls of the dank cell. She punches uselessly at the heavy steel door, but it earns her nothing more than aching knuckles. Pressing her forehead against the cold surface, she slides down to her knees, a ball of frustrated tears mangled in her throat. It threatens to suffocate her completely, but she swallows it down, planting her hands on the floor and allowing herself to breathe. Steady—in and out, in and out. Stay calm, stay focused, she tells herself. Shitty situations don't allow for panic.

Slowly getting to her feet, Rey makes her way to the darkest corner of the cell. She lingers there, keeping her eyes focused on the door. It's been hours since she was dragged in here, a burlap sack over her face along with her hands and ankles bound, a gaggle of unknown assailants surrounding her, their foul musk offending her heightened senses and their raucous shouts filling her with dread. Everything had happened so quickly.

Where is Kylo?

Is he trapped in a cell like me?

Did they kill him?

Her heart trembles at the thought. In this new world, he seems to be her only constant, a dreary lighthouse in the middle of a malevolent black ocean. Yet what of those deadly rocks surrounding the headland where he resides? How can she navigate these strange, perilous waters with her only light source being a man she scarcely trusts? Will he lead her into those rocks? Will he...?

Regardless of her warring emotions she finds herself thinking of him, hoping he has not suffered a fate worse than herself. In the last seconds before the alleyway went dark, she remembers his breathless exhale, a sharp curse; then, the smell. It had been the smell of blood, his blood. She wraps her arms around her waist and closes her eyes, wishing to the low, cold ceiling that she was back home, back with Bodhi, and Rose, and Paige. Back in her old life.

The events of the club pass through her mind like the obnoxious, thick clouds of a summer night sky, but she chooses to ignore on them. Not now, one part of her mind warns. Later, another promises bitterly and she finds a new lump in her throat, this one riddled with self-loathing. Shaking her head, she sets her jaw determinedly. Later, she promises them both.

Another hour passes before she hears any movement outside her prison cell. A set of boots approaching, slow, measured. Then, a door closes. The foot steps grow louder, more purposeful as they reach her cell. At last, they pause outside her door. She waits, every atom in her body screaming, every muscle coiling tight like a spring as her senses spike and her fangs unsheathe. The monster behind her eyes burns, igniting a conflagration of rage beneath her skin, though she holds it in check, willing herself to remain poised, watchful.

Heavy keys clank against the steel door, the locking mechanism releases and a slant of dim light cuts into the confined space as the door swings open. Rey hugs the shadows, straining to see the individual. She notes the broad build, the rich, dark skin, the warm eyes—
—and shock instantly tears through her like a whip.

Blinding, frenzied red engulfs her vision. "You!" The sound leaving her mouth more closely resembles that of a feral bobcat than any human sound, but she's too enraged to care. "Where are the others?!

The man—werewolf, she corrects herself, Finn, his name is Finn—enters the room cautiously, his gaze locked on Rey. She angles herself low and bares her teeth at him, that strange animal sound vibrating from her throat again. He seems to weigh her reaction, standing perfectly still with his hands furled at his sides.

"Where are the others?" Rey repeats sharply.

He steps away from the door, which she realizes has been left ajar. Knowing better than to attempt an escape, she steps with him along the wall and he watches this with careful eyes. They remain this way for an eternity before he eventually speaks.

"It's midday. It will do you no good to run. The safest place for you right now is here."

She scoffs. "Safe?"

"You don't have to make this difficult." He lifts his hands slowly, opening them to show he holds no weapon, no hand cuffs. "Just come with me to answer a few questions."

"And then what?" Rey snaps.

"And then we'll get you something to eat."

She sniffs, turning her nose up at him.

"You're a newborn." he explains. "You'll need plenty of blood in your first months of transformation."

"Yeah, and whose fault is that?!" she bites hatefully, despite her efforts to tame her fury. This newfound rage both surprises and terrifies her. Never has she felt so close to losing control like this.

Finn's expression betrays the first real emotion on his face: shame. He hastily tries to conceal it under his mask of apathy, but not fast enough, unfortunately. Rey files it away for later. Should an opportunity present itself, that shame could be tilted to her advantage.

"The sun isn't the only thing you should fear." he declares, deciding to change the subject. "We know you've been targeted for assassination."

One of her eyebrows hikes to her hairline. "And you won't kill me, is that it?" She scowls, unconvinced.

He evades her question a second time, much to her ire. "You can come willingly, or you can be persuaded."

Rey glances at the open door, knowing this wolf is alone, that he has no back up should she take it upon herself to do something... foolish. He must read her intention because the next thing she knows, he's in her face, shoving her back against the wall with a single hand braced over her collarbone. His strength is impressive, more impressive than she's anticipated and the air leaves her lungs in a choking rush.
"He trained me, you know—Kylo Ren. I used to be a part of his pack."

_Ah yes_, her mind recalls the conversation with Ruelle. "The traitor."

He sneers at the term, but makes no effort to correct her assertion. "I don't like violence, even against your kind." The word is spoken with utter scorn.

"Not by choice." she reminds him venomously.

Again, that shame flickers in his gaze, dimming the golden crescents surrounding his eyes. Taking a deep breath, he steps back, nodding toward the open door. "Move."

Looking begrudgingly between him and the vacant rectangle of darkness, she obeys, her hackles rising as he falls in step a few paces behind her. Once she walks over the threshold into the hallway he commands her to turn left down a long line of matching solitary confinement cells. They must be in an abandoned prison of some kind. From the lack of windows, she guesses something underground. As they reach the end of the corridor, Finn comes up beside her and takes her arm.

"It's safer this way." he replies before she can jerk away.

She doesn't have time to ponder on the statement because they are then ascending a wide stairwell and entering into what appears to be a massive, decommissioned cistern. _It's a main square of sorts_, she realizes. _How old is this place?_

Heads suddenly snap in their direction and Rey's stomach sinks. Countless sets of hard gold eyes bore into her skin like malignant barbs and she wants nothing more than to shrink into the earth, and disappear. Finn holds firm to her bicep, his tight fingers clamping tighter as a group of wolves rise from their seats at a bar built into the far west corner of the chamber. Rey's spine tingles as she feels the heat behind her eyes again and quickly swallows down the desire to attack, to draw wolf blood.

_Is this going to be a normal thing?_ she wonders, half joking, half panicked.

Averting her eyes, she forces her attention to the ground in order not to feed the monster's fury and presses her tongue to the roof of her mouth. It's a sign of submission, she knows, but she's easily outnumbered fifty to one. _'Sometimes, you gotta swallow your pride and play it smart,'_ Paige's words echo in her mind. _Smart_ sounds like a good idea right about now.

"Back off, Kessix." Finn warns the wolf heading the approaching group. "She's to be taken to the general, _unharmed_."

"That little tramp cost us ten good wolves. No one is worth—"

"Are you challenging the general's orders?" Finn interjects coolly.

The tendon along Kessix's throat pulses uneasily and, despite his gargantuan size, he retreats. Rey watches with hooded eyes as the other wolves follow, their scathing glares fixed solely on her. Finn wastes no time, yanking her forward and propelling her out of the chamber up another set of long steps. They reach the top without further incident and Finn directs her along a twisted series of hallways. She quickly loses her sense of direction and relinquishes to his lead, letting her thoughts wander for a moment.

_Kylo's whiskey eyes plague her mind, taunting her with the memory of his taste and she inwardly berates herself. She'd kissed him, possessively, without thought, without shame. And what of the man she'd bitten? Yes, bitten._
I sealed his fate, she whispers emptily as the reality of it slams into her. Revulsion crawls up her throat and she does everything in her power to hold steady, to conceal the inner turmoil of her thoughts. She breathes evenly, in, out, in. Out.

I'm a murderer.

The confession rings in her mind like an endless bell, tolling in the depths, shaking her very bones and she wants to cover her ears, to rid herself of the awful sound. But she doesn't. She continues on with Finn's firm grip on her arm, her stare forward and her face a naked map of emotion.

"I know this is my fault."

She startles at his voice. "What?"

"Everything that has happened to you. I know it's my fault. I..." he hesitates, shaking his head. "I didn't intend for it to happen. I swear."

"The road to hell is paved with good intentions." Rey replies waspishly.

He sighs, his forehead wrinkling with frustration. "Things weren't supposed to happen this way."

She gazes down at her hands, sun-kissed hands. She belongs in the sun. "I want to go home." The declaration doesn't sound childish, or even remotely like a request. It is a statement, vacant, emptied. I want to sleep in my own bed with my dog. I want to go on the summer road trip with Rose like we'd promised. I want to sit out on the docks and watch the sunrise like I always do. I want...

The gravity of her reality settles around her neck like a millstone, dragging her deep beneath the hellish waters of an alien ocean and ripping her wings from her spine, drowning her.

"I didn't want this." she murmurs, her voice dreamy and distant to her ears. The heat, it's beginning to scald her eyes and her fangs—they pierce her tongue as she bites down hard.

Finn stops, seemingly unaware of the building storm within her. "I know and I am sorry. I mean that." He looks at her fully, his warm eyes conveying genuine regret.
"What is that prisoner doing without proper restraints?" a voice calls from behind them.

Rey turns, her blood coming to a boil as she spots a familiar face. The blonde from the subway, also the same blonde who had grabbed her outside of Heaven's Night.

Finn swiftly places himself between the two of them. "I got this Kaydel."

"After as much trouble as we went through to capture her, after the ten good soldiers we lost, forgive me if I question why in the fuck this parasite is walking around freely."

"I said I got this." Finn's shoulders stiffen and he stands broader, straighter.

"If you'd let me handle it, we could have already had the information we needed and disposed of her."

Rey's hackles stand at full attention and she can feel the last vestiges of her rationality going up in smoke. "Dispose of me?"

Both wolves focus on her at once.

"That's not the general's orders." Finn says firmly, firing a pointed glare at Kaydel. "All the general wants is to talk."

"Then, I'll be disposed of, right?" Rey snaps.

"Yes." Kaydel affirms, her gold eyes glinting.

"Kaydel!" Finn whips around. "Leave. Now."

"No." she says simply, a hidden conversation passing between the two.
Rey would have caught the obvious tell between them if not for her overwhelming rage. She feels the hunger rising in her like a tide and her thoughts turn simple, bloodthirsty.

—didn't want this—

So thirsty—

—hate the way they smell.

Tear into them.

Kill.

She rockets forward on instinct, barreling past Finn and right for her target. Kaydel anticipates Rey's attack, centering her body and grinning before Rey ever reaches her. They crash with a resounding thud on the floor and skid several yards back in a chaos of tangled limbs. Rey bares her fangs viciously and Kaydel replies in kind, her vivid eyes threatening as Rey struggles over her to maintain control; however, Rey quickly finds herself outmatched when she is upended and smashed into the rough stone floor. Blackness swirls at the edges of her vision and Rey can feel the blood vessels in her neck bursting under Kaydel's ruthless grip. She leers over Rey, her elfin face contorted into deranged, harsh lines of animal wrath.

"Kaydel stop!" Finn's shouts, his voice hazy, far away.

She completely disregards him, glowering down at Rey. "You're fucking with a real wolf now, fledgling!"

Rey fights against the werewolf's hold, nails biting into Kaydel's bare wrists, her arms, her cheek. But she merely smirks, spitting her words like acid. "You think Kylo Ren is the best our world has to offer. He's nothing but a circus animal, a domesticated dog." Her eyes flash with disdain.

A pair of strong arms appear at the edges of Rey's vision, looping around Kaydel's waist and pulling her away. She flails angrily at the owner, fever-deep in her desire to rip Rey's heart through her throat, but Rey is still too busy seeing black stars surrounding her vision to care.

"Lieutenant Connix! That is enough!"

The entire world freezes at once. Rey even holds her breath despite her lungs burning for oxygen and she glances around dazedly at Kaydel and Finn. Their silent gazes are fixed on an approaching figure flanked by two guards. She nears them gradually, though not out of unease or fear as Rey would assume, but displeasure. Her long brunette hair rests in elaborate braids atop her head, thrust with veins of silver and her velvet rich eyes strike Rey, though she cannot place why.

"Finn, see to Kaydel's wounds." the woman commands while keeping her focus fixed on Rey.

"They're superficial—"

Finn jerks Kaydel's arm with an angry glare, effectively silencing her.

"I had intended to speak with you," the woman's attention shifts to Finn, "but that can wait. For now, I will speak to the vampire fledgling."

Rey notes the slight distaste in the woman's tone at the mention of vampire and she rises to her feet, more out of self-preservation than respect. Kaydel shoots her a derisive grin as Finn leads her
away from the scene and Rey ignores the chafing of her pride.

"I will speak with her alone." the woman tells her guards.

The two hesitate, looking between one another warily, but eventually obey, disappearing down the bend of the hall after Finn and Kaydel. Silence closes in around the remaining occupants of the corridor and Rey finds herself fidgeting, most of her anger dissipated now. The general, Rey concludes, turns and walks down the hall the way she'd come, pausing to glance over her shoulder. Rey bites her lip, suspicious of whether to follow after the woman or not, but knowing she has little other choice.

"My name is General Leia Organa." she says as Rey comes up beside her. "I do not have time to mince words. Do you know where the object is?"

Rey decides she's not here to mince words, either. "Where are the others? Kylo and Ruelle? What did you do with them?"

The general peers at her a long time, tilting her head. "Finn's unit was to retrieve you specifically. I gave no other orders."

"Did they kill him?" Rey's voice betrays a hint of desperation and she hastily quells it.

"I very much doubt it." she whispers.

Something about her answer appeases Rey and she offers the woman an honest reply to her earlier question. "I don't know where the talisman is. I thought I'd lost it in the harbor."

"What about your friend, Rose Tico?"

"What about her?" Rey bristles instantly.

"I mean no ill intent, child." she soothes. "My wolves have scoured the harbor now for three full days. We have lost ten good soldiers to First Order vampires. I ask because these wolves were under my protection. You're not fully unaware of the war between our species, but I've spent too long watching it consume countless names and faces, good men and women." She stops, capturing Rey with her eyes. "To speak frankly, I don't have an endless supply of bodies to sacrifice. Our situation is dire."

Rey considers her words carefully. This general wouldn't leave anything to chance. She means to find that object, one way or another. "You've obviously done your homework on me and anyone I connect with. You've probably got someone watching Rose right now."

"Clever." Leia smirks. "Yes, I've posted wolves at your friends' apartment. Paige Tico filed a missing person's report with the police two days ago. They've also taken in your dog."

"Bodhi." Rey smiles, glad for the first time in several days.

Leia's expression, however, darkens. "The First Order have come snooping around, too, though we've seen no movement against the women thus far."

Rey's stomach churns uneasily. "Are they going to hurt them?" Then, she poses a more direct question. "Are you going to hurt them?"

Leia sighs, halting at a low archway and motioning for Rey to follow. They enter into a storage room filled with old vases and furniture, knick-knacks, stained-glass and other various paintings.
Leia stops in the middle of the room, musing over the draping cobwebs and empty shadows, then turns back to Rey. "That is not my intention, but as you well know, war is impartial to its victims."

Anger stirs in Rey anew and she glares pointedly at the general. "If your wolves harm a hair on their head, I'll hold you personally responsible."

A hint of surprise mingled with challenge glitters in the older woman's eyes. "I can see why Kylo Ren kept you alive."

She should be scared, not irritated. A part of her is scared, or maybe not? Maybe it's restlessness. She can't be sure anymore. All she knows is she wants to be outside, to feel the electric beat of the world around her like she'd felt it in that club, the unnamed man's pulse thundering under her lips and the taste of his—

Rey viciously tears her mind away from the memories, but her eyes only drop to another indicator of her monstrosity: the empty blood bags on the floor. Finn had brought them to her after she'd been escorted back to her cell. And she'd learned one very distinct if disgusting thing—she hates it cold. She'd finished the bags shamefully, her body turned away from the door and her eyes squeezed shut, while Finn had lingered.

He attempted to apologize to her one final time, but Rey, still not used to her outbursts, had practically roared at him. "Apologies don't mean shit to me! For all your efforts in gaining that talisman and here I am, a vampire! For what? For what?!!"

Minutes pass by like hours and she finds herself longing for a view of the sun, just one short glimpse of even a cloudy skyline. The air around her is cold, heavy, and she gets up, pacing for the umpteenth time before sinking to her sit bones again. A part of her wants to sleep, another wants to scream, a third wants to kill. She ultimately decides to lie back, settling her head upon the hard stone floor and gazing blankly up at the uneven ceiling. She wonders on when these cells were constructed, why tunnels connected them to a cistern and most importantly, the general's plans for her.

*She'll likely have me killed soon*, Rey deadpans. She should want to cry at this, to feel fear, but all she can muster is a vacant kind of cynicism.
The next afternoon, Finn brings her more blood bags. She knows it's afternoon by the smell on his clothes, midday sunlight. She never would have thought she'd be able to smell it so clearly. Settling down, she busies herself with drinking, pausing only to nibble cautiously at her lower lip. Finn remains near the door, standing with his arms folded over his chest.

"You're werewolves." Rey remarks, holding up the half empty bag. "I thought vampires are the one's who drink blood."

"They are." Finn agrees. "We have a back-up supply we purchase under the table. Vampires are much more agreeable when they're half-starving and you have blood on hand."

Rey's expression turns to ice. "You use it for torture."

He looks away, allowing the silence to grow around them. He's also lingering again. She peers shrewdly at him from the corner of her eye as she drinks the last of the ruby liquid and sets the plastic off to the side.

"Tonight is the full moon."

Rey frowns at him. "Why are you telling me this?"

"A warning. It's hard enough for the general to maintain command over these unruly packs. A full moon makes it nigh impossible. After the comrades we lost, I would advise not trying to escape."

"And that's my fault?" she bites angrily.

"No," he concedes, the dismay in his voice only stoking her frustration, "but it doesn't change what you are."

Dreams are never straightforward, never an explicit timeline of beginning, middle or end. In this instance, she happens to be running, breaths ragged, arms pumping, hair in her face, the full moon above her and the trees reaching hungrily, beckoning her like twisted, lonely versions of self-murder. And that bulbous, yellow moon, gazing down at her as if some grand eye set atop its
bed of royal satin clouds. A lustful witch's pearl, she thinks, malignant and whispering such vulgar promises—

Can you hear him? Smell him? Feel his eager claws digging into the earth? He's dark and filthy like the forest. Can you taste him, little one? That primal musk. It's all for you.

Such lovely promises...

Her muscles moan in protest as she leaps across a ravine, scrambling up the other side and tumbling head first down an unseen drop. Brambles and thorns snag her skin as crickets and owls fall silent in her wake. She crashes onto the bottom with a cry of shock, but is on her feet at once, tearing through the overgrowth like a madwoman, sprinting as far and as fast as she can. Nightingales sing above her in their low, lonely voices as she glances behind, searching the underbrush for him. The night breeze combs through her hair, cooling her burning skin when—

—a low, permeating growl. It travels deep into her bones and she halts at once, turning awkwardly on her heels to scan the trees again.

There, nestled between two gnarled and entwined oak trees; those whiskey-colored eyes. Devil's gold.

He suddenly bursts forward, a streak of shadow, and she bolts, tearing her legs ahead of her with her heart hammering fiercely at her ribs. She can hear his pursuit, those harsh deep grunts of sound, and she cannot deny the excitement teasing her veins. Yes, she thinks, chase me. Catch me if you can.

The forest thins and Rey breaks through the treeline into a vast open meadow with the vigilant moon hanging overhead. Her pursuer gains quickly, his breath hot on her heels and his overwhelming scent encircling her like the coils of a snake. She grins as she risks another peek over her shoulder and finds the massive beast so close she can distinguish the star shapes of brown at the centers of his pupils.

Suddenly, faster than she can react, he leaps forward, tackling her to the ground and pinning her under his weight. She lands with a soft 'oomph' and a flurry of dandelion seeds bellowing up in front of her as his powerful arms cage her, his deadly claws skimming along her curves, claiming her. She shivers at the cool sensation of his snout pressing to her neck and her core pulses as he inhales, a throaty animal groan leaving his chest. She croons in reply, arching up to his heat in earnest. He licks and nibbles along her shoulder blades, slipping those dangerous hands up over her breasts, teasing her nipples; then, he's grinding her down, pressing her firming to the ground and caressing her inner thighs with his cock.

She strains to look back, to catch sight of his face, but only those glowing wicked eyes greet her. The rest is left to darkness, a wild, indistinguishable dance of shadows. She reaches back, desperate to anchor herself, to identify a solid body and she finds it, gripping ruthlessly into a silken bed of hair. He comes down upon her, growling in a mixture of pleasure and pain, and she gasps as she feels him play with the slick along her entrance, nudging the head of his cock between her folds. She spreads her thighs, readying herself for him, and he pushes into her, filling her to the hilt.

Her dream-addled mind loses track of the details and before she realizes it, she finds herself near the cusp of orgasm, a large hand wrapped at her throat and another toying with her clit as the slap of flesh fills her ears. Her hands curl, nails digging into the dirt—
—and Rey wakes in the whirlwinds of orgasm, her body tensing, coiling tight like the string of a bow as a loud moan escapes her lips. Her core spasms, her legs tremble and her eyes roll back, the flood of pleasure which inundates her veins completely short-circuiting her brain. She falls back to her cot in a daze, heart pounding and breathing labored. Never in her life has she ever experienced a wet dream that... intense. Let alone without some kind of stimulation from herself. She licks her lips, high color tainting her cheeks as she feels the soaking seat of her pants.

Chapter End Notes

PLEASE REMEMBER TO LEAVE ME SOME FEEDBACK!
CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM IS WELCOME!
IF ANY ERRORS WERE SPOTTED, PLEASE LET ME KNOW!

Extra Notes & Links:
What a snarling bobcat sounds like. Wol Kessix (I couldn't find an image, so I used this character because I like the name.)
A/N: So I am very tardy with this chapter and my deepest apologies. I've had a lot of trouble with plot ideas for this one, but I've spent the last few months really working on that, as well as another project I recently completed: Hieros Gamos (an Aliens/Ergo Proxy AU).

** And I know our horny darklings have yet to meet back up, but I promise ch.viii has something lovely in store.

**SONG INSPIRATION:** Small Town Boy - Paradise Lost

**CHAPTER WARNINGS:**
- profanity
- heavily implied sexual misconduct with a minor / very dubious consent / triplet creepiness
- blood and violence / secondary character injury

See the end of the chapter for more notes.
Kylo sits across from Silas and Cadoc, the desire for a cigarette about as loud in his mind as the headache working hard to split his skull in two. The electric beat of the music pounds against his skin like a living pulse, grating his nerves and making him all the more agitated. He motions sharply to the bartender with his empty shot glass.

The man, gaunt though puckered from a life of liquor and likely cresting his sixties, dares to cast him a wary glance before plucking the glass and refilling it. Scotch tonight. Straight up. He returns the glass dripping over the brim and Kylo traces the mouth of it with his fingertips, gaze distant.

At the man’s lingering shadow Kylo looks up and finds him staring hauntedly over to a shadowy table situated in one of the far corners. Kylo’s scowl deepens as a sour taste forms in his mouth. He has chosen not to spare that table even a cursory glance tonight. The triplets hold a boy no more than fifteen, dusky lashes fluttering and lips drained white as they lick at the incisions carved into his flesh. Bites and bruises decorate his torso, fragile bones visible under his skin and bare legs splayed awkwardly. He already has the look of a corpse.

They feed more like ghouls, not werewolves. Kylo would never permit his pack to feed this way… like some nihilistic throng of feral blood-drinkers. It’s disgusting.

He swallows his anger, finding a rare gratitude for the more logical seat of his brain taking command. He must remain cool. Striking out at the triplets in anger would be unwise, especially now. His thoughts drift to the incident three nights ago.

And the truth is, though Kylo will never admit this—not even as a conscious thought in the safe seclusion of his mind—the triplets pose a deadly threat. Werewolves they may be, but their lack of deference for any form of order likens them more to rabid demons. In spite of the first werewolves feral temperament, they held at least some basic understanding of hierarchy. These savages don’t.

Long ago Kylo had accepted his mistake for making them one of his kind, knowing a day would come when he would pay dearly for that decision. They are not werewolves. Hell, they were barely human when he’d found them. They are empty pits of hunger, never satisfied.

And always patiently waiting for that crucial moment of weakness.

He cleans out his shot glass, the welcoming burn of his throat a needed distraction from the bartender’s terror-stricken expression. The man knows better than to interfere, however. It’s only unfortunate he has to witness the triplets insatiable appetite like this. Kylo has done well to keep them under control, though they have been testing his reactions as of late. Often they feed at the Supremacy, sharing their adolescent victims with the vampires there and doing various other repugnant things.

Silas and Cadoc share a furtive glance that Kylo just misses and his hackles rise at once. You’re losing control, he murmurs to himself. His feet are already slipping. He can feel it.
And with what happened three days prior.

Well...

Kylo swallows, really needing that cigarette.

- 0 -

- 3 DAYS EARLIER -

- 0 -

He stirred, his body a distant throb of pain and the air around him cool, pleasant even. Not the biting chill of the outside night where...

Where what?

He blinked.

They’d come upon him before he could react, a silver blade driven viciously into his ribs. It had been his blade, which he had gifted to the traitor in kind. Looks like their next meeting will end with the bastard’s heart ripped from his chest.

And the girl — Rey —she’d been taken. At the memory of her startled features he jerked up, desperate for his eyes to focus when a wall of agony slammed into him and he fell back, cursing roughly. A cloud of leather scent puffs up around him and he frowns. He’s lying on his leather couch in his apartment.

He wasn’t captured...

A wet rag brushed his forehead and a halo of pink hair blotted out the world above. “Master? Thank fuck! You’re finally awake!”

Ruelle.

Behind her a second occupant in the room approached, his sneering face an unmistakable curse on Kylo’s existence. Hux. The vampire grinned languidly as he surveyed the scene, waiting while Ruelle finished wiping the grit and sweat from Kylo’s face. Kylo himself felt his insides withering with dread. This was bad. Worse than bad.

“The blade was coated with wolfsbane. Not enough to do any real damage, but enough to slow you down. I found you after they’d gone.” Ruelle explained, her unsteady voice working his nerves.

Kylo shoved her hand away none too gently and pushed himself to a sitting position, his glare never leaving Hux. Kylo would stand if he could, but the injury he sustained would have easily brought him to his knees and he most certainly loathed the idea of kneeling before his nemesis, particularly in this situation.

So how fucked was he really?

Beyond Hux, Kylo spotted Phasma’s dead expression in his periphery and his stomach sunk. Absolutely fucked, he thought.
The room swelled with the silence, forcing all occupants to endure its pressure. Ruelle shifted uneasily as honks and outside static blared on below them. Kylo never broke eye contact with Hux, doing his dammedest to measure his enemy with unreadable eyes. But he must see right through Kylo.

“Go fetch your master a clean change of clothes before he ruins his furniture like a good dog.”

Ruelle bristled at Hux’s command. “You don’t command me coppertop.”

Hux ignored her jab, his eyebrows rising to his hairline. “Is that so? Why don’t we ask your pack leader.”

Ruelle glanced at Kylo nervously, but he was too busy trying to burn a hole through Hux’s face. After a moment, however, he relinquished, admitting inwardly that he should have known better than to expect his victory against Hux to have been long-lived. Their previous conversation flitted through his mind and he bit the inside of his cheek.

Kylo should have known better.

After giving Ruelle a curt nod, he settles back into his couch and props his feet upon his coffee table, albeit with some effort. “What do you want?” he drawls, feigning indifference.

Again, Hux sees right through him. “You’re quite a sight. I admit I had expected a little more self-restraint from you after that sideshow in Snoke’s throne room. You’re on thin ice as it is.”

“Speak for yourself. It was your men who cost us the compass in the first place.” Kylo snaps.

Hux takes a seat opposite him and props his own feet on the table.

Ruelle returns at this point, her steps tense and her light eyes as hard as jewels.

“For the last six hundred years, you have served under our supreme leader’s rule as his loyal brute, and I must admit, you have served him well. But how does it feel, to fall out of his good graces?” Hux’s words drip with disdain.

Ruelle steps forward, ready to defend her master when Kylo raises his hand to stop her.

“I’ve never trusted werewolves. Degenerate creatures with no real refined sense of immortality. If it were up to me, I would have never allowed a pack of mangy animals to work under my crown, regardless of whether or not they murdered their own kind. But what does that make you, I wonder…” Hux paused, his monologue hopefully having some purpose beyond simply insulting Kylo—and irritating him—before the vile weasel had him dragged off to Snoke. “Such a shame, losing the girl.”

Kylo’s back suddenly goes ramrod straight.

“There’s a somewhat human scent here. It must be hers.” Hux whispers offhandedly.

“What do you want?” Kylo repeats, his voice jagged with barely contained agitation.

Hux pulled his feet from the table, casually resting his elbows on his knees and his chin in his palms. “It’s simple. I want the Resistance slaughtered. I want all of you extinguished. Your wretched kind have caused enough trouble, but you, Kylo Ren, are tolerated for your usefulness.” He steepled his fingers before his mouth, a slow grin curling behind those long fingers. “But Snoke is known for disposing of his tools once their usefulness has run its course.”
Ruelle stomped forward, fists clenched. "Stop toying with us and tell us what the fuck you really want already, you—"

"Ruelle!" Kylo barked, the action causing a shot of pain through his midsection.

Phasma had also taken a threatening step forward, jaw taut and hand reaching for the weapon concealed beneath her jacket.

"I've told you what I want." Hux supplied calmly. "Your kind gone. All of you. But as it is, you're still useful, you Knights of Ren."

He’d underestimated Hux. Oh how he’d underestimated him. If this were any other moment, Kylo would have allowed himself an ounce of respect for the opportunistic fool. His flights of fancy had turned out more grandiose than he’d have ever have thought, Kylo would give him that. And the ginger blight just gained the perfect leverage over his supreme leader’s prized pet.

Kylo was beyond fucked at this point. They all were.

"We don’t answer to you! Our pack leader doesn't answer to you!" Ruelle shouted angrily, arms crossed.

"After his awful performance at that mortal cesspool of a nightclub, I would argue otherwise.” Phasma remarked tonelessly, speaking for the first time.

A beat of pregnant silence.

Ruelle looked around at Kylo helplessly, her rose-colored lips parted in a wordless plea. He held her gaze, his own mouth pressed into a firm line.

So Phasma’s whole purpose of being at that club was to confirm... what exactly? That Kylo would disobey orders? That he’d had Rey all along? What did Hux know? This unsettled him the most. If Hux realized that Kylo had kept Rey, then it would suggest Hux understood Kylo’s thought process better than he’d have liked.

"I presume you're finished." Hux remarked, glaring at Ruelle. "If you've nothing better to say, then keep your trap shut. The grown-ups are speaking."

Ruelle bit her tongue with great reluctance, throwing an affronted look Kylo’s direction and he shook his head.

When Hux saw the floor was his, he at least cut to the chase. "I propose a trade. Simple, clear-cut" The hair at the back of Kylo’s neck stood at attention. "Name it." he whispered.

Hux’s grin spread so wide Kylo was reminded of a shark. "I will keep your secret, none of my men will pursue your little street mouse, and you will perform a simple request when I ask it of you."

Is that what Rey was? His? The thought ignites a possessiveness in him that was frightening and he pushed it away, needing to focus on the moment. He spared Phasma a glance, but her face gave nothing away. Unsurprising.

"A request?" he asked.

"A request." Hux echoed.

"And what is this request?"
Hux chuckled. "Now that would ruin the game wouldn't it?"

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The game.

Kylo spares a secret glance at his two subordinates. It appears things may be more difficult for him on this killer’s board then he’d first anticipated no more than a week ago. The second Rey walked into his life he has made one fell step after another.

And could he end her as his supreme leader has bid him to do?

After the events at *Heaven's Night*, he realizes with a kind of cold satisfaction that such a thing is completely out of the question. Whether a weakness on his part or not, something about her intrigues him, makes him restless with hunger. His only thought when finding her in that restroom with that faceless human in her clutches had been to *keep her*.

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Darkness creeps in, slow, dreamlike. The moon rises late tonight, full and round and beckoning. Just beneath it sets the horizon’s cityscape, its filthy bronze light diminishing in comparison to the moon’s riveting yellow glow.

Kylo looks around at his pack, their eyes already in the heat of change. Six pairs of violent gold cutting through the shadows. In front of them stands a small acreage of woods. This thicket just beyond the city limits has served as their hunting ground on nights like these for the last century. Far enough away from the both the Supremacy and the inner city for Kylo’s comfort. They rarely ever run into a human, unless of course, you happen to be a vagrant under a local bridge, or a homeless drug addict on the empty highway.

The types of people no one will miss.

Stripping bare and discarding their clothes to the ground, the knights move into the trees, melting into the gloom. All but Ruelle. She lingers, throwing him a nervous stare to which Kylo mirrors. The unspoken agreement resonates between them.
Then, she’s gone, dropping her garments to the dirt and bounding into the shadows. Kylo looks after her, realizing only now that his teeth have sunk into his tongue. Blood taints his mouth and he swallows it, peering back up at the moon.

He will stand sentinel at the edge of the woods as he always has, allowing them their one night of freedom in their baser form. But his thoughts are no comfort tonight. He paces through the mud and overgrown grass, stomach twisted up in knots at the thought of this favor Hux has requested. What the hell could he possibly want Kylo to do? The possibilities make him nauseous and he bites off a curse, nostrils flaring. Vulnerability isn’t anyone’s strong suit, least of all his.

It wasn’t his father’s, either.

He shakes his head, immediately forcing the dangerous thought into a strongly armored box and hurling it down the deepest chasm of his subconscious; letting it flicker, letting it snuff out.

An undetermined amount of time passes as Kylo’s mind runs with all sorts of troubling conclusions to Hux’s ambiguous request. Not to mention the cloaked glances from both Silas and Cadoc he has been receiving since that night at the train station. The triplets themselves appear to be oblivious to these developments, but Kylo has wits enough to know they see everything.

He sinks so far into his thoughts that he jumps when his cell phone vibrates to life. He’d only started taking the damn thing because of the incident with Hux. Remaining in the good graces of that slimy fucker is currently in his best interests, apparently.

And what do you know…

“What?” he answers, voice clipped.

“You should watch your tone.” Hux replies silkily.

Kylo closes his eyes. “Just tell me what you want.”

“I need your help. Now.”

“It’s full moon. I’m kinda busy at the moment.”

Hux scoffs. “Watching over your ragtag band of miscreants? They will behave well enough while you’re away. Meet me at Rosewater Park.”

The line goes dead before Kylo can respond and he angrily shoves the device back into his pocket. Looking from the treeline to the city he furiously concedes and stomps his way back to his car, not even bothering with the thick layer of mud he smears onto his floor covers. Shoving his keys in the ignition, he pommels his foot down on the clutch, rips the gear shift into reverse and burns out onto the asphalt.

He reaches Rosewater in thirty minutes give or take, which, from the look on Hux’s face, isn’t fast enough. Kylo parks his car at the park entrance some distance away and approaches, smelling another vampire in the near vicinity. Phasma.

“Now that you’re finally here, we can begin.” Hux looks down his nose at him.

Kylo disregards the scorn in his voice and scans the environment, noting several apartment buildings south of the park, while a serene lake lay to its north, enclosed by well kept hedges, stone walls and thick vines. “What are we doing here?” he asks at last.
Hux crosses his arms. “Because of your tardiness, Phasma and I took it upon ourselves to eliminate the Resistance mutts watching this place.”

At Kylo’s lack of contrition he continues, pointing to the apartment building closest to the lack. Go to that apartment building to the fourth floor. Wait for my signal.”

Kylo frowns at him. “Why the hell…” Then it dawns on him, “The Tico girl.”

“Come to that conclusion all on your own, Ren? I’m impressed.” Hux sneers humorlessly. “Now move.”

He has half a mind to tear the snide fucker’s head from his shoulders, but he reigns in his malice, gritting his teeth so hard they hurt and starting down the bicycle path to the opposite edge of the park. His head swims with unease at the current shift in events. Snoke didn’t order this. With the police sniffing around the Tico sisters and even outside alphabet organizations looking into the train incident, Snoke would know better than to bring attention to their world.

Vampires and werewolves may be immune to time, but no creature is above death. And if the existence of their species was to be discovered, there wouldn’t be enough immortals in the world to stave off extermination, or worse, capture for scientific study.

Kylo spots Phasma near the apartment building entrance, bloodstained and gaze fixed on her approaching general. They meet at the juncture of Cobalt Avenue, Hux passing Kylo a cursory nod and the two disappearing inside. Kylo lingers a moment, his nerves wound so tight his whole body feels like a band stretched beyond its limits. He hates this. *Fuck* he hates this.

Hurrying across the street, Kylo takes the iron stairwell of the escape three at a time, surging up to the last floor with ease. Peering into the apartment window, he can see the empty living room of the Tico sisters with a couple candles lit and a flickering lamp radiating light from the kitchen. The place is sparse but well kept with faux leather furnishings and ornament wall hangings.

He goes perfectly still as the soft cadence of conversation reaches his ears through the glass.

“The cop promised to find her, Rose. The best thing we can do right now is not do anything at all. Let him handle it.”

“I’m not just going to sit around twiddling my thumbs while Rey is missing! She could be hurt and need help!”

“That’s exactly what will happen to you! Then what good would we be to her?! You were nearly killed last week!”

“Which is exactly why we should be out looking for Rey right now! That cop hasn’t found anything to help us find her! The trail is going cold! He won’t be able to find her before…”

“Don’t talk like that. Officer Dameron will find her.”

“Paige—”

A raucous bark breaks the conversation, followed by a pause. Kylo stiffens.

“What’s wrong Bodhi?” Rose asks.

And all at once the world explodes with movement as a large german shepherd—the one Kylo had seen in Rey’s apartment—bounds through the living room to the window towards him, while at the
exact same time the apartment door bursts inward, practically breaking off its hinges and its deadbolts skittering across the floor as two dark figures rush in.

The sisters appear from the kitchen, Rose screaming at the invaders and causing the dog to about face and barrel straight for them. The animal latches onto Hux’s arm like a terrible vice and he emits a startled roar as Phasma shoots forward at the sisters, her sights set on Rose.

Kylo erupts through the glass, hurrying toward them.

Phasma snatches Rose around the throat, towering over her as Hux flings the now mangled dog to the side with a wounded yelp, but then something happens that Kylo does not expect. The elder Tico abruptly flashes the matte silhouette of a familiar shape and points it at Phasma. He stands in awe for a moment wondering how she could have possibly gotten her hands on UV ammunition; but when she fires, when the bullet tears open Phasma’s shoulder and the look of pure murder glints in the vampire’s eyes, Kylo knows Paige Tico has made a grave mistake.

He sprints for, intent to fling Paige against the wall before Phasma can rip her heart from her chest — but Rose hits him before he can reach them, slamming her knee to his groin so hard his vision blacks out and he crumples to his knees. He is forced to watch as Phasma tears into Paige’s chest with bare fingers, blood welling from her mouth like a spring before she is flung carelessly into the Sheetrock wall, caving it in.

“No!” Rose wails, turning to run to her.

She never makes it. Hux has his hands on her before the world can blink and a cloth over her mouth. In seconds she sags unconsciously in his arms.

After another moment to nurse his broken balls, Kylo rises to his feet, fury practically setting him on fire. “What the fuck are you doing?”

Hux ignores him, turning to Phasma. “See to this.” He motions to Paige’s limp body.

However, before Phasma can carry out the task a barrage of sirens scream down the street and shouts echo down the hall. Their close. Too close to do much at all.

“Damn it.” Hux grunts, lifting the sleeping girl’s body over his shoulder.

Kylo swallows, making up his mind. “I’ll take care of this.” he says, tone deadly calm.

Both survey him curiously, then Hux nods, seemingly satisfied. They’re in this mess together after all. Sorry bastard.

When they leave he makes a quick review of the place before ransacking it further, finding valuables in predictable places and tossing things around the kitchen, adding to the appearance of a robbery and kidnapping.

Then, he pulls out his phone, dialing three numbers.

“911. What’s your emergency.”

“I’ve got a woman here with severe chest injuries and massive hemorrhaging. Likely head trauma.”

“What’s the address?”
“3339 Cobalt Avenue. Fourth floor.”

“And your name?”

Kylo hangs up.

Chapter End Notes

PLEASE REMEMBER TO LEAVE ME SOME FEEDBACK!
CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM IS WELCOME!
FOLLOW ME ON TWITTER IF YOU WISH!
ALSO CHECK OUT THE LIVE TWEET THREAD WHERE I DO PROGRESS FOOTNOTES/UPDATES!
A/N: This was a quick update; for me at least. Rofl! Not only do we get some good background history on Finn and Kylo's dynamic, but also some answers (way more questions, though) to Ruelle's past. Loads of smut in store with some potentially triggering kink for some in coming chapters! Will list the warnings, but tread carefully if you're easily unsettled!

**SONG INSPIRATION:** Farewell - Clan of Xymox (This song fits perfectly with Rey's escape, I think.)

**CHAPTER WARNINGS:**
- profanity
- reference of past slavery

**Moodboard created by** Beautiful_and_Broken (Dazzy)

See the end of the chapter for more notes.
glares down at the empty blood bag, then tosses it aside. “Are you going to continue to feed me like some wild animal or what?”

In the last twenty-four hours the entire underground had devolved into a feral nest of howling chaos and angry retorts. Something serious had gone down, something to do with the “human sisters,” and Rey had known at once, heart shooting into her throat and body trembling. She’d nearly torn through the concrete walls in a rage demanding to be let out. She’d kicked and screamed and punched, leaving her knuckles a gory mess. That was how Finn had found her, one floor beneath the chaos, voice hoarse and eyes blazing with unchecked rage.

At least she’d been allowed a shower, even if she had to climb back into her old clothes. That was
“I wish it didn’t have to be like this.” Finn whispers from the opposite side of the room where he sits with his back against the door.

Rey suppresses the urge to launch at his neck. “Tell me if my friends are okay. You can tell me that much, can’t you? Your girlfriend only told me a creature like me shouldn’t care.” She bites the end off harder than she probably should, especially if she wants him feeling generous, but she can’t help it. Her nerves are shot.

He releases a breath, a heavy exhale from his nostrils. It drags out so long she’s sure he isn’t going to answer when: “Paige is alive. The last we heard she’s been taken to the ER.”

Rey’s on her feet in a flash. “What happened? What about Rose? Is Rose okay? How bad is Paige hurt? It was Snoke wasn’t it?” She steps toward him, hands shaking. “Can I see them? Tell me Rose is alive! Tell me that you son-of-a-bitch or I swear I’ll—”

He’s on his feet just as quickly, tone sharp with warning. “She’s alive.”

Momentary relief washes over Rey, but it doesn’t last. “What about Rose?” she asks softly.

His expression betrays him. “We don’t know.”

Sound evacuates her ears, replaced by a dull rasping static and blood rushes to her head, briefly blacking out her vision. When she gains her bearings again he is speaking to her, face grave.

“—wolves were found dead. A call had gone out for an ambulance, but Rose Tico was gone when the police got there. Our unit only found traces of werewolf scent.”

“But it was Snoke.” Rey assumes, teeth bared.

He refrains from answering at first, a flicker of uncertainty in his eyes. “His men wouldn’t have let the girl live.”

Another possibility creeps into Rey’s mind and her stomach turns. “Kylo?”

Finn’s mouth draws down in an antagonistic frown. “That’s who I’d put my money on.”

She picks up on his hesitation. “But you aren’t sure.”

He looks to the opposite wall, gaze distant. “If I’m sure about anything it’s that Kylo Ren will do whatever is necessary to get what he wants.”

“Then why let the girl live?”

“I’m not sure.” Finn shrugs. “What I am sure of is his loyalty to that sadistic monster.”

_Snake_. If he’s as bad as everyone keeps saying, she hopes she never meets him. Rey bites her lip, another more pertinent question perched on her tongue. “What makes you so sure?”

If the way Kylo treated her is any indication to his temperament then perhaps Rose isn’t in any real immediate danger. And the call to 911 for an ambulance. If Kylo had intended to kill Paige, he’d have done it. And Finn said it himself, Snoke would have ordered Paige to be killed.

Finn laughs hollowly, though doesn’t give her an immediate reply. He glances up at the ceiling, down along the floor, then back up to her eyes and the expanse of centuries reflecting back at her
sends a shock of fright down her spine. “Because he killed his own father, murdered him in cold blood. Not even a half-assed vampire would do that to their own kin let alone a wolf. He’s a disgrace to his kind. He is the traitor.”

Her eyes widen and an icy ball of dread coils in her stomach, burning with an alien emotion of hurt she cannot yet fully understand, but it grows, holding to her with greedy claws. Why does she feel like she’s been betrayed somehow, lied to? More importantly, why does she feel the need to defend him against Finn? Ignoring the storm of emotions in her chest, she presses him. “What happened between you two? You used to be on his side?”

Finn laughs a second time, this one far more bitter than the first. “Ancient history.”

“So you’re not going to tell me?” she glares at him. “You won’t let me go to my friends, you won’t let me help them. The least you can do is humor me.”

Silence.

“Fine.” she snaps, turning to her corner of the room.

“He saved me.”

She stops, head craning around slowly to peer at him.

His gaze however, is cast to the floor. “In those days vampires often bought humans from a secret syndicate of slavers they financed. You can imagine how lucrative a clandestine business like that would have become in the obscure corners of history before this modern age.”

She shudders, drawing in on herself at the mere thought of all the horrifying possibilities a statement like that posed.

“Humans weren’t just purchased for food. In those centuries vampires could get away with housing hundreds of slaves at a time for sport, or various other… activities.”

Her stomach rolls uneasily. “What sort of activities.”

“The grisly kind. I’m sure you can use your imagination.” He smiles vacantly.

A flash of the man’s face from Heaven’s Night floats up to her, twisting her already knotted insides. The hunger she’d felt when sinking her teeth into his throat, tasting the heat of his blood had erased all evidence of humanity she still held in that one terrifying moment. Even now, it frightens the hell out of her.

That creature wasn’t me. Despite her words the taste of his blood haunts her tongue nonetheless. It always will, she knows. And that is the most terrifying of all.

“I’d thought my prayers had been answers when I’d been chosen to fight in the pit, instead of dying a slow death in the dungeons. I had been wrong…” he trails off.

Rey refrains from speaking, instead, finding a tolerably comfortable spot on the concrete floor few feet from him and pulling her knees to her chest.

“I survived for three long years, but I fell eventually. All of us did, one way or another. I’d learned the value of hatred then, how being doomed to die could be so liberating.” He chuckles, a colorless sound. “When it happened, though, I hadn’t anticipated…”
“What?” Rey asks.

“He’d stepped into the pit. It was a hot summer night and I was fucking freezing, but that’s what happens when you’re bleeding out in the dirt.” One of Finn’s eyebrows tick up, his gaze darkening. “He had come to deal the final blow—that’s what I’d thought, at least. But when he’d lifted me up and whispered in my ear, I couldn’t believe his words. I’d thought it was a trick. Then he had asked again and I could only nod. That night, I became one of his pack, a Knight of Ren.”

“You sound grateful to him.” Rey points out, confused.

“I was. I always will be.” Finn answers, looking at her intently. “We became like family, we still are, regardless of…” He purses his lips, staring at his hands. His next words are spoken in a whispers. “And I have found family here, too. The Resistance is my home, now.”

“Do you hate him?”

He thinks on this for a long time until finally answering, “No.”

Somehow she can understand Finn’s feelings, his reluctance. She doesn’t know quite what to think of Kylo Ren herself, or the strange innate thrill his presence seems to draw out of her. Rey can’t say she exactly likes it, either.

“Thanks. For humoring me, I mean. You didn’t have to.”

Finn shrugs at his boots. “I’m the one who put you in this position. I figured I at least owe you the truth.”

“What about my friends?” Rey cannot hide the tremble in her voice.

He sighs, deliberately looking as far away from her as the room will allow. “I don’t know.”

And all at once, they are back where they started. “That’s all you’ll give me? I don’t know. You obviously have more information than that.” she frowns.

“We’re at war.” he remarks uncomfortably. “None of my decisions are simple. I do what’s necessary to protect those I love. The thing about war is—”

“That I’m a vampire and I can’t be trusted.” she cuts him off, finishing what he struggles to say.

He fixes her with a measured glare. “And we saw you with Kylo Ren.”

The kiss, she realizes. Her cheeks flush red at the memory of it. The Resistance wolves must have been watching her from the moment she’d escaped Kylo’s apartment.

“He’s loyal to Snoke and you’re…”

Rey’s lips peel back in a growl. “I’m what?”

Finn shakes his head, choosing not to finish.

She launches to her feet angrily and stalks to the other side of the cell, not missing for a second the way Finn’s shoulders tighten with anticipation. “What are you even doing here, then? Don’t you have somewhere to be for your family and their war?” she snaps. “You’re feeling sorry for getting me turned into a monster, yet you won’t tell me a thing about Paige, or Rose. That’s my family.”

“I—”
“Just get the fuck outta here. Leave me alone.”

Rey hates the bundle of thorns in her throat and the tears that stream freely down her face, but nothing she can do will stop them. She feels numb and agitated, restless with the desire to put her shaking hands to work, to tear into something—anything.

The only response she receives from Finn is the door shutting securely behind him, the locks clicking in place, followed hollowly by his departing footsteps and the empty stillness thereafter.

It’s late when she hears movement again, a fresh set of shoes clacking toward her room at God knows what hour with the impatient cadence of one forced to do a chore. The door swings open to reveal a familiar head of golden hair and her hackles rise at once.

“You!” she hisses.

Kaydel smirks, coming into the cell and slamming the door shut behind her. She carries a shiny black shopping bag full of what Rey can only assume are clothes. She hopes they are clothes, anyway. Her heart twitters uneasily as Kaydel stops at the center of the room, head tilting thoughtfully.

“You look like shit.”

Rey turns up her nose, choosing not to take the bait, but her fangs respond regardless, stinging her gums as hey extend. “What do you want?” she growls.

“To curb stomp your fangs into the back of your skull, vampire, but as things are, I’m not here for me.”

“Then what are you here for?” Rey rises cautiously to her feet.

Kaydel rolls her painted eyes as if the reason should be obvious; then, throws the bag in her hand at Rey’s feet. “Following orders.”

“You don’t strike me as the ‘following orders’ type.” Rey says, staring apprehensively down at the bag.

“Your gift for stating the obvious is duly noted.” Kaydel motions to the bag. “Pick it up.”

Rey scowls dubiously at the shiny black lump.

“What, you don’t trust me?”
She snorts at Kaydel’s almost playful tone. Of course she doesn’t trust her. Nonetheless, Rey stoops over to take the bag, eyes never leaving that elfin face.

“They costed our pack good, hard earned cash, so don’t go ruining them.”

Rey bulks, instantly affronted that Kaydel would insinuate she possesses no more than a child’s disastrously limited concept of money. She does understand money, more than this uppity bitch knows.

By the time she looks up again, Kaydel has departed, the smooth roll of her hips disappearing beyond the door with the heavy slab of metal booming behind her. Rey wastes no time, uncaring who is watching as she strips out of the sticky attire she currently dons and hurriedly climbs into the fresh set, which happens to be an oversized white T-shirt and a mismatched pair of track pants, but she can’t complain. They’re clean.

A soft click at the door makes Rey suddenly freeze, every muscle in her body fusing like stone. She stands perfectly still, listening.

A second click.

The lock.

Who is at the door?

She hadn’t heard them approach. Her heart gallops wildly in her chest, her blood pounding in her ears. It could be the vampires who have come for the price on her head, or a rogue wolf wanting to rip her apart for causing the loss of their comrades… or Kylo? She feels no shame at hoping for such a miracle, begging for it even.

The door creaks ajar only a few inches.

Rey waits, breath held in her lungs.

She waits for an eternity.

But nothing happens.

“If you mean to kill me, come out and do it already!” she growls lowly, but no measure of audacity can mask the fear in her voice.

Silence.

She swallows, her body shaking.

Then: “Run Rey.”

The whisper makes her nearly jump out of her skin and she chokes back a gasp. “Finn?” Her jaw drops.

“Go now, before I change my mind.” he orders.

She shakes her head, disbelieving what she hears. “But—”

“Rey.” His tone brooks no argument. “Go. Now. Keep to the outer tunnels. You’ll come to a main shaft. Remember to follow the yellow line.”
Rey creeps to the door, hunting for Finn’s silhouette, but finds only a vacant, dimly lit corridor to greet her. And her heart skips a beat.

“Finn?”

No answer.

Rey doesn’t bother waiting for another cue. She’s down the hall and around the bend in seconds, following her sense of smell and avoiding wolf patrols when necessary. Finn’s words echo in her mind, warning her away from the central core of the den and on through the tangled labyrinth of subterranean tunnels until at last she finds the yellow line, a guideline to be exact, painted into the ceiling of one particular junction for those seeking the exit.

It’s a miracle she makes it to the surface, but with the mess involving Paige and Rose it’s not surprising their attentions are focused elsewhere. Her stomach sours at the thought of her friends and she pushes on, running up the last flight of stairs towards the starry night sky.

It’s chilly, the heavily bruised remnants of sunset giving way to night blue as she hastens along the shadows, knowing the wolves will catch wind of her escape soon enough. She must put as much distance between them as she can before that.

The smell of pollution and salt tell her that she’s near the sewage plant, southwest of the harbor, but she breathes in deeply despite the stink, grinning to herself as she runs. Freedom. Glancing up at the sky, she spots the moon, a waning gibbous against the coming stars. A part of her half expects wolves to suddenly burst out from every direction, Finn having changed this mind and hurriedly trying to remedy his mistake before she can slip away. She knows their location now, which could be critical to their opposition. Her legs pump faster until she’s literally flying over the open field towards the highway, a single face coming to mind. Will he help her? Will Ruelle?

There is no one else she can turn to and going to the human authorities is completely off the table. She sighs bitterly at the thought. Human. Not like her. Not anymore.

‘I’ll keep you hidden.’

Will Kylo’s words still ring true when she shows up at his doorstep? If she even makes it that far…

Rey’s feet hit the asphalt of the highway and she glances at the city limits sign, relieved to be on a straight path for the metropolis although she knows she won’t be safe, not until she reaches him. And what if he can also protect Paige, or help her find Rose? Hope blossoms in her chest, though she swiftly quells it.

He’s loyal to this Snoke. Don’t be foolish.

But there’s nowhere else to go.

She shoves the warring voices to the back of her mind and focuses on the simple target in front of her, air cutting through her lungs in crisp huffs. Kylo’s apartment rests on the east side of the city past an amphitheater. That at least, is one thing she can recall.

Time bleeds into a haze of singular purpose as she searches, cars drifting by as a mist of white and red light, and buildings no more than shadowy fixtures against her periphery. She walks the narrow alleyways and vacant streets for hours, scanning the scents for any remnant of him. The human
smells drive her so close to feeding she wants to scream, so she bites the inside of her cheek instead, letting the taste of her own blood sate her for now. After the way she had carelessly bitten that human at Heaven’s Night the mere thought of feeding on a human petrifies her.

Rey is sure she has searched every nightclub, every bar, every night owl social event of the city by the time she glances up at the sky again. It’s 6AM, only an hour from sunrise. Dread sickens her stomach and she begins to panic, drawing the attention of the few homeless wandering the streets.

Out of nowhere, a hand rips her around and a wall of floral perfume invades her nostrils. The startled gray-gold eyes of Ruelle greet her and she could cry.

“What are you doing out here?” she hisses.

“Finn let me go. I—”

“Shut up and come on!” Ruelle yanks her arm so hard Rey is sure she’s pulled it from the socket.

They hurry across the alley to the street where Ruelle hails a taxi. She shoves Rey into the back seat before she can protest and puts a finger to her lips in a bid for silence, then turns to the taxi driver. “Deadstar Drive, Finalizer Tower.”

Neither of them speak for several painful minutes, Rey glancing openly at Ruelle’s shadowed profile and Ruelle glaring straight ahead. The driver plays a rock radio station too loudly for comfort, but Rey is far beyond comfort at this point. With her nerves shot she opens her mouth to speak.

“Shut up.” Ruelle whispers, her voice nearly drown out by the music.

Naturally, Rey ignores her command. “Finn let me go.”

She rolls her eyes. “I can fucking see that, genius.”

Rey swallows a nasty retort, choosing to pick her battles, and continues. “He told me Kylo made him, a long time ago. He made you too, right?”

Ruelle doesn’t answer, face hard.

Rey stares at her, waiting.

A blustering sigh exits Ruelle’s nose, lips pressed into an angry line. “Yeah, he did.”

“Did he save you from the pit like Finn?”

She smirks, an expression far too cold for her pixie features. “He made me against my will.”

Rey stares at her dumbfounded. “But I thought you—”

“Care about him?” Ruelle’s lips break into a monstrous grin. “I’d kill for him. I’d murder anyone he asked me to, even Snoke, but it wasn’t always that way.”
PLEASE REMEMBER TO LEAVE ME SOME FEEDBACK!
CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM IS WELCOME!
FOLLOW ME ON TWITTER IF YOU WISH!
ALSO CHECK OUT THE LIVE TWEET THREAD WHERE I DO PROGRESS FOOTNOTES/UPDATES!
A/N: Noow we're getting somewhere. I know the smut is taking forever, but I promise, once it comes -- pun totally intended ;) -- it will not. STOP. And this plot is totally about to get wild. Strap in! I hope you enjoy the ride!

!!!!!! IF THERE ARE ANY ERRORS PLEASE LET ME KNOW. I TYPED THIS IN A RUSH TO FINISH BEFORE MY BUSY DAY THIS MORNING !!!!!!

SONG INSPIRATION: Written In Blood - She Wants Revenge

CHAPTER WARNINGS:
- profanity
- power imbalance, physical altercation, slapping
- semi sexual content (explicit wording; i.e., p*ssy)
- dead bodies, slight gore description

See the end of the chapter for more notes

"If your afraid to say,
Ballsy. Reckless. Stupid. Could he try for sagacious, or fortuitous maybe, by some far stretch of the imagination? But speaking frankly, since when has Kylo ever been one to pass up an opportunity, especially one staring him in the face; innocent life or not.

Hux should know by now that he is no mere dog. After all these centuries and the rat-faced bastard can’t tell the difference. Needless to say he had been one straw short of nuclear when Kylo finally answered his cell.

“You were supposed burn down the evidence and kill her! Not send her to the fucking ER!”

“You have your insurance, I have mine.”

“What?”

“There’s no way Snoke or the Resistance will risk getting involved with Paige Tico now, not with this many human eyes watching. As of this point, your secret is safe with me… and the comatose girl.”

“What exactly happens if she wakes up? That city cop never leaves her bedside.”

“She’s suffered major head trauma, but who can say. Miracles do happen.”

“Before this is over, I’m going to kill you.”

“I look forward to it.”

A sudden knock at the door jolts him from the memory and he jerks to his feet, considering the very real possibility that Hux has decided to skip the entire ‘before this is over’ schtick and come for the grand finale. Such a thing is not foreign to the realm of probability. If Snoke discovers either of their secrets both of them are as good as dust by morning. This wouldn’t be the first time the supreme leader has burned a wolf at the stake. The method is medieval, but nevertheless efficient, albeit with the proper kindling.

But all that vanishes the second Kylo looks through the door’s peephole, jaw dropping and eyes nearly bulging from their sockets. He rips the door open at once, the air evacuating his lungs in a
rush as he stares down the hazel eyes which have cursed him since that night on the platform.

Her lips tremble nervously in a phantom smile before she averts her gaze to the floor.

Beside her Ruelle opens her mouth to speak, but Kylo doesn’t allow her the option. In one fell motion he yanks them inside and slams the door firmly behind them, his body crowding Rey against the wall. She stares up at him in shock, words caught in her throat.

The action rudely reminds him of the healing injury at his side and he silent curses Finn, wishing for his death again. “How did you get away?” he demands gruffly, fingers curling at her throat.

Her surprise turns to anger, though before she can answer him he turns to Ruelle.

“Was she followed?”

“I tailed her for over an hour while she wandered the streets. There was no one. She’s damn lucky I found her before the bloodsuckers did.”

“You’re sure. No one saw you?” he stares at her askance.

“Mostly.” she growls defensively. “But you know yourself Kylo, Hux’s best soldiers learned their stealth from us.”

He cannot fault the pride in her voice. The Knights of Ren are unparalleled on the hunt. It’s only natural Hux would require his men to learn from the best.

“I shouldn’t have run.” Rey’s voice pipes up, eyes back on the ground—an act of submission.

He scowls at her. “But you did.”

She looks up at him, tongue pressed into her cheek.

“How?” he asks, referencing his previous question.

Her brow furrows. “Finn. He let me out of my cell and told me how to escape.”

He almost laughed. “The traitor?”

Rey glares at him, swallowing her intended words and hitting him with a more impending question. “Where is Rose?”

His jaw clamps shut and a sharp breath exits Ruelle’s nose.

“Where is she?” Rey presses.

He loosens his hold on her throat, realizing belatedly how his fingers dig into her flesh. “General Hux has your friend, but she’s alive.”

“Where?”

He sneers at her. “Do you think that prick would still have her if I knew?”

Her eyes go flat. “Oh right, the compass. That's all you care about.”

“I’d mind my tone if I were you. I’m not the one with a bounty on their head who came to find me for help.” It’s an assumption, but a correct one by the shy blush of her cheeks.
She swallows glancing over at Ruelle, then to the balcony behind them. “I’m sorry about… almost getting you killed.”

“Don’t do that.”

Rey frowns. “What?”

“Apologize. I don’t like apologies.” he replies frostily and lets her go.

She watches distractedly as he strides over to the other side of the room and pours himself a bourbon. Ruelle ushers her into the living area and collapses on the couch, throwing her feet atop the coffee table, dirty pumps and all.

“Pour me one, too.” she says.

He already has the second glass filled in his hand and is heading over to them. “Get your fucking feet off my table.” he grumbles.

She acquiesces, throwing him a childish look before taking her shot glass. They down their bourbon together, staring absently at the wallpaper with distant eyes.

“I’d kill for a cigarette.” Ruelle professes, getting up to pour her another drink. “You wouldn’t happen to have a stale pack lying around, would you?”

Her question is directed at Kylo, but he cannot stop his gaze from crawling furtively back to the simmering girl on the love-seat. Rey is bursting to have answers and she hopes he will do more than just give them to her. She’s hoping he’ll help her.

He shakes his head at Ruelle. “You know I quit some decades ago.”

“No, but they leave a distinct smell.” He wrinkles his nose.

“I could care less if it makes us easier to track. I need my fuckin’ cigarettes like I need my sex. One hit right after the other.”

Speaking of sex makes Kylo think of the kiss and his cautious observance morphs into open gawking, remembering how warm and pliable her body had been in his arms, feline muscles rolling and blood hot in her seeking mouth. And her fangs. His dick twitches at the memory, fire kindling below his navel in delicious, licking flames. He hasn’t allowed the memory precedence in his mind since that night. With everything else plaguing him, a provocative kiss had been the last thing on his brain. But now…

Rey catches him staring at her parted legs, lashes instantly fluttering wide and a flush of red traveling down beyond the neck of her plain T-shirt. His eyes lock on hers and the wolf in him croons, low and promising.

“So are we gonna talk, or are you two just gonna eye fuck each other for the rest of the night?”

Kylo rips his gaze away as if struck and gets to his feet, sauntering towards the entrance of his bedroom and focusing outside on the twinkling city lights. Ruelle walks past him to the balcony with a shrewd smirk and takes in the scene for herself, arms crossing, then proceeds back into the living area and sprawls out on the couch. She completely takes up the space, leaving him nowhere to sit except next to Rey on the love-seat. He bites back a groan and remains standing.
It’s better this way, he assures himself and begins pacing around the room, twirling the bourbon in his glass. Hux had told him earlier that Snoke desires their presence, particularly his. He’ll have to go tonight. He cannot risk being ignorant of what transpires between the two. Still, he does not want to go. To be frank, he finds himself liking that suffocating room less and less with each new night.

“What happened to Paige?” Rey breaks the silence, a slight tremor in her voice.

Finn has told her things. Kylo can see it in the astute way she measures his posture, chin high and hands folded neatly in her lap. Her legs are tightly pressed together now; however, this does little to thwart his desire to yank her track pants down her ankles and take her right here.

He fantasizes about sitting on the love-seat, how Rey would sink onto his cock with her back flush to his chest and a sweet moan exiting her lips. How she’d strain up to his wanton hands, nipples taut and, all too soon, he’d be fucking her down off the couch into the carpet, hand roped in her dark hair and yanking with each unforgiving thrust until her knees were skinned raw.

Kylo wonders offhandedly what her pussy looks like, his tongue playing abstractly behind his teeth. Wouldn’t it be a sight to see after he finishes her, red and ravaged and dripping with his seed. His wolf snarls possessively.

Ruelle’s drumming fingers on the coffee table bring him back to reality—for the time being. “She got in the way.” he states, recalling the question.

“Did… you do it?” Rey averts her gazing, unable to look him in the eye with this inquiry.

“No.” he mutters and pours himself another drink.

“Then who did?”

There it is: the threat. He can’t help but smile at the hint of iron in her tone. She wouldn’t last five seconds against Phasma, not as a fledgling. She needs time for her powers to grow, and she needs training. He relishes the idea of being the one to train her.

“Hux’s over-sized Doberman Pinscher.” Ruelle answers.

Rey frowns, confused.

“Phasma. The viking bitch who tailed you at Heaven’s Night.” she clarifies.

“And they haven’t tried to finish the job because…?”

“We are not impervious to death.” Kylo supplies prior to downing his fourth shot. Damn he needs a cigarette, or a good rutting. His wolf grunts earnestly at the idea and he pinches the bridge of his nose, moving on with the conversation. “Your friend Rose found out just how easy it is to kill a vampire. Both our species are in many ways immune to harm, but we have our weaknesses. Risking the exposure of our world to humans would be unwise.”

Rey considers his words. He can see the shift in her mind, how she struggles to think of their world as hers and the human world as an alien plain. At last, she nods to herself and gets to her feet. “Alright, if I can’t get to Rose, then I want to see Paige.”

“You heard what Kylo just said, right?”

“Yeah.”
“Then you know you of all vampires can’t go waltzing into her hospital room. You’d be dead before you even made it to her floor.”

Rey folds her arms over her chest, turning her calculating glare at Kylo. “Why did you keep her alive, exactly? It obviously wasn’t out of charity.”

“No. I kept her alive as leverage over Hux.”

She is struck by how easily he answers her, with no hesitation, no shame… and it boils her blood. “That’s all?”

He raises an eyebrow. She had hoped for a different answer, one where he revealed how his crisis of conscious had influenced his decision. Such a vulnerability could prove fatal among enemies, whether he had entertained the emotion or not. And he hadn’t. “What else should there be?”

Crack!

Her speed surprises him and his cheek stings before he realizes he’s even been slapped. Ruelle stands in displeased wonderment as Rey revs back to hit him again, but he lunges this time, forcing her off balance and into the plush leather cushions of the love-seat. His grip tightens around her throat, her eyes widen; then, his fingers flex—a show of warning.

She growls in spite of it, fangs extended and eyes flashing a deadly red. “She’s my family and you’re using her?! You son-of-a-bitch!”

“Yes. And there’s nothing you can do to change that. You’re a fledgling vampire with no nest and a target on your back. I’m all you’ve got.”

“I should never have come here!” she hisses. “Finn was right about you! You’re no different than the rest of them! A monster!”

He looms over her, a hulking shadow of broad shoulders and coiled muscle. “Guilty again. But you still would have come here whether you knew about Paige—”

“—Don’t say her name!—”

—or not, because you realize you have nowhere else to go.”

“I want to see my friends!” she roars in his face, spitting the words through her teeth.

Kylo pushes her harder into the chair, realizing the danger of crowding her down like this with his legs spread wide and his body invading every aspect of her space, but he cannot help himself. Her fangs glint in the amber light, the gloomy contours of orange defining her features in a dreamlike haze and Kylo sinks down to cover her lips with a sigh. She grabs his face at once, though not to cradle and he moves swiftly, pinning both her wrists above her head. She opens her mouth in an angry scream only to have him slide his tongue past her teeth for a taste. Her jaws clamp shut in response, but not fast enough.

When he pulls back to flash a triumphant grin she chases after him, arching up and killing his buckling self-control with a single whimper. It’s been a long time, too long and his wolf whines in excitement. The thought of fucking her here and now in front of Ruelle imbues him with a sense of absolute power. Hell, if given half the chance Kylo would fuck her in Snoko’s sepulcher on his goddamn throne with the old bastard watching. Watching as he claimed what he desired for himself, throne and all.
Yet by some miracle he finds his wits, pulling away with an involuntary groan. His chest trembles, breaths coming in short bursts as Rey hurls a glare at him. Her cantankerous lust only serves to fuel his own and he shifts his hold, switching both of her wrists to one hand and using the other to take her chin in a dominating grip.

“I told you before that I’m not your enemy, that you I’d protect you.” he says lowly.

She lifts her chin defiantly. “Yeah? To what end?”

He pauses, unsure of what to say because, in all honesty, he doesn’t know. Rey senses his hesitation, her eyebrows drawing together in a scowl of bewilderment.

Ruelle’s voice startles both of them, reminding them of her presence. “You’re friends are in no immediate danger.”

Biting back a curse Kylo collects himself, rising off of Rey and taking several careful steps back, but little can be done about the stiff outline of the erection in his pants. Great.

“How do you know?” Rey asks Ruelle, sitting up and deliberately ignoring Kylo’s presence.

“Over the decades I’ve learned to give Hux some credit. The bastard is a strategist. He wouldn’t waste a valuable asset like your friend, especially now that Kylo has leverage over him, knowing how you feel about her and how Kylo feels about you.” Ruelle hurls a pointed at him and he huffs, looking away to the wall. “Besides,” she continues, “I wouldn’t say what Hux did was exactly under Snoke’s orders, either. Best to hide the girl away and let things cool down for a while. As far as either side knows, the object is tucked safely away at the police station. Nothing immediate needs to be done.”

Rey weighs this information, skeptical at first, then nodding in concession. “It’s not like I have much of a choice but to play along, right?”

“Right.” Ruelle frowns.

Rey switches gears, though she still refuses to look in Kylo’s direction. “What is deal with that thing? Why does your overlord want it?”

“To find someone.”

“Who?”

“The father of your kind, Luke Skywalker.”

Kylo enters the Supremacy with measured promptness, his hair windblown from the drive and his face a calculated mask of indifference. No life stirs in the foyer aside from Mitaka who passes him
a covert nod of greeting before disappearing down a darkened hallway and Phasma who stands on
the second floor landing, her hand curled loosely around the balustrade and her crystal eyes fixed
on him. His neck prickles with unease.

Down the winding steps to the underground he contemplates the growing peril of this entire mess.
One of them, Hux or himself, will kill the other before this is over, and to be quite frank, a part of
Kylo wonders if it will in fact be Hux who does the honors.

The stories of old enter his mind and he considers the tale of his ancestor, their dark father, the first
of immortals blessed by the daemon warlock, Sheev Palpatine. Most of the legend is based on
hearsay and myth. No immortal alive today knows the truth of what happened all those centuries
ago. Not even Snoke.

A hand suddenly shoots out to grab him and he reacts instinctively, twisting on the balls of his feet
and grabbing a fist full of the assailant’s shirt.

“Are you bloody mad?” he hisses.

_Hux._

Kylo draws him closer, his grip tightening. “Where?”

The other man snorts, realizing the subject of the question. “Safe. Unattainable. And _it_ might
remain that way if you play nice.”

“Did _it_ happen to have the answers you seek?” Kylo whispers sarcastically.

Hux grins a grin that unsettles Kylo. “Isn’t it funny how some things just fall into your lap, such
fortuitous things.”

“You know where it is?”

The grin overtakes his whole face. “You don’t, but seeing as we’re both on the same _team_, I
suppose I can tell you that I might know someone who does.”

Kylo stares, perplexed by his conspirator’s confession and intuition tells him that the compass isn’t
at the police station, not anymore at least. Though had it ever been? He wonders at the possibility.
Who took it? More importantly, who had spoken to the Tico sisters?

“Tell me.”

Hux pats the hand Kylo has gathered at his throat. “All in good time. Come now, the supreme
leader demands our presence.” He gives one last grin before unhooking Kylo’s frozen fingers from
his collar and turning around.

Kylo quickly falls in step beside him, though the revelation between them leaves him no time to
prepare for what’s in the next room. As they enter Kylo notices first the broken, lifeless bodies
near the foot of the throne, then the harsh quality of the lights—they are far too bright—finally the
opulent glimmer of burgundy and starless robes lingering near the throne. His eyes widen. An
elder, but not just any elder.

*A nightbrother.*

Hux’s expression mirrors Kylo’s momentary lapse of shock. “Maul.” he utters aloud.
The dark face leers, lantern yellow eyes a wide expressionless pit of cunning hunger. This monster hasn’t seen the likes of any light in over eight centuries. By most he’s only murmured about in legend, much like Kylo’s ancestor. Kylo himself has not seen Maul since the night he chose to follow Snoke, abandoning his past forever in that lightless chasm. Maul’s gaze falls upon him…

and remains.

“The general seems to have forgotten his manners.” Snoke’s chuckle drifts out from behind the throne.

Both mens’ knees hit the floor at once and Kylo risks a cautious glance at Hux’s face. As smooth as a mill pond, not a ripple present.

“Your general appears quite soft for a military man.” Maul proceeds down the steps and begins circling them. “If you tire of him send him down to me.”

Color drains from Hux’s face.

Snoke laughs, long and loud. “I’ll keep that in mind. However, we have more pressing issues to attend to and our guests have finally arrived to discuss them.”

Maul stops in front of Kylo. “Let’s discuss them, then. The hour grows late.”

Snoke sits on his throne. “The object is missing.”

“Missing?” Hux blurt out in faux surprise.

“Sources also tell me that the Tico sisters have been attacked. Evidence of Resistance wolves was found in the ashes of the apartment building.”

“They grow desperate.” Maul muses.

“Perhaps.” Snoke mutters, steepling his fingers in front of his lips. “That being said, there is one glaring piece unaccounted for: the fledgling.” He directs his piercing eyes on Kylo. “You have yet to find this child?”

“No supreme leader.” Kylo lies through his teeth, head down and voice even.

“Disappointing. This is precisely why I have requested the assistance of Darth Maul. He will not fail me in finding and extracting the information from the girl. Then, my Master of Ren, you may kill her.”

Kylo’s jaw tenses, eye twitching. “Yes supreme leader.”

“Her name?” Maul murmurs above Kylo, the guttural edge of his voice making Kylo’s stomach twist with dread.

“Rey Sampson.” Snoke answers.
Rey Sampson = Surname meaning (sun)

Chapter End Notes

PLEASE REMEMBER TO LEAVE ME SOME FEEDBACK!
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FOOTNOTES/UPDATES!

Rey Sampson = Surname meaning (sun)
A/N: Yup! Another update!!! Woohoo! \o/ And I don't want to lie and say we are at the half way mark because I'm not exactly sure on the length of this story, but let's just say mostly half-way. ROFL! The plot is about to really pick up as well as the devoted Reylo.

* * Ruelle moodboard by ME and Reylo art by PandaCapuccino. Please don't steal! Thank you!

SONG INSPIRATION: Love You to Death - London After Midnight

CHAPTER WARNINGS:
- profanity
- steamy couch cuddling, fluff and blood kink

WARNING FOR AN UNKNOWN FUTURE CHAPTER! THIS FIC WILL EVENTUALLY CONTAIN AN EXPLICIT WEREWOLF SEX SCENE! BE AWARE THAT I WILL MARK THE SCENE IN THE CURRENTLY UNKNOWN CHAPTER IF YOU SIMPLY WANT TO SKIP OVER IT; HOWEVER, IF THIS STILL BOTHERS YOU AND YOU WISH TO ABANDON THIS STORY NOW IS THE TIME.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

"I die when I hear your voice.
To touch you divine.
Be my possession, my sweet obsession wine."
Rey wakes in a windowless room, small, pleasantly cool with wine-red wallpaper; the same wine-red wallpaper she’d found herself staring at the night Kylo had told her she would never see the sun again. It’s oddly comforting in a morbid sort of way, a grounding point she can work from. Grounding points offer two things to the owner: before this and after this. There is no bridge in between these references in time, only a cold certainty.

*I’m a vampire. I’m not a human, not anymore.* She closes her eyes as the words crash down on her. Where does she even begin rationally with something like that? She supposes she can start with another far more pressing reality. She is a vampire wanted dead by other vampires. The only allies in her corner—if they truly are in her corner—are werewolves, predictably an enemy of her newfound species. But the cherry on top? These wolves are loyal to the very vampire that wants her head.

How’s that for a quandary?

If she wants to survive, she will have to get used to this new side of herself, one way or another. The moral part of her doubts she ever will, but this whole mess is not her fault. She had been made this *monster* without her consent. That… changes things.

From the other room, the television blares with on-screen battles, weapon blasts, shouts of agony and gunfire. At least Ruelle isn’t watching porn this time.

Rey sits up, rubbing her arms more out of nervousness than any actual desire to get warm. She thinks of her family, of Rose and Paige and Bodhi. Despite what has happened, she hopes beyond hope that they are alright. They deserve to be alright. If not for her, then this whole mess would have never happened to them. The guilt falls over her again, cumbersome and burning at her chest. Emotions it seems are more powerful now that she is a vampire and the light-speed with which to transition between each emotion is jarring.

It frightens her.

With an aching throat and eyes blistering from hunger, she slips out of the cot and proceeds to the living room. The lights glow dimly from kitchen while the harsher tones of the television wash out.
Ruelle’s profile. She rests leisurely on the couch, taking up as much room as she can with a shot glass of vodka glinting on in her hand.

“So Sleeping Beauty is finally awake.” She peers at Rey from the corner of her eye, a feline smile ghosting her face. “Evening Beauty.”

Rey ignores her teasing. “Where’s Kylo?”

“He’ll be back soon.” she answers vaguely, turning her attention back to the battle.

*Obviously.* Rey groans. “Where did he go?” she asks more specifically.

Ruelle changes the subject. “You should pour yourself a drink. It helps curb the hunger pains.” To punctuate her suggestion, she drains her glass.

“I don’t drink.” Rey remarks flatly.

The two stare at one another for a beat, Rey with her arms tight over her chest and Ruelle twining a lock of hair between her fingers, a thoughtful scowl on her face. She brings the string of hair to her mouth, rolling it between her lips before dropping her hand and the piece of hair with a sigh.

“He’s meeting with Snoke, probably taking a beating just to keep your sorry ass a secret.” she declares icily.

A blush imbues Rey’s cheeks and she averts her gaze to the TV. Not once but twice she has lost control of herself around Kylo Ren. And both times Ruelle has been present. If she had a shovel she couldn’t dig a hole deep enough to hide from her embarrassment. Still, if given a second chance she would not hesitate to repeat her actions. Hell, she might have gone even farther, she can’t know for sure. Not around him.

*A rational person would have kneed him in the balls*, she tells herself.

On the television a man in futuristic uniform screams and fires at an alien creature, its skeletal tail cracking like a whip and impaling the man. No porn, but still graphic.

“Pour yourself a drink.”

Rey frowns at her.

“Pour one, or I’ll pour it for you.” Ruelle challenges, eyebrow arched.

Stomping angrily to the liquor cabinet—it would have sounded so much more convincing had she a pair of boots—she grabs an amber bottle that looks as if it hasn’t been touched in years and fills a glass. Ruelle watches with acute fascination as Rey downs the shot only to cough half of it through her nose a second later. *And it burns!*

Ruelle cackles. “You weren’t kidding!”

In a cloud of fury Rey stalks over to her before remembering herself, only stopping short as Ruelle surges to her feet, lips hardened into a combative grin. The vampire in Rey murmurs to rip the wolf’s heart from her chest, but she refuses, taking a step back and putting some distance between them. Relinquishing from a fight has always chafed Rey’s inborn desire to prove her worth, but she knows this dispute would prove nothing. Ruelle may be a wolf *and a bitch*, but she is not a threat.

The latter notes her subtle shift in demeanor and the grin turns serious. “You should have been a
wolf, you know.”

Rey’s jaw drops.

“You’d have made one hell of a Knight of Ren.”

“Are you just saying that because of…” she trails off, the blush returning again.

“Partly, yeah. What Kylo is doing is dangerous. I’m sure you’ve already realized that. Intimacy between a vampire and a werewolf is unanimously forbidden.”

“Why?”

“For one, a single blood bite from you would kill Kylo and vice versa. The diseases we transmit are not only deadly to most humans.”

“I’d never choose to bite someone like that.” she mumbles uncomfortably, then recalls the man from the club and hates herself. How easily had her fangs pierced his flesh? How quickly had she forgotten herself?

Ruelle frowns, though chooses not to comment on that incident. Instead she brings up an even more awkward subject. “In the heat of sex an immortal always bites. It’s our nature. Why do you think most humans who interact with us wind up dead or changed?”

“I don’t plan on having sex with Ky— him.” The defensive edge in Rey’s tone is anything but convincing.

“Whatever you say. Besides, I made the statement mostly because you’re smart. Naive maybe, with a little too much moral baggage, but you’re a survivor.”

Rey stares at her. “Is that a compliment?”

“It’s about the best you’re gonna get from me.”

This time when Rey pours a drink she downs it with some dignity. “So why is Snoke looking for this guy, Luke Skywalker?”

“To kill him.”

“But would that kill the entire vampire species?” Rey shakes her head in disbelief.

“No one knows for sure, but if you were me, would you care?”

Rey purses her lips because yes, if she were a werewolf she wouldn’t give two shits about killing daddy vamp, whether it subsequently ended all his children or not. But as fate would have it she isn’t. She is one of those children.

Ruelle picks up on her train of thought and shrugs. “I doubt Snoke would do anything to jeopardize his immortality, honestly, but from what little I know, Skywalker became a threat to all immortals. The war between vampires and werewolves was growing out of control. Hundreds were dying each night. Then, when Snoke had beaten back the wolves to the brink, Skywalker betrayed him.”
“Why? Why would Skywalker betray his own kind?”

“The only one still alive who knows is Kylo.”

Rey considers her words. “You said Skywalker became a threat to all immortals. How?”

“No one is for sure. All I know is it had to do with some past world magic, ancient magic.” The element of fear in Ruelle’s eyes gives Rey pause.

“With as ancient as your kind are, I would think you’d have detailed records of your history.”

“Oh there are. But digging into the past is forbidden.”

Rey scowls. “Seems like a lot of things are forbidden in your world.”

“Our world.” Ruelle corrects her, smirking. “And it’s kept us alive this long.”

“Is the story on how you became a werewolf also forbidden history?”

Ruelle’s eyes darken. “Yes.”

Rey pours herself another drink. “I’ll find out sooner or later. It might as well be by you.”

Walking up beside her, Ruelle steals her shot glass and throws it back, draining it dry. When she finishes, she considers Rey with a peculiar expression. “One day soon I’ll tell you, but not yet.”
Kylo arrives a few hours later, his face haunted by deep shadows with bruised smudges under his eyes and his lips shriveled into a grimace. Rey enters from the balcony to see Ruelle turn off the television and stand up, every cell of her body vibrating with unease. As Rey looks back to Kylo she finds his wide eyes already set her, intent and a little unhinged.

The seed of fear in her gut grows.

“Things have gotten out of hand.”

Ruelle steps forward. “What do you mean?”

“I want you to meet up with the others. They are looking for a man named San Tekka. I want you to help them find him and bring him to Hux.”

“San Tekka? I’ve heard that name before.” she ponders aloud.

Kylo strides past them to the liquor cabinet, neglecting all the shot glasses and going straight for the bottle. “He’s an old priest connected with the Resistance.”

Recognition instantly flashes across Ruelle’s face. “He was the human who had a direct line to General Organa. But I thought he was dead.”

“So did I.”

Without another word, Ruelle follows his orders and exits the apartment, snatching her coat and hurrying down the hall. Rey watches the door close just as Ruelle disappears beyond the bending corridor. Tenuous silence fills the air and Rey opens her mouth to speak—

“He’s sent someone after you.” Kylo whispers, staring down at the bottle in his hand.

“Who?”

“The human who had a direct line to General Organa. But I thought he was dead.”

“So did I.”

Without another word, Ruelle follows his orders and exits the apartment, snatching her coat and hurrying down the hall. Rey watches the door close just as Ruelle disappears beyond the bending corridor. Tenuous silence fills the air and Rey opens her mouth to speak—

“He’s sent someone after you.” Kylo whispers, staring down at the bottle in his hand.

“Who?”

“An assassin.”

Rey hugs her sides, an indescribable sensation floundering in her gut. Going from nobody, to vampire, to the lead vampire’s most wanted list is really starting to give her whiplash. But… “I thought you were Snokes’s best assassin.”

Kylo looks up sharply at her failed attempt to lighten the mood. “He’s an Elder and a Nightbrother, which means he isn’t your average immortal.”

She averts her eyes sheepishly. A little humor would have been nice, even at a time like this. “So what do we do?”

He shakes his head and finishes off his bottle. “I don’t know. You can’t stay here, or Ruelle’s. The rest of my pack doesn’t need to know about you.”

“You don’t trust them?”
“No.”

Rey’s eyes follow him as he collapses on the couch, his head drooped forward and his massive shoulders slumping. Why does he make her think of an oversized lost puppy all of the sudden? She furtively pinches herself for the thought and walks up to him, giving them three breathable feet of space. At her approach he lifts his head, though does not meet her gaze.

“There might be someone who can keep you safe.” he says.

She waits, choosing not to press him, not when he looks so ragged and uncertain. The minute tremors of his feet and hands betray an element of exhaustion in him Rey absolutely understands. His wits are fried, he needs rest.

“I can take you to her before dawn—”

Without a second thought, she reaches her hand out to his face, cupping his cheek and effectively silencing him. She isn’t sure why she does this other than a desire to give some form of comfort. He looks so tired.

“You need sleep.” she murmurs.

His wide dark stare fixates on her, the devil’s gold reminiscent of a child’s shocked innocence. Her thumb follows the crescent bruise beneath one of his eyes as her other fingers curl under his jaw, delighting in its scruffy texture. Rey remembers well what that scruff had felt like when kissing him and she thinks she might like it.

“I rarely sleep.” he supplies gruffly.

A small smile works at the corners of her mouth. “Which is exactly why you need it.”
Kylo’s lips part as if he might protest; then, unexpectedly he lunges forward, pulling her into him while simultaneously twisting her around and settling her atop him as if he were a throne. He encloses his arms around her possessively and inhales her scent, nuzzling the crook of her neck. She cannot help but purr and sink further into his embrace, lulling her head back onto his shoulder.

“I don’t want sleep,” he growls, his words moist against her skin. Rey closes her eyes, turning her face and nuzzling his temple. She knows. God how she knows, because she has felt it, too. Ever since witnessing him in the subway, the way he moved, the way he spoke; all else has been a footnote at the back of her mind, especially sleep, because what she really wants is…

One of his hands slide under her shirt, his touch cool against her heated skin and she gasps, her toes curling when his fingertips find the nipple of her right breast and tease it to the point of pain. Her fangs extend at once and she feels the fire mounting behind her eyes, brightening them to their vampire red with each twist and tug of his fingers. It’s unclear who finds the other first, but a breath later his lips slant over hers hungrily and she is opening for him, allowing him access to whatever part of her he wants to taste.

All of her apparently.
Rey senses the hardness growing between his legs and squirms over him deliberately, causing the kind of friction that makes a man whimper. She dines on the exquisite sound, captivated by its raw vulnerability and sheer animal need. And power. It resonates like a roll of thunder over her nerve-endings and she wrestles against his hold, suddenly desperate to face him, to cradle his head in her arms and—

NO!

“Stop!” she shouts.

He jerks at her outcry and the two freeze, both staring at one another in stunned silence as the world settles back into place. Rey’s heart pounds in her ears as horror grips her chest. I’d wanted to bite him, to mark him as a vampire marks what belongs to them. This is what Ruelle meant by blood bite. But the intensity to bite the man at Heaven’s Night couldn’t have held a candle to the need she feels to mark Kylo.

To make him hers.

“I was about to…” He trails off, his uneven pants ghosting over her skin.

“I know.” she murmurs. “Me too.”

But neither of them let go; both facing the other now, neither of them dare even move.

Rey bites her lower lip, forgetting about her fangs and accidentally piercing her flesh. She squints at the fleeting sting of pain and Kylo watches as a droplet of blood gathers, his darkened, half-lidded eyes hypnotized. Words form in her throat, though before she can get them out his thumb paints the droplet across her lip, dipping into her mouth and enticing her tongue. She exhales a breath she didn’t know she’d been holding and chases him, closing her mouth around the digit and sucking.

He growls lowly, his upper lip curling in approval. “I should have made you a wolf the moment I saw you.”

She hesitates at his confession, unsure whether her reluctance is due to the lack of consideration for her agency in the statement, or the glaring fact that a larger part of her wishes it had happened that way regardless.

Kylo’s free hand skims up her bare back, lifting her shirt and craning forward to place possessive kisses along her breasts. She emits a startled yelp and releases his thumb from her mouth as his own closes around one nipple, then the other. Her hips grind down on instinct, the bundle of nerves at her core screaming for more friction.

“We should stop.” she mutters breathlessly.

“I know.” he agrees against the valley of her breasts, licking and nipping her into a frenzy.

Rey swallows a groan as her eyes roll back. “I mean it.” she sighs. “Kylo stop.”

He grabs her waist, pulling her down hard on the bulge of his pants and she nearly melts. But they have to…

“Stop. Kylo—I—stop!”

She jumps back as he hands release her, realizing only too late that she has clawed him. She stands
appalled at the trickle of fresh red painting his cheek.

“I’m sorry I…”

Focus comes back to his expression and he shakes his head, glancing at the wall. “Don’t be. It needed to stop.”

The instant quality of cold detachment in his voice hurts her, true assertion or not. She conceals it as best she can, which isn’t that difficult considering he’s avoiding looking her in the eye as much as she is him.

Thirty minutes later Rey has showered and changed into a fresh set of clothes, Ruelle’s much to her consternation, but black looks good on her. Kylo betrays as much when she walks out from his bedroom to the living area, the tight leathers making her feel nothing short of naked.

He clears his throat. “We only have two hours before dawn. Let’s go.”
Chapter End Notes

PLEASE REMEMBER TO LEAVE ME SOME FEEDBACK!
CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM IS WELCOME!
FOLLOW ME ON TWITTER IF YOU WISH!
ALSO CHECK OUT THE LIVE TWEET THREAD WHERE I DO PROGRESS FOOTNOTES/UPDATES!
A/N: What you thought you knew about Heaven's Night... 😊 Let's just say I was inspired after watching Constantine and figured I needed to expand upon the supernatural underworld while still attempting to keep that Underworld movie vibe. How did I do? Btw, possessive Rey was totally random, I swear. And mind the warnings!!!!

**SONG INSPIRATION:** Mutter - Rammstein

**CHAPTER WARNINGS:**
- profanity
- more steamy slow burn teases for the smut
- **GORE**, blood, *explicit* descriptions of torture, Kylo does some of the torturing and it's not easy to read, abuse of the elderly, murder/mercy killing

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

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“I sung of Chaos and Eternal Night,
Taught by the heav'nly Muse to venture down
The dark descent, and up to reascend...”

- Paradise Lost / John Milton

---
So this is what it has come down to, seeking help from the last person on earth he should be asking. After leaving the Supremacy, the call between them had been chilly at best if not equally as brief. But what other choice does he have?

His gaze drifts to the quiet passenger in the the other seat, her chestnut hair dancing listlessly in the wind. She has not spoken to him since his apartment and she rolled her window down some thirty minutes ago, but nothing more. A part of him remains unsettled by it, while another argues he should be happy. Snoke wants her dead and she is a rogue vampire. Worse still, she could have grown sympathetic towards the plight of the Resistance since his ex-knight released her from her cell. All these reasons and more are why he should be content with her silence.

And his mother? Who knows what she told Rey…

He has always afforded some of his cleverness to his mother. How can he not? In the ancient days of his past he had seen just how effective cleverness could be; he had listened and he had learned.

His thought of feminine power lures him to glance at Rey again and he watches as she pulls her hair back into a bun with stiff, minuscule movements, her mouth set into a brittle line. The street lamps overhead illuminate the inside of the car with slow, intermittent pulses, bathing her in sallow light before hurrying away to drown her in darkness once more. To the east the beginning glow of predawn kindles over the horizon, bruised and faint yellow.

“I remember the exact moment. And I knew too that my world would end with her, regardless of where it had begun.” Han’s memory whispers.

A young boy had once asked his father how the man had come to realize he was in love with the boy’s mother. The memory fills Kylo with an impending sense of dread, so unlike his memory’s counterpart. Back then Kylo—or Ben as he was known—had lacked the understanding of the repercussions from such a courtship as the one between his parents. To that child their love had yielded only comfort, something he could put his trust in. Something that would never fail him.

But things go sour…

An elderly beggar at one of the stoplights approaches his car from the passenger side and Kylo swiftly rolls up Rey’s window, not bothering to meet her gaze as the light flicks back to green. The beggar stands with haunted eyes when they pass him by and Kylo looks pointed in every other direction. With his current state of perturbation the last thing they need is for Rey to attack a human on street camera.

“Thank you.”

He peers at her only to find she has turned to face the window and he decides not to reply. Keep things simple, keep them detached.
They arrive at their destination moments later, Rey’s shoulders tensing at the sight of the glowing neon letters above the building. Kylo ponders offhandedly about irony and its place in this situation before getting out of the car and going to Rey’s side. She doesn’t bother waiting for him, climbing out and slamming the door behind her with trembling hands.

“The back.” He nods.

She follows behind him obediently, head ducked low and arms wrapped securely around her waist. The vibration of her unease is enough to make even the world wobble off its axis and he squashes the instinct to reach behind him and take her hand. They weave through the few cars still left in the parking lot, employees of the establishment, and cut across the street into the alleyway. Kylo watches every corner, prepared for anything to attack. Thankfully, they make it to the back exit without a hitch.

The door opens at their approach, revealing the striking face of a gargantuan man in grease-stained suspenders. Strono, or Cookie as he prefers to be called. The crimson light behind him exaggerates his jarring deformities, limbs far too long even for one his height and a face seemingly crushed by Fate only to have her stretch its fixtures in some feeble attempt at mending a mistake. He scrutinizes them, his eyes lingering specifically on Rey.

Then, he steps aside.

They enter with haste, Kylo not bothering how Cookie brushes past him to take the lead, the man’s shoulder bumping him hard enough to knock his thoughts off course. He deserves it, probably—most definitely—especially after promising he would never again bring another catastrophe upon them like Takodana. She might owe him a favor, but he knows what he will ask is too much.

Truth is, she probably already knows what he has come to ask. Maybe that can speed things along, though.

The muted beat of club music plays lazily from the main room, the meandering chatter of the last employees cleaning up before closing drifting through the hallway. Cookie leads them past the main room down a series of bends to an elevator. The doors slide open and Kylo swiftly ushers Rey inside.

Cookie does not follow.

Only after the doors slip shut does Kylo breathe, but his heart suddenly feels too big for his chest. A peek over at Rey reveals that she too seems to be suffering a minor heart attack. He considers telling her that she will be safe here, that things will turn out alright. It would make her a hell of a lot easier to control, but he holds his tongue.

Upon reaching the underground, Kylo exits the death box promptly, strides long and purposeful as he makes for the large door at the end of the hall. Rey’s footfalls echo shortly behind his, her rhythm hasty and uneven. The smell of cigar smoke and subtle vanilla reaches his nose causing him to hesitate, his hand hovering above the old-fashioned door knob. A part of him wants to be ironic and call this moment his point of no return, but he realizes with a strange touch of humor that he had crossed that point weeks ago.

He glances back at Rey. She looks far more dangerous in leather, especially under these crimson lights. Heat tugs below his navel and his wolf grumbles mutinously, still fuming at him for what happened in his apartment. He should have grabbed her before thinking twice and fucked her right there on the couch, or maybe let her fuck him. He rather liked the idea of her riding his dick as if he were some wild horse that needed breaking.
The door abruptly clicks open of its own accord. “Come in already!” a voice calls from inside.

Kylo pushes it the rest of the way open. Beyond the threshold lies a cozy, mid-sized room with antique lamps and a sprawling oakwood desk at its center. Sitting at this desk is an old woman, slight and willowy with shrewd features and a cigar hanging from her lips. Maz Kanata, empath, root healer and, once upon a time, a witch in need of a werewolf’s services.

“I knew you’d come for your favor sooner or later.” she whispers, feathery tendrils of smoke rising around her face. Her eyes drift to Rey and she motions to a sofa at the back of the room. “Sit child.”

Kylo approaches the desk. “You owe me.”

Maz takes a long drag and taps the cigar’s ashes into a nearby ashtray. “I do, but I suspect you wish to involve me in a rather precarious predicament. Perhaps you should try begging instead.”

He scoffs. “This is how you repay a debt.”

“This is how I stay alive.” she counters, taking another, far longer drag. “I’ve heard word of a compass lost. A compass to Luke Skywalker, father of the Nosferatu... like your pretty girlfriend over there.”

He bites his tongue. “She needs protection. That’s all I ask.”

“You want me to keep the very creature Snoke is after in my house when you know well that I am neutral in this war?” Anger contorts her expression.

“You play by a set of rules General Organa doesn’t even follow!” Kylo fires back hotly.

“Nonetheless, this is neutral ground!”

His foot unexpectedly slides forward, rage welling up in his fist like a molten guiser. He would have smashed the desk into splinters, done a damn better job than any woodchipper could have dreamed, but the next few seconds end with him nursing a fresh cut on his hand from a silver knife. He snarls viciously though Maz remains steadfast, fingers wrapped securely around a familiar hilt.

“What the…?” he gapes, confused.

“A message from him.” she clarifies.

The traitor! His blood nearly boils over.

“You’d do well to listen, little wolf, and I might be willing to help you.”

He reigns in his temper at once and sits down in the chair nearest him. “I’m listening.”

She sits, too, placing the knife on the table before her with the blade pointed a scant to the right, directly at Rey. “Whispers told me of your failure with obtaining the compass. I also know of Snoke involving the Nightbrother. Darth Maul.”

“I doubt the spirits were that specific.” Kylo drawls.

The old witch smirks, teak brown eyes dancing. “No, but my club is a house of whispers, little wolf.”
*Her club* meaning the subterranean dance-hall sandwiched between this floor and the world above. Kylo hadn’t told Rey, but it was one of the reasons erasing the man’s life she had taken so easy. At the thought of her he glances behind him, finding her round stare fixated on Maz.

“Your traitor’s message is this: When you find the compass, destroy it.”

Kylo turns back to the woman, an incredulous laugh bubbling in his chest. “Never.”

“You petulant child! Do you have any idea what is at stake?!”

“Luke Skywalker is mine.” he growls.

“Your hate has blinded you, you must know that!” Maz slams her hands on the table, causing the blade to tremble. “You know it is more than Luke's death Snoke seeks. Deep down you must see how you’re being used. With your family’s connection to—”

“I don’t care about that.” Kylo cuts her off bitterly, furious that she’d even bring it up.

“That’s right! You don’t care! And because you refuse to acknowledge your family’s history you have missed what’s right in front of you!”

He stands slowly, every atom of his body vibrating with hellish rage. “I didn’t come here to be reprimanded by you Maz. I came here because you owe me. If you ever mention my family again, I will reach down your throat and rip your heart out. Do you understand?”

A touch of fear flickers in the witch’s eyes and she glances at Rey, then him again. Swallowing her next words, she chooses to navigate more carefully. “I can keep her hidden in a safe place.”

Kylo nods. “I don’t want to know where so long as she’s hidden from werewolves and vampires.”

“Wait.”

The two turn at the small sound of Rey’s voice.

“I don’t know you.” she says, directing her statement at Maz.

“You’ll be safe with her, Rey.” he tries.

But she refuses to listen. “I don’t know her, Kylo! I barely know you! I want to see my friends! I want to be somewhere where I can actually think! I just…”

Kylo rises to his feet. “You need to feed.”

“I don’t want to.” she argues, grinding her fists into the couch.

He walks to her and offers his hand. She takes it, albeit hesitantly. That chafes his heart, but he decides to file the feeling away for later. Presently, he stares with intent into her hazel eyes as she stands. “I need you to trust me, Rey.” he says.

“How can you ask me that?”

“Because it’s the only thing that matters, right now.”

Rey frowns, contemplating. After a long moment she glares at him with curious determination. “Okay. I’ll trust you. From this moment forward I won’t question your lead… if you give me one truth about yourself.”
He looks at her, waiting.

“Who is General Organa to you?”

Wrong question.

He shakes his head. “No.”

Hurt crosses her face before she can tuck it away and he instantly regrets his attitude, castigating himself for being so cold. But she wouldn’t understand his situation. She couldn’t.

Rey turns away—

—and he blurts it out on reflex, shocking everyone in the room, especially himself. “My mother.”

Astonishment turns to horror and she backs away from him, dropping his hand. “You’re fighting your own mother?”

“Yes.”

“Why?”

“You wouldn’t understand. I—”

As if Fate couldn’t deal him a worse hand at a worse moment, his cellphone rings.

It’s Hux.

“What?” he snaps.

“Meet me at the warehouse off pier 14 after sundown. We found him, and without your help unfortunately. Make sure to hide away your little pet so you can actually focus on work tonight.” Hux hangs up.

Kylo stands with the phone still to his ear, processing Hux’s words. They’ve found the priest, which means the First Order is one step closer to finding Luke Skywalker, which brings him one step closer to his ultimate goal. It rattles him. So many centuries spent fighting for this moment. He had felt something akin to it the night on that subway platform but…

Things are different now.

“Kylo. I need to speak with you alone for a moment.”

Following Maz’s voice, he sees that she has walked out into the hallway. He trails after her and closes Rey in the room behind him. The old woman’s eyes crawl from the door to him, irritation evident in her probing gaze.

“What?” he grumbles.

“You belong to her.”

His ears grow hot and he refrains from punching a wall. “I came here to drop this girl off, so she wouldn’t be my problem anymore.”

“Then why not just kill her?”

Maz shakes her head. “The mess you’ve tangled yourself in, Ben Solo.”

“Don’t!” he starts, the sound of his given name making his chest hum with memory. “My name is Kylo Ren.”

She grins. “You’ve never been good at lying, little wolf, but this weakness has taught you well to use the truth as a cloak. Remember that… because that girl in there,” she motions to the door, “will undo you.”

He stands there in silence, face betraying all Maz needs to know.

With a click of her tongue she divulges Rey’s location. “I’ll keep her at my summer vineyard on the north side of town. You remember where it is, yes?”

“God damn it, Maz.” Of course he remembers where it is.

“I’ve something to attend to with Cookie. See to your vampire and I’m sure you can find your own way out when you’re done.”

Presently, Kylo re-enters the room, a very acute and very persistent throb needling at his temples. His body demands sleep, but that would be practically impossible with the conundrum before him. Rey rests on the couch again, hands firmly in her lap and hair pulled haphazardly into a bun. She had done it while he and Maz spoke outside.

And at the sight of him she angrily pulls it loose, her movements jerky with accusation.

He lingers at the door, yearning to speak yet finding only ash on his tongue. He had not meant to reveal the truth about his mother. If he were smart he would have kept his fucking mouth shut. If he were smart he would have brought Rey before Snoke long ago and killed her. He would have washed his hands clean and not thought twice about the strangeness between them. A mirthless smile tugs at his lips. But he is not a smart man. He is a fool.

“So you’re just going to leave me here?” she inquires frigidly.

“It’s safe here. Maz knows plenty of places to hide you.”

“And you just disappear, right? Just like that.” She nods bitterly, the latter part spoken more to herself, as if a confirmation of her own notions.

*You think I’m abandoning you.* He realizes.

*Which would be the logical thing to do.*

All the same, he eliminates the distance between them, bending close to her and hovering. She looks up at him with wide guarded eyes.

“I should leave you here and never see you again.” he says.

The tendons along her throat spasm as she clamps her jaw tight to conceal her hurt, but she cannot hide from him. Kylo reaches out, sure she will reject him, but is rewarded when she does not shy away. The leather feels snug against her skin as his fingers ghost over her abdomen, creeping up her chest and pausing only the briefest of seconds on her breast; then onward, until at last he
reaches the permanent bite mark of the vampire who turned her. The very dead vampire.

She reads the desire in his gaze and her own flares that alluring red. “Leave then.”

He opens his mouth to reply, though stutters a gasp when her hand applies pressure to the crotch of his pants.

“Leave.” she repeats, starting a slow, agonizing friction—up and down, up and down, up…

Heat pools in the cradle of his hips, his balls tingling as his cock twitches eagerly under her rhythm. His left eye twitches with it and he viciously grabs her hand, killing its motion. Unperturbed, her other reaches forward and tugs at his zipper, but he finds he cannot stop that one because his other hand is too close to curling around her neck, her supple, elegant neck. The scar of teeth on her skin is like a hideous blotch on a cherished mural and he disdains it.

*That should be mine.* His wolf rumbles.

Rey unfastens the last button of his pants and spreads open the material, attention fixated on her actions until her touch grazes the outline of his swelling erection and he resists a feral groan. At that she stops, daring a cutting glance up at him.

‘*Leave,*’ her defiance says. ‘*See if you can walk away from me and never come back.*’

*The animal in us makes us do peculiar things,* he muses, but he doubts she will feel all that shameful later. He rather likes this side of her and his dick spasms its own approval as she applies pressure with her palm, beginning the motion again—up, down, up, down…

His eyes blaze, the heat behind them enough to sear every nerve ending in his body and his hand at her throat tightens. She smirks. Unable to take anymore he shoves her forcefully against the couch, relishing the startled yelp from her mouth before he seals it with a dominating kiss. She whimpers as he takes her lower lip between his teeth, biting down just enough to remind her what he is capable of.

“You’re a fiend.” he hisses, nuzzling her hair. “And I’m going to make you pay for it.”

“I trust you’ll keep that promise.” she hisses back.

He dreams of making her pay for it, which only worsens matters. Waking up hours later drenched in sweat and his sheets a mess of his own fluids, he doubts he can withstand much more. The smell of his own arousal is enough to set him off again and he barely forgoes an interlude with his hand, which makes him think of her hand and the way it had touched him.
In the past he sought pleasurable company little, though he had satisfied the body when necessary. This simple method allowed him focus and precision without the baser pulses of carnal need hammering away at his skull. But every tryst had included a member of his own kind. Never a human and most certainly, never a vampire.

Until now…

As he dresses an image flashes in his mind’s eye. An island. He thinks for a moment that perhaps he had dreamed of it, but then it’s gone, like water through a sieve, and he lets it go, hastening out the door for more serious matters.

The pier after sundown is a ghostly bronze cut-out of rectangles and warped lamp poles, distant lights from ships in the harbor winking like polluted stars and ghoulish silhouettes of skyscrapers standing sentinel under the waning moon. He paces the wooden slats with a periodic comb of his fingers through his hair every-now-and-then, wondering to himself about Snoke, about Maul. About everything.

Maul isn’t just after Rey.

He’s after Kylo. He’s after Hux, too.

Snoke trusts no one.

Then why do you trust him to hold up his end of the bargain? A mutinous voice asks. You’re a powerful asset to him, but only as long as you play by his rules. And when have his rules ever not involved only furthering himself? When have his games ever not expended those who were once his allies?

Maz’s words from the traitor resurface: “When you find the compass, destroy it.”

With what little information the First Order has garnered about the compass, they know it to be a star reader, the center lodestone glowing blue at the impending time of specific alignments and magnetic shifts within the Earth’s core. At least, that is what one ancient man’s grimoire details. Kylo only needs it to find Luke. He cares nothing for all the rubbish about magic. Kylo hates magic.

“Stars appear brighter at sea, stronger, and islands are their own universe, a fulcrum of existence surrounded by salt and liquid. Sometimes the stars align in just the right place at exactly the right time, and a door opens.” The phrase from his mother worms its way through his mind.

His train of thought is rudely interrupted by a familiar scent on the breeze and his feet grind to a loud halt.

“Early. How sensible of you.” the redhead drawls.

Kylo rolls his eyes over his shoulder. “Let’s get this done with. I don’t have all night.”

“Obviously.”

Ignoring the word’s connotation, Kylo shoulders past Hux toward the warehouse, his ears abnormally warm. Hux hurriedly saunters ahead of him and beats him to the door, deliberately allowing it to close in Kylo’s face to maybe break his nose. And it would have if Kylo hadn’t caught it in time. He glares at the bastard’s obnoxious back, fantasizing quite literally about
ripping the vampire’s spine out through his ass.

Silas and Cadoc sit with Ruelle among a set of old rotting conveyor belts and machines. His youngest of the pack meets his eyes and the two share a secret conversation. Satisfied with the outcome, she settles back down in her spot. Across the way a terrible scream suddenly erupts into the stillness, echoing off the rafters and vibrating up through Kylo’s bones.

Lor San Tekka.

“The triplets have already started.” Hux alerts him. “Though I suggest you get in there before they make any further interrogation impossible. I want information. After that, your mongrels can do as they please with his corpse.”

Kylo makes no reply and heads straight for the room, the stink of blood and piss heavy in the air. This warehouse had once been a factory for processing cattle and the room they currently have the prisoner housed had been a shower area for the workers. The irony isn’t lost on Kylo and he enters with a stony face.

Tekka sits at the very center of the room in a rusted metal chair with one of the triplets cradling his bruised and glistening face. The triplet’s fingers smear blood and spital down along his chin and back up over his slack lips in a luridly sexual way, shoving two fingers inside the old man’s mouth as if he were a fish caught on a hook. Another of the triplets has Tekka’s foot propped on an old table scattered with tools, each one baptized in red.

“We’ve softened him up for you.” the last triplet murmurs from the opposite corner of the room, malignant eyes ghostly in the frail light.

Kylo nods, studying the extent of the damage with a chilly expression: glass glittering from one weeping eye socket, broken knuckles smashed so hard they can’t bruise fast enough, an exposed splinter of bone at his shin, a missing earlobe, not to mention all the blood. He inhales carefully through his nose and maintains his mask of indifference, but the room smells like slaughter and his wolf loves it.

Maintain control.

He steps forward in front of the prisoner. The two of the triplets back away to their fellow sibling waiting in the corner. Tekka’s head tumbles forward and wet chokes fill the room.

“Where is the compass?”

The old man stares at him with his one remaining eye.

“Don’t make me ask again.”

No reply. Only that stare.

“We only just started with him, master. Humans are quite fragile. He doesn’t have much fight left.” one of the triplets says, grinning.

“Leave me alone with him.” Kylo orders.

The three share a look between them, each face serene and blank, before obeying his command. As the door clicks shut behind them he counts himself lucky at least to talk to this man alone without the interference of neither Hux nor his pack. A fresh wave of something pungent wafts up to him and Kylo realizes with a touch of pity that the old man has shit himself. It isn’t surprising
considering the trauma already done to his body.

Kylo walks closer, towering over him. “You can make this easier on yourself and give me what I want instead of prolonging your suffering. One way or another, I will get what I want.”

He smiles, or at least he attempts to. The nerves in his face seem to malfunction and instead of a smile he manages an offensive grimace. “Your mother would be so proud wouldn’t she?” he gurgles.

Kylo stiffens. “Don’t test me, priest.”

“You would kill me, then? For the compass?” he inquires with a touch of sarcasm.

Kylo grasps his chin, fingers digging into bone. “I’ve killed a lot more for a lot less.”


“They got in my way.” His statement is cold and emotionless.

The old man’s one watery eye stares up at him in pity. “No. They got in Snoke’s way. You’re nothing more than his blunt instrument.”

The assertion hits Kylo like a freight train, but he conceals the shock from his face. Each word digs into him nonetheless, a thorn working its way down deeper and deeper. Regathering his wits, he moves his opposite hand to cradle Tekka’s cheek, thumb dangerously close to the injured eye socket. “Where is the compass?”

Tekka’s eyelids tremble and he instinctively tries to pull away, but Kylo’s grip is steel.

“You helped General Organa decades ago and she in turn helped fake your death, didn’t she? Meaning you’re still a loyal ally.” Kylo’s thumb caresses the tears of blood beneath his eye, sensing his spike of fear rising. “The compass is hidden somewhere. If you’d been able to give it to the Resistance we’d have known. Where is it?”

“I am loyal to the protection of this world. You are more than Snoke’s loyal dog and you know better than to go looking for Luke Skywalker.” Tekka finally murmurs, saliva dribbling off his chin.

“The compass.” Kylo says flatly, his thumb resting on the protruding slivers of glass.

Tekka’s eyelids spasm, but he holds firm. “I know where you come from. I know the pains you’ve suffered—”

“You know nothing about me!” Kylo snarls in his face, so close he can see the spidery capillaries across the old skin. “Now. The compass. Where is it? Tell me and I will kill you quickly.”

Tekka blinks slowly, resolute. “No.”

Very well. Kylo plunges his thumb into the gory socket of the man’s eye and Tekka chokes back a startled scream, his body seizing with agony as fresh hot blood seeps over Kylo’s gloved hand. His screams only intensify when Kylo’s other hand reaches for the exposed bone in the man’s leg, pulling it until he hears another satisfying snap.

“Where?!” Kylo demands.

Tekka shakes his head, though he appears more to be writhing.
“WHERE??!”

“Noooo!”

“WHERE IS IT?!”

Gurgled wailing.

“TELL ME!”

“N—no—AHHHHHH!”

Kylo grabs his skull with both hands in a ruthless grip, feeling the blood vessels pounding even through his gloves. Any more pressure and the man’s head will pop like a balloon. “TELL ME NOW!”

“Please! I—”

“NOW!”

“A hunter!”

Kylo stops, the cloud of rage diminishing. “What?”

“A hunter. He’s had it all along. I tried to—to talk him into giving it to me, but”—Tekka coughs hoarsely—“he refused.”

“I want his name.”

“Dameron. Poe Dameron.” he heaves with a wet sigh, his body utterly broken.

Kylo nods and steps back, preparing to deal the death blow when Tekka’s next words give him pause.

“Your mother forgave you a long time ago.”

Rage flares anew and the second, and final satisfying snap is the old priest’s neck breaking.
Chapter End Notes

PLEASE REMEMBER TO LEAVE ME SOME FEEDBACK!
CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM IS WELCOME!
FOLLOW ME ON TWITTER IF YOU WISH!
ALSO CHECK OUT THE LIVE TWEET THREAD WHERE I DO PROGRESS
FOOTNOTES/UPDATES!
A/N: In a rush, so I'll add the quote for this chapter later! Also, thank you so much for all the support!!!! I'm so happy to have this story rolling along, because I'd had trouble with the plot, but now things are finally moving and I'm gonna see this story to its completion. ;) And you can thank Rey for the fellatio. It was her idea, I swear to God! Full contact smut in 5, 4, 3, 2...

** And I made another graphic for this project cause reasons. It's at the bottom of this chapter.

See the end of the chapter for more notes
It’s fucking cold. Either werewolves run hot, or Ruelle likes to wear skimpy clothing for the pure purpose of walking around with indefinitely hardened nipples. Thankfully Maz had a change of clothing for Rey once they’d reached her summer vineyard which, simply put, looked more like a villa from some fairy tale painting. In love, Rey was irrevocably in love.

She currently stands in the sprawling sun room watching as the sun begins to crest the horizon. She only escapes back into darkness when the stinging of her skin becomes too much to bear and Maz leads her to one of the many bedrooms, this one without windows.

“I can bring you something to eat for the hunger, but it won’t help much. I’ll have your boyfriend bring some blood bags over for you.” Maz says.

Rey shakes her head. “He isn’t my boyfriend. We just...” Just what exactly?

“You’ve no reason to cling to flimsy lies, especially with a target on your back. Accept what’s real and you may yet survive.” With that, Maz disappears down the hall.

Rey looks on bearing a hint of jealousy as the old witch walks through the soft rays of sunlight coming in from the windows, her deep-colored skin made richer by the day’s radiance. She returns a moment later with a PB&J sandwich, Rey’s favorite. A part of Rey wonders if this is happenstance or Maz had sensed her preference somehow. Not that it matters. She starts in on the sandwich with haste, cramming as much into her mouth as she can in one bite.

She even has strawberry jelly. Not grape. Rey stops mid-bite, glancing at the woman dubiously.

Maz smirks, letting Rey make of the expression what she will. “You should sleep. This ordeal has taken a lot of you.”
Sleep. Her body desires it, of course, but the underlying stab of guilt over not finding a way to Paige and Rose burrows into her chest. Perhaps... “Did Kylo say when he’d come here?”

“No.”

Rey isn’t surprised, but the thought remains in her mind. One way or another, she will get to their apartment. She will see it for herself, assassins and threats of death be damned. Then, she will convince Kylo to help her. No way would she leave her family alone to die. No fucking way.

“Sleep well, child.” Maz whispers, the door closing behind her and snuffing out the light.

Memories of Paige flood Rey’s mind as she lies down, warm images of summer afternoons walking the harbor, chilly evenings of autumn and the three of them trick-or-treating despite their age, nights of Rose lying sick in her bed and Paige never leaving her side, their shared lunches at Dex’s Diner across from Rosewater Park. Rey recalls them all and her throat aches from unshed tears.

“I’ll find you. Even if it kills me.”

She repeats these words, over and over like a prayer from her lips until at last the darkness claims her. But the darkness does not last for long. Too soon she is dreaming of an imposing, hooded figure materializing from the void and an island.

An island with a door.

“You said you were neutral in all this. What did you mean by that?”

Maz glances over at her from a shelf of moon flowers and sets her watering can on an empty space beside them. Above the lessening moon gives little glow tonight and the lesser stars contest to shine the brighter through the glass roof of the greenhouse.

“How old do you think I am?”

The question throws Rey. “Fifty?”

She laughs. “Try one thousand.”

If Rey had been standing she’d be on her ass right now. “A thousand years old? No way. That’s impossible.”

“A few months ago werewolves and vampires were impossible to you.” Maz counters. “The humans of today do not possess the luxury of longevity like those of us from the previous age.
There was a time when humans lived for thousands of years in a single life span, you know. Far back into the unknown eons before the current histories. Much of that time has been forgotten, however.

“Were immortal like Kylo… and me?” Rey asks.

She laughs again. “This will come as a further shock to you, but vampires and werewolves are a rather young species compared to the world, by about seven hundred years.”

“How old is Kylo?”

“Six hundred. Give or take.”

Rey sinks back in her chair, processing the old witch’s words.

“His mother bore him from a human mate, a man she loved with all her heart.” Maz continues.

“Then why is Kylo in a war against her?” Rey shakes her head incredulously.

“You asked why I am neutral. I am neutral because what started this war was a creature both sides of the night desired to destroy. He was our true enemy, but Snoke saw fit to turn a son against his family and cloud the alliance which had existed between both species.”

“Alliance?”

Maz stares at her for a long time. “Ask Kylo.”

The two drift off into silence and Rey looks back up at the moon, staring until her vision blurs and the gossamer rays bleed out over her periphery. Ask Kylo. There is a lot she could ask him about this world they now share, but the main question on her mind has to do with trust. The sexual tension between them is difficult enough without her feeling the whiplash of each new situation he brings. Kylo Ren is an enigma, yet there is one thing she does know for sure. He wants her as equally as she wants him. Maybe more. And that complicates matters for both of them.

Maz’s voice breaks her from her thoughts. “I have a question of my own.”

Rey lifts a quizzical brow, intrigued. “Yeah?”

“Why don’t you carry a cellphone?”

She almost laughs at the randomness of the question. “Honestly? I don’t like them. Never did. I kinda enjoy the ability to just disappear, no one knowing where I’ve gone. Another upside, it made things harder for my boss to find me when I wasn’t at work.”

Maz lets out a mirthful guffaw. “I’d have thought you’d give me the simple answer and say you couldn’t afford one. But I like yours better.”

Rey chuckles with her, shaking her head goodnaturedly. Lying and giving the simple answer would have been easier, but, to be honest, she has always prided herself in not carrying one. Rey supposes it is merely for the sake of being different. Nothing deep or special, just basic defiance. And it’s that defiance that all at once gives her an idea, one she should have thought of days ago. Her eyes widen with the realization of it, but she will have to wait. Asking Kylo outright would earn her a swift and unyielding ‘No’.

She will wait.
Rey attempts to stir their conversation back towards her conundrum. “What do you know of this Darth Maul?”

The warmth instantly leeches from Maz’s expression. “He is an abomination.”

“He’s an Elder Kylo had said. What does that mean?”

“It means he is one of the few turned by the progenitor, but make no mistake, Rey, he was no friend of Luke Skywalker.”

“Then why turn him?” Rey wonders aloud.

Maz shakes her head. “No one knows. There are only stories and legends.”

Why would Luke Skywalker turn this Darth Maul figure if he was an enemy to him? And more importantly, why would the father of vampires disappear? This feud between vampires and werewolves seems more convoluted with each coming night she learns more about it.

*Nothing makes sense.*

Silence falls over them again and Rey lets it persist this time, searching the constellations in the sky while Maz tends to her flowers. Whatever had happened all those centuries ago had ripped apart a family and Rey finds herself sympathizing with Leia Organa a little. She wonders about Kylo, what he was like before all this, why he had chosen to stand with Snoke, someone who obviously betrayed Kylo’s own blood. *Why?*

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The next night Ruelle arrives with several bags slung over her shoulder exiting what can only be her car, a sleek 1967 Chevy Impala, Marina Blue. It fits her. Perfectly.

Maz had left earlier that morning while Rey slept. Rey had found her note in the sun room, giving one unconditional instruction: remain at the residence. Do *not* leave. Maz also noted that she would check on Rey again in three days. Until then, Rey had full run of the house.

Rey, to be quite frank, finds the entire situation uncomfortable. This is not her house, yet here she is… house-sitting, for lack of a better word.

Ruelle bustles through the front door wearing a singularly chafed expression, stopping in the foyer and throwing the bags at Rey’s feet.

“There you go, *empress*.” she grumbles.

Rey stares down at the shiny lumps. “What are these for?”
“You tell Kylo you can buy your own fucking wardrobe. I’ve got a social life, too, in case either of you have forgotten.”

“What the hell did he do?” Rey gapes down at the names printed across the bags. They are high end names she recognizes from some of the most elite stores in town.

Despite her attitude, Ruelle smirks. “Guess he likes you better in black.”

“I’d be just fine with my clothes from my apartment.”

“Too bad then that your landlord threw out what of your belongings he couldn’t sell.”

“He did what?!” she shrieks. Rey can’t help it. She knows she shouldn’t be surprised, but it still hits her like a freight train. That was her property. Her belongings.

“Yeah. So that,” Ruelle points to the floor, “is all you’ve got, buttercup.”

Rey finds herself too devastated to fire back, instead walking away into another room and leaving the bags on the floor. It should have already occurred to her that her human life evaporated the night that vampire sank his fangs into her throat, but she could not have prepared herself for the minutiae of it. Resisting the urge to bite another human is difficult enough and because of that she has not been given the necessary time to process how swiftly and thoroughly her previous life is slipping between her fingers.

Her home, her possessions… her family. If only fate would allow her but one thing from her past to survive, she prays for it to be her family.

Ruelle’s boots sound across the hardwood floor as she approaches. Rey ignores her, leaning against the window frame in the living area and staring out across a meadow to a small gazebo near the lake.

“You get used to it.” Ruelle whispers, coming up beside her and looking out the window.

Rey shakes her head.

“It took me over a century to forgive Kylo. It took me another to forgive myself.”

“Why did Kylo turn you?” Rey asks, peering at the knight from the corner of her eye.

Ruelle bites the inside of her cheek, gaze going distant and hazy. Only after an eternity does she speak, voice stiff and formal. “I was offered… as a sacrifice.”

The revelation throws Rey and she gapes at her. “A sacrifice?”

Crossing her arms, Ruelle scoffs, looking up at the moon. “Superstition can be a deadly pyre, especially to a young maiden who is the last born of her house among a number of siblings. Her absence would scarcely be felt, would you not agree?”

Rey faces her fully. “What’re you saying?”

Forbidden candor reflects in those gray-gold daggers. “I am saying be content you never knew your parents. The limits of a parent’s love for an unwanted child and the limitless once those confines are broken…” she trails off, wetness shivering in her lashes. “They make you long to be anyone but who you are.”

Rey reacts belatedly, her hand covering her mouth in disconcerted shock as understanding creeps
over her like an unwanted tide of foul, briny water. All the indicators are there, from Ruelle’s altered posture to her tone, to her dialect; how the proper use of non-compound words and lack of foul language stick out like sore thumbs. Here is a girl who loathed her past and became a chameleon, yet still, she is bound by the enduring shackles of that past. Rey’s eyes drift up to the darkened roots peeking out from under the pink dye Ruelle so diligently maintains and newfound kinship pours from Rey’s heart.

“Dabria.” Ruelle whispers.

“What?”

“That was the name Kylo Ren had given me the night he made me. Dabria Ren.”

“Why not go by that name, then?” Rey frowns.

A mordant smirk curls Ruelle’s lips. “I’m sentimental. Take it from me, sunshine, some things will never change.”

The two fall into companionable silence as Rey ponders over her words. She can sense the love Ruelle has for Kylo, far deeper than worship and much less fickle than base animal erotic fancy. To her, Kylo is family. Rey smiles, feeling, for the time being, like herself.

“I wasn’t planning on telling you this. At least not yet.” Ruelle reveals.

“Then why do it?”

“Because you matter to Kylo. He trusts you. And since he trusts you, I trust you. Just don’t fuck it up, because then I’ll have to kill you and break my master’s heart.”

Despite the knight’s seriousness Rey finds herself laughing, a low chortling simmer in her chest that turns loud and uncouth, echoing off the walls in piercing gaiety. She laughs so hard tears form in her eyes and her jaw throbs, but it feels good. For a moment, everything feels good, even the hunger. Speaking of the hunger—

“Maz said Kylo would bring by some…” she scowls, not wanting to say the it, but forcing it out anyway, “blood bags.”

Ruelle eyes her cryptically. “That’s not the only thing he’s bringing.”

“What do you mean?”

Ruelle looks back out the window, mischief evident in her eyes. “You’ll see.”
Kylo arrives a few hours later after Ruelle leaves and Rey falls to her knees. Tears of joy spring from her eyes as she watches Bodhi exit the back seat of his car, tail stiff and ears pinned back. She calls out to him from the front door and his head jerks in her direction, a bark of excitement piercing the stillness. Her arms open up to him as he starts for her, tongue lolling over his chops, but a second later he stops dead in his tracks.

“Bodhi. Come here, boy! It’s me!” she calls.

An ice pick runs through her heart at the sound of his growl, low and dangerous in the back of his throat.

“Bodhi. It’s me. It’s Rey.” she inches closer on her knees.

The animal shakes its head and jumps forward in a show of warning, lips peeled back over shining teeth. He barks, louder and darker, eyes glittering like pinpricks of starlight.

Rey swallows an agonizing lump in her throat. He doesn’t know me. I don’t smell the same to him. I’m a stranger, a monster he fears. And a part of her knows he is right to fear her, for she can smell the heat of his body, the thick scent of flesh… and the blood that pumps beneath.

She bites down hard on her lower lip, remembering her fangs only after she has broken the skin. Her vision blurs with her tears and she relinquishes a pathetic sob. It isn’t fair. None of it is —

A gloved hand caresses her cheek and she opens her eyes, looking up into the face of Kylo. His expression remains an imperceptible shadow as he lowers himself down on his hunches.

“Where did you find him?” she asks.

“I happened to see him wandering the streets. He was looking for you.”

She laughs sardonically. “Who he’s looking for is gone.”

He stares at her for a breath, considering a secret thought. Then, he stands, offering her his hand.

“Come inside.”

She takes it, following after him obediently, though pauses when he ignores the front door.

“Leave it open.” he says over his shoulder, a curious twinkle in his eye.

Rey purses her lips, but does not question him and takes a seat on one of the couches. Kylo walks over to the window where she had stood only hours before, glancing off-handedly at the pile of unchecked bags in one of the seats adjacent to Rey before looking back out the window.

He clears his throat. “So, you’ve not tried any of them on yet?”

“They’re very nice.” She smiles half-heartedly as she wipes her cheeks. “I just… They’re expensive. Spending that kind of money for clothes was unnecessary.”

“I didn’t purchase them because they were necessary. I purchased them as a gift.” His tone is polite, though she senses an underlying note of frustration.

“I’m sorry.”

“What did I say about apologizing?”
She exhales in an abrupt rush of anger. “Damn it! I said I was sorry and I can say I’m sorry if I fucking want! I’m sorry! I’m sorry that I’m sorry and I’m sorry that you’re in this mess and I’m sorry—”

“Rey.”

His whisper stills her tongue, reverberating through her ears louder than a crack of thunder and her heart twitters in her chest, a desperate bird hungry for the sky.

Slowly, he turns, devil’s gold anchoring her to her seat. “Please stop.”

Why does he bare the look of a man in desperate need of penance? His gaze betrays him, raw and charged with hidden meaning. It frightens her, because after everything she has endured she understands that expression. She has seen it countless times on her own reflection as she relived the sick thrill she’d felt when biting that nameless human whose face she scarcely remembers. That, she decides, is the greatest punishment. The faceless victim. They haunt your thoughts, waiting for the quiet moments when you least expect it. Then, they sink back into the shadows, content to remain there until your next quiet reverie.

Kylo approaches her, reaching for something he carries in his other hand—the zipper of a small black cooler. She had not noticed it before. From under the ice he pulls out a fresh bag of dark, glistening crimson and her mouth waters.

“You need to feed.” he offers it to her.

She receives the bag, frowning at how cold its content feels, yet taking the tube screwed on its top and putting it to her lips nonetheless. The second its coppery tang hits her tongue all care for its frigid temperature dissipates and she swallows it down in big savory gulps. A contented sigh escapes her lips at the last squeezed contents and she reaches for another, Kylo extending his arm forward and placing the cooler at her feet.

He leaves her, walking back to the window and staring impassively out at the murky line of trees as Rey hastily finishes her second bag, licking her lips and wiping a stray trickle of blood from her chin. She studies him, from the way his hands hang in his coat pockets to the wayward strands of ebony casting shadows over his face.

“Why are you standing over there?” she asks softly.

He doesn’t look at her, relenting a heavy sigh. “I should leave.”

Her hackles rise at once. “You should stay.” The authority in her tone startles even her and the two lock eyes.

Rey sees many things there she does not yet wish to address and she tries to quell the building storm in her chest at the intensity radiating between them, willing her focus on the simplest of things: What do I want this very moment?

Control, a dark side of her answers. Give me control.

Following on the voice’s heels, she recalls Kylo’s tone as he’d sworn he would make her pay at Heaven’s Night, how her body had responded so willingly, the wetness gathering between her legs and her cunt crying in earnest. But not tonight, the dark voice croons. Tonight will be about control.

Rey tucks her lip between her teeth, fangs glinting. “Come here.” she whispers.
He obeys her without question, her tender command hanging in the air around them as the heat draws to her eyes, igniting them an enticing ruby. He stops at her knees, looking down over her face to her neck and a smirk threatens the corners of her mouth. She rises to her feet, slow and purposeful, forcing his eyes back to hers as she steps aside and points to where she sat. He considers her, a veiled emotion toying with his lips.

Rey’s tone deepens. “Sit.”

Kylo opens his mouth as if to protest, eyebrows ticking up to his hairline, but whatever waits poised on his tongue dies the instant she reaches between his legs, planting her hand firmly on his groin. He inhales sharply, nostrils flaring.

“I said sit.”

His compliance is careful and attentive, watching her every breath as he sinks purposefully down onto the cushions. His hands rest over his knees, stiff and ready to react should she try his limits too far. The demon in her purrs at the thought. She will be pushing his limits tonight, beyond any doubt.

“Good boy.” she breathes, knowing her words will spark a challenge in him.

And they do. She can see it by the sudden flush of anger in his face, but she redirects that rush of emotion the moment her mouth slants over his, savagely claiming him in a way her human self never dreamed. Her hands work at his trousers with reckless impatience, undoing them and tugging them downward. He assists her efforts by lifting his hips, but his hands are too eagerly crawling up her shirt to by of any help. Too soon, however, she pushes them away and parts from him, earning her a frustrated growl.

“Stay.”

“Don’t command me like a dog.” he retorts crossly.

“You’re not a dog.” Rey whispers, kneeling down and pushing his shirt up to nuzzle the hard planes of his abdomen. His hands try to find purchase on the couch, digging into the plush material as she tastes the flesh below his navel, nipping and raking her teeth until his hips writhe. She smiles, glancing up at him. “I think you like being told what to do, though.”

He raises an eyebrow, chest unsteady. “Do you?”

“Mm-hm.” she nods, curling her fingers under the hem of his boxers.

His tongue darts out, painting over his upper lip as he watches her and for a moment her stomach flutters with unease. Twice she has attempted this endeavor in her human life and both times were not exactly successful, but they had taught her at least something about the male anatomy. And tonight is not about fear, it is about control. She looks at the growing erection tenting his boxers and decisively pulls the garment down. Her eyes go wide with mild surprise at first sight of it, awed by its size. She had expected as much after touching him but...

Her core throbs in response and she feels fresh slick pool between her legs.

Kylo groans, inhaling the scent of her arousal like a man desperate for air, that glorious upper lip peeling back in a needy grimace. But he won’t move, not without her say-so and that is the unspoken agreement for tonight. She can read it in his eyes and the conviction there devastates her.

“... you matter to Kylo. He trusts you. And since he trusts you, I trust you...” Ruelle’s words
murmur at the back of her mind.

Shoving that train of thought away, she fixates solely on the animal need pulsing through her blood and leans forward, placing a chaste kiss on the tip of his cock. His exhales, teeth clamped tight as she begins her work with her hands, first bringing them up to her mouth and wetting them with her tongue, eyes never leaving his as she does; then, stacking both along his length, curling her fingers in a gentle grip while she brings the head to her lips for a second kiss, this one far less innocuous.

His boots plant firmly on the floor and his hips shift, threatening to pitch forward into her mouth as she lavishes him with forceful swipes of her tongue, but he refrains, his cheeks flushed and eyes glittering.

He is beautiful this way, trapped and wanton beneath her, and Rey finds she might want to keep him like this forever. Mine, her mind croons. Forever.

Her fangs glide dangerously over his engorged flesh, like the faintest scrape of fingernails and Kylo throws back his head with a hiss. She rewards him by taking him deeper into her mouth and swallowing, the action enveloping him in wet undulating heat and he gives an encouraging moan.

“Faster.” he pants.

She obliges him, sinking further over his cock until she feels its head nudge the back of her throat, the pressure causing tears at the corners of her eyes. His hips nudge her encouragingly, every ounce of control she can feel trembling through his body and her cunt clenches as her nails dig savagely into the tender flesh of his thighs.

“Rey!” he calls out, hands finally snatching hold of her and kneading her hair, tangling the ponytail, pulling it loose entirely and forcing her head down.

She opens as much as she can for him, feeling her air passage protest and more tears trickle over her cheeks, but she keeps her breathing steady, humming encouragingly as his tip hits the back of her throat again. Her hands at the base of his shaft twist, pumping faster and faster. He yanks viciously at her hair, gritting out incoherent words of praise as she swallows and sucks with abandon, driving him to the point of feral madness before cupping his balls and making his whole body spasm.

Her name tumbles brokenly from his mouth and her insides sing with desire, the wetness between her legs making even the slightest movement send jolts of ecstasy up her spine. The heady sensation of power renders her brain an electric fog of delicious confusion, her only anchor being the building cadence of her lover’s growling moans.

She can almost feel exactly what he wants, she thinks, reacting to him in near perfect harmony. A deeper, though much hazier notion crosses her addled mind. We’re one. Somehow...

“Rey I can’t—”

And she knows he won’t be able to hold out much longer.

Settling back on her folded legs, she sucks off his head with a lewd pop, earning her a shocked hiss. He looks down at her like a wild predator surveying a demure prey animal, feverish with the abrupt need to take and leave nothing left. Though all the while her hooded eyes guide him, drawing him up like a marionette on strings and towering him over her.

She drops her lashes to observe the state of his arousal with deadly thrill and murmurs. “Mark me.”
Kylo’s gaze flashes and he needs not a second invitation. He grabs her head with both hands and sheathes himself in her mouth with force enough to make her choke, but she takes him completely, delighting in the chaotic roll and jerk of his pace. Saliva drips from her chin as she absorbs the sounds they make with each incoming thrust, Kylo not even bothering to mind her fangs, anymore… and she wants to bite him. The desire to do so fills her with such urgency she nearly clamps down on instinct, but thankfully remembers herself at the last second.

He feels it, too.

She can sense it in his movements, the unbridled pistoning of his hips as he hits the back of her throat, fucking her mouth like she never knew she wanted him to. He doesn’t even care. A deep moan escapes her chest at the sudden realization, vibrating up her throat and causing Kylo’s eyes to roll back. Her name rumbles from his lips and she rubs her thighs together, needing that slick friction.

The sounds of the room alone are enough to make her come and she paints possessive red lines down his exposed hips with biting nails.

“Fuck!” he howls, throwing his head back.

Her lungs burn for oxygen but she knows he’s close to losing control and she wants to take him there, to send him over the edge into a fiery chasm of pandemonium and delicious sensation. The very thought of marking her with his spend echoes in his mind like a drum. She can feel it pulsing through her own and it makes her entire body quake with need, her cunt begging for attention. He pulls back and takes his cock in his hand, pumping it hard and fast as he comes. Rey stares up at him with her mouth open as he loses himself, his spend dotting across her cheek and neck in dainty opalescent ropes, covering the mark of her maker like precious pearls.

His glowing eyes are several shades too dark, almost black in gold, and radiating a wanton reverence so fathomless she could be staring into a sea of stars. Before she can react he hoists her up to her feet, ripping his shirt over his head and padding her face clean, though leaving her neck. She smirks at him and he kisses her, his tongue sampling every corner of her mouth. He relishes his taste on her.

“Thank you.” she says against his lips.

He nods, his forehead brushing her hairline. “But I should be thanking you.”
She laughs. “Later.”

“Later.” he agrees, the devilish edge in his tone sparking a dark tingle through her core.

Despite that the sense of control from this experience is enough to leave her on high for weeks, making her forget for a moment all that lies below her. It’s a wonderful feeling, to forget. If only for a little while.

Kylo pulls her with him as he sinks back onto the couch, tucking her in his lap and securing his arms around her in sweltering warmth. She nuzzles his chest, resting her ear against his slowing heartbeat and neither of them speak. He falls asleep this way, head resting on the cushioned back of the couch and Rey’s fingers teasing the stubble on his chin.

She lingers as long as the night permits her, but the sun soon rises and she must retreat to the confines of her room, sheltered by the darkness.
Chapter End Notes

PLEASE REMEMBER TO LEAVE ME SOME FEEDBACK!
CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM IS WELCOME!
FOLLOW ME ON TWITTER IF YOU WISH!
ALSO CHECK OUT THE LIVE TWEET THREAD WHERE I DO PROGRESS FOOTNOTES/UPDATES!

Extra Notes & Links:
- Dabria Ren = dae - bria [a name for one of the Angels of Death]
- Inspiration For Maz's Villa
- Ruelle's 1967 Marina Blue Chevy Impala
A/N: Okay. Time to cool down from the last chapter. Lol! So near to the end and we're about to take this ride to its peak! I'm super excited to share what's in store. 😊 And if you're interested, I've another Reylo project up and coming, a dark LotR A/B/O AU, Oathbreaker. As far as this chapter goes, Hux is precious to me, okay. I couldn't just leave him some one-dimensional villain. I love him too much.

**SONG INSPIRATION:** Personal Jesus - Marilyn Manson (Supremacy Mansion scene) & In the Androgynous Dark - Brambles (mood for the final scene and Kylo's current state of mind)

**CHAPTER WARNINGS:**
- profanity
- graphic depictions of blood and gore, heavy violence
- child death, referenced child murder & mutilation

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

“So break yourself against my stones,
And spit your pity in my soul.
You never needed any help.
You sold me out to save yourself.”

- Snuff / Slipknot
Kylo wakes to a blinding ray of honeyed sunlight slicing through his eyelids. He blinks, shielding his face and glancing around himself. Memories come back to him with creeping slowness and he takes in his practically naked appearance. A blanket had been thrown over his legs he supposed for decency should the owner of the villa come in and find him sprawled out like a king on her sofa where he had been given one hell of a blowjob last night.

He doubts very highly that Maz would appreciate knowing her furniture had been the victim of a vampire-werewolf consummation. Well… almost. If he hadn’t felt Rey’s need for control outweighing her desire to have him throw her against the nearby coffee table and fuck her into oblivion he would have acted upon it. And she’d nearly bitten him last night, too. The thought should fill him with instinctive unease, but it does not. It thrills him.

And after that?

He had never felt such a desire to keep her near, to drag her down on him and press her to his chest with such possessive vigor. Mine, his mind had echoed over and over. She probably did not realize it at the time, but the urge to shift had nearly overtaken him. Her infernal titillation had woken the beast in him so utterly it had taken all his willpower and strength just to hold onto her.

After the last two days, Kylo is surprised the desire to shift only surfaced last night when the pressure from Snoke, Hux and now Maul has steadily grown on his shoulders for weeks. It’s enough to make him want to forfeit all he knows and spirit Rey away to some far off wilderness where they are masters all their own and he can fuck her every minute of every night until the sun comes up. Then he can hunt. He needs a good hunt.

Escape.

He craves it.

In the throes of their passion she had sensed it somehow. Hell, he had felt her in his mind last night, had he not? Not tangible or clear, but somehow visceral. The epiphany arouses a touch of fear in his chest and he locks it away somewhere deep inside. For later.

Tough all too soon, his thoughts shift to Skywalker and everything snaps back into prospective. He cannot leave with Rey, no matter how much he wishes he could. He has unfinished business. Snoke promised him centuries ago he would have vengeance and Kylo intends to collect. But after that maybe…

He gets up, his choice made.

After he kills Luke, after all of it is over he will take Rey and run. They could disappear. It’s not impossible. Snoke would be stung by his betrayal of not only keeping Rey alive but also keeping her a secret from him; just the same, they could make it. He has lived close to the old predator for too long not to know his methods and moods. Though would Rey be willing to run?
The question leaves him heavier than he initially realizes and he walks about the halls, looking for a distraction. One quick check alerts him that Rey had placed the blood bags in the fridge and set the cooler by the front door for him before heading to her room. Further down the hall behind a darkened bend he finds a closed door and Bodhi sitting patiently in front of it. The ghost of Rey’s scent surrounds him and he gazes down at the canine with mild distaste.

“You’re lucky I found you.” he mumbles.

The animal returns the pointed look, ears pricked forward and tail twitching in annoyance. Kylo breaks eye contact to stare up at the door and earns an aggressive warning. He rolls his eyes.

“You’re pushing your luck.”

Bodhi’s lips peel back, showing off those big shiny teeth.

He was lucky to be alive after those same flashy teeth had ripped into Hux’s worthless shoulder. Kylo had assumed the animal dead, to be quite honest, and when discovering him on the streets Kylo had refused to leave him filthy, alone and limping. Ruelle herself had lacked the necessary enthusiasm when attending to the combative animal’s injuries and needed bath. At least Kylo got a few minutes of satisfied humor out of it.

With one last glance at Rey’s door Kylo turns and heads outside, locking up the house behind him and mentally preparing himself for the day and night ahead.

Silas and Cadoc are unexpectedly waiting in front of his apartment door when he arrives at his building. He greets them with a terse nod, masking his mild surprise and letting himself in. They follow closely on his heels, a shared look of anticipation creasing the corners of their eyes. They’ve spent the last twenty four hours with the triplets interrogating the Resistance wolf, Jessika Pava, and by the lingering evidence of blood splatter on Cadoc’s knuckles Kylo would be wise to assume no known location for Poe Dameron has been beaten out of her.

Not even the Resistance knows where he has disappeared to after Tekka’s capture and subsequent death. Kylo’s hands flex at the memory of taking the old priest’s life, unsettled suddenly by a feeling of repugnance. He swallows the bitter taste of it and pushes the memory away.

“Where is Dabria?” Silas asks.

Both he and Cadoc stop in the middle of the living area, glancing offhandedly into the open door of his room to the plaque holding his ancient sword. The rubies glint boldly in the sunlight. By now, Kylo hopes that Rey’s scent has largely faded from the apartment, especially with the added musk of burning candles.

“I sent her to the hospital with the other Tico girl. There is a possibility the cop might show up and
I don’t want the Resistance getting ahead of us.” Kylo answers.

Cadoc shakes his head. “He’s not just some cop. He is a hunter. I doubt he will be going back to the human even if she woke up to give him answers. He got what he needed from Tekka.”

Hunters. Kylo has seen few of them and killed fewer. For humans they are formidable dealers of death that both vampires and werewolves spend much of their time avoiding. The first hunters were began by an ancient monk from the foreign mountains halfway across the world, a practitioner of white magic known only as Obi-Wan. History goes that before the war between immortals began, another war was being waged, one against a far more deadly adversary, a hellish sorcerer known as Darth Sidious.

That is what Kylo’s mother and uncle would have had him believe, and he had… until the truth found him.

Cadoc approaches, his gnarled leather face twisted in agitation. “With what we’ve gathered from the Resistance bitch we know Dameron isn’t on a normal hunt. Silas dug a little deeper and found that his records show he hasn’t even been on the city’s police force for more than five months. Beyond forged transcripts and a false birth certificate all record of him disappears entirely. No link to parentage, affiliation with other hunting guilds, nothing. We don’t even know if Poe Dameron is or isn’t his real name.”

Kylo frowns. “What is he after?” He whispers the question more to himself than anyone.

“It’s possible he’s after Snoke. He could be drawing him out to kill him.” Silas postulates.

Cadoc scoffs at such an absurd notion. “No hunter would be stupid enough to try, especially one on his own.”

Kylo considers both statements carefully. Snoke being the hunter’s target would not only be a suicide mission, but a failed one. And hunters are solitary for the most part. There has not been an organized guild strong enough to take on the entirety of the immortal world for the better part of three centuries.

“But there is the upcoming celebration of Red Masque.” Silas argues. “Snoke comes out among the coven during celebration. He is vulnerable no other time. And that compass is the only way for him to track down Skywalker… You know as well as I do the real reason he wants it.”

“Not these stories again.” Cadoc growls.

“They aren’t stories if they’re true.”

“In the last forty-eight hours the First Order has suffered twelve Resistance attacks on key trade warehouses, we have a hunter on the loose doing gods knows what, an Elder tracking a rogue fledgling and you’re worried about hearsay.” Cadoc’s voice grows louder with each second.

Silas, on the other hand, remains steady. “The Red Masque is no more than a month away.”

“Precisely and you’re concerned over baseless legends of black magic!”

“There is truth to every—”

“Enough.” Kylo snaps.

The two stiffen, turning to face him.
“I want both of you to scout the southern part of the city. Consider it our luck that the hunter remains elusive of both sides, but see that you two are the first to catch him and bring him before Snoke.”

They nod sharply, though Kylo catches the overt glitter of contempt in Cadoc’s eyes, centered openly upon him. Silas’ expression also betrays a more than subtle hint of disdain.

Wolves can smell even the faintest vestiges of weakness, like a shark to a drop of blood in the ocean.

Kylo’s control is slipping.

Faster.

And faster.

That night proves an even faster descent into strange waters, beginning with Hux summoning Kylo to his study. Phasma walks casually beside him as they enter the Supremacy, her attire a black sheen of armored leather under the milky light of chandeliers overhead. Already Snoke has ordered the lavish crimson decor for the upcoming Red Masque, silk draperies, excessive diamond curtains, First Order emblems of the finest marble… and as with every year, a specially chosen group of humans are brought onto the estate, selected specifically for their lack of blood pollutants and applicable blood purity.

Special occasions call for special cuisine, his master once said.

Cigarette smoke greets Kylo as the two pass by one of the sitting rooms and he is painfully reminded of how much he misses the nasty habit. With the building amount of stress on his shoulders he could actually eat through an entire cigarette carton to be quite frank. The realization leaves him oddly frazzled at the edges and he bites back the urge to lean over and rip Phasma’s head off.

She must sense his thoughts because a challenging curl tugs at her mouth, twisting it into a cold smirk. “Cracking under the pressure, mongrel?”

“Well?” he asks diplomatic, eyes glued to the hallway ahead.

“Rest assured that should anyone face the supreme leader’s wrath for any of this, it will be you.”

“Protecting your maker to the end? Your loyalty is commendable.”

She ignores his sarcasm and leads him up a set of stairs to the darkly silhouetted lounge he had spoken to Hux… so many weeks ago. It feels like centuries, now. Kylo finds his adversary in the
same spot near the same window with the same reflection glaring back at him, only this time there are curious differences: a marked difference to the stiffness in the vampire’s shoulders, a hint of distress he can almost smell and there, the curl of his fingers at his sides, betraying a sense of urgency. This isn’t the usual stick-up-his-ass awkwardness his adversary exhibits. This is altogether new.

Beyond the window the bruised sunset dims, guttering like a candle until finally snuffing out and unlike before a new species of fear rolls in Kylo’s gut.

“See that we remain undisturbed.” Hux says to Phasma, not glancing over his shoulder.

She nods mutely and exits the room.

The fear grows.

“I’ve never understood why Snoke keeps your kind under his heel. You’re our enemy, our opposite, and given your past and your betrayal of your family, I was shocked to find our supreme leader putting such trust in you.” Hux breaks eye contact with him through the reflection of the glass to look out over the landscape. “And given our little arrangement—”

“Get to the point.” Kylo snaps, his hackles rising.

He’s going to ask me for something...

But what?

That question alone fills him with a fresh sense of dread.

“You should show me some respect, considering I could have your precious fledgling in Snoke’s clutches before the night’s end. All I have to do is say the word.”

Kylo moves in a flash, aiming for Hux’s throat, but the bastard moves faster, evading his crushing grasp and slipping behind him. Pivoting on the balls of his feet, Kylo aims a fist for his face, however, Hux catches the strike before it lands, his fingers like steel.

“Hear me now, wolf. If you don’t help me, I will betray your little secret!” He hisses.

“Not if you are dead.” Kylo snarks back.

“What kind of secret could be worth killing for?” a new voice rumbles from the doorway.

The two freeze instantly and both turn to find none other than Darth Maul at the doorway, his ravenous eyes malignant glowing torch lights at the end to of a cavernous hood and that leer… It glints back at them with two abnormally long—even for a vampire—needle-like canines. Kylo remembers his being the first face he had seen in that lightless chasm after he had committed his ultimate sin.

Murderer.

Father killer.

The words ring hollowly in his chest.

“The two of you are such busy little bees.” Maul continues, stepping into the room, Phasma fast behind him with her head bowed low in submission.
Kylo can see Hux’s miniscule step back, an unintentional movement into his personal space and Kylo stands up straighter, attempting to conceal any emotion that could expose him. By the expression of the elder it is far too late.

“You have hunted recently.” Maul muses to Hux. “I can still smell her perfume on you. Tangerine and clove.”

No shift in expression, not even a blink, but Kylo catches the slightest twitch in his adversary’s hands now clasped conspicuously behind his back. A standard show of respect, though Kylo knows better. Fear… is sometimes wise.

Maul’s attention veers to Kylo, gaze widening with piqued curiosity. “You carry the scent of something else. It’s the same as before. Something—”

“Forgive me, my lords.” Yet a new voice interrupts, small and not mildly terrified from the doorway. Mitaka. “Snoke requests the presence of General Hux and Master Kylo Ren at once.”

If there were no others in the room, Kylo might have run over and kiss Mitaka himself, but things being as they are, he merely nods, the flicker of thanks in his gaze the only indication given to Mitaka as both he and Hux flee the lounge in haste, leaving behind the elder’s grinning visage.

Neither of them utter a word as they descend to Snoke’s sepulcher. Neither even so much as look at the other. They enter the room, ignoring the shattered wine glass near the corner, the splatter of blood and glittering shards and a mangled child not three feet from the monster’s throne. He’s growing impatient. When their supreme leader grows impatient, he turns to more tender prey, more malleable.

Kylo bites into his tongue and bows mechanically alongside his accomplice, ignoring the sweet scent of the child's blood engulfs the room.

This is who you serve. A nasty little voice inside him taunts. This is who you betrayed your mother for, killed your own father for…

Shut up!

Behind them the doors creak and slam shut, punctuating the eerily hollow silence around them. Hux conceals his panic well, much better than Kylo often can in the presence of his master, but now is not the time to allow jealousy. Kylo braces himself for whatever is to come, steadying the runaway heart in his chest.

“I’ve heard word that you have a lead on the compass, General Hux.” Snoke intones from his chair, arctic eyes piercing.

“We do.” Hux never misses a beat, all evidence of his disquiet smothered beneath a placid, almost doll-like expression.

A beat of silence.

Kylo’s head lowers as Snoke’s eyes shift to him, then back to Hux. “And you neglected to mention this in your report to me? Curious. Nevertheless, tell me. What new information have you found?”

“Hunters appear to be involved. One of the captured wolves revealed to us that a hunter by the name of Poe Dameron may have attained the compass and is now hiding it.”

“And where is this hunter?”
“We are unsure.”

A vein along Snoke’s temple pulses. “Unsure…”

“We will have the object soon. I have sent my captain in search of him. Her and her team will have the compass before the next full moon. I can promise you that.”

“Can you, general?”

The supreme leader’s tone forewarns of his coming violence, but Hux could not have fled even if given half the chance. The old monster’s claws are buried in his stomach before Hux can work up a good shout and Kylo remains frozen, absolutely still as he keeps his focus on the marble floor beneath him.

“Tell me general are you becoming distracted?” Snoke asks softly, his grip tearing into Hux as if he were paper.

“No supreme leader!” he grits out, blood flowing over his lips.

“Are you certain? Because it would be such a sad even to lose one of my most prized military leaders.” Despite his words, Snoke’s tone insinuates the dark pleasure he would feel at ripping the poor vampire’s heart out.

“I swear it! My loyalty is to you!”

More blood, this time staining his luxuriant golden sleeve and Snoke cradles Hux’s cheek with his opposite hand. “That is fortunate for you, dear general, because if I were to believe otherwise…” he trails off, digging his hand deeper into Hux’s innards.

Kylo closes his eyes against the pitiful wail and musters his courage. His mother’s voice comes to mind unexpectedly, her words echoing through his bones like a the gentle surf from his childhood. *Fear can be wise, but never lose sight of your goal, Ben. Always remember it.* He clings to her voice, willing its assuredness over him like a protective blanket and opening his eyes again.

Snoke’s robes lay in coils on the floor before Kylo and he looks up into the deformed pale face. The monster’s long fingers drip fresh with Hux’s blood who now lays curled on the ground a few feet away. Kylo remains steady, dipping his head low once more and speaking clearly.

“What is it you wish of me, supreme leader?”

Long wet nails ghost under his jaw, lifting his eyes back to his master’s. “All in good time, my Master of the Knights of Ren.”

They leave the chamber with Hux shuffling like the death and subsequently collapsing in the hallway. A sliver of compassion ignites in Kylo’s chest, but he refrains from helping the man up. Hux eventually makes it, using the wall to leverage himself, then turns to Kylo. He opens his mouth, though closes it a second later. Something passes through his eyes and Kylo could swear it is desperation, but before he can decipher it, his cell rings.

*Heaven’s Night* the glowing screen reads.

Not bothering another second with Hux, Kylo ascends the stairs and hurries to the main entrance of the mansion. The cell rings another three times before he can make it to the outside. Once at his car, he answers.
“Hello?”

“Ben. I need you down at Heaven’s Night.” Her voice is... off.

Static crawls over his skin as a cold chill settles in his stomach. “What’s wrong?”

“Don’t ask questions and just get over here as soon as you can. It’s about Rey.”

His heart sails up through his throat. “What about—”

“Just get over here. Now!”

Kylo should have seen this coming. Today has been nothing short of a paradox and the perfect bookend for it would be the fucking traitor standing at the center of Maz’s office. Kylo’s blood scalds his veins and his wolf roars, but he is halted by Maz’s lifted hand.

“You will abide by the rules of my house, Ben Solo. Remember who is protecting your vampire.”

He dials back his hatred, though only an inch. All he wants to do is murder the man standing before him. “What the fuck is this?”

Kaydel Connix steps up beside the traitor, Kylo only just having noticed her. “That’s what I’d like to know. And if you lay one finger on him I’ll have your fucking head for my trophy wall.” she growls, eyes flashing.

“Kay, you promised.” the traitor murmurs.

“I promised to back you up on this insane decision you’ve made without consulting me first. If I wanna skin the general’s son alive, I’ll damn well do as I please! We’re dead anyway!”

“Not while under my roof!” Maz snaps.

“Kay I’m doing what I feel is right.”

“Which you chose to do without my fucking opinion on the matter!”

Kylo turns to leave, not about to witness a domestic disagreement between two imbecilic wolf-mates—

—but Maz’s door abruptly slams shut.

“Ben please.”

He glares over his shoulder at her.
“Sit. You will want to listen.” She points to one of the seats beside her desk.

“I doubt that.” He crosses his arms.

“Kylo, please just give me five minutes.”

At the sound of the traitor’s tone addressing him Kylo’s insides twist with disdain. “I’d sooner scatter you all over this room.”

Connix moves to attack but is stopped by a firm hand on her shoulder. “This isn’t helping. Kylo, I know nothing can change what happened between us, but I ask you just this once to hear me out.”

“I don’t lend an ear to an enemy.”

“I am lending my trust to one tonight.”

The words hit their mark and Kylo considers him for several long moments, at war with the traitor he knows and the man he knew, a man at one time he had freely called brother. Trust for a wolf who betrayed his own pack, his own alpha is laughable, but Kylo cannot deny the bond they share. Squaring off his shoulders, he takes a reluctant seat, eyes never leaving his old apprentice.

A visible sigh of relief leaves the man’s chest and he takes the seat opposite Kylo, motioning for Kay to stand away from him. She obeys, albeit with some objection, her bright golden eyes cutting at Kylo as if she assumes such a thing could frighten him.

“I’m sure you’re still curious why I let Rey go.” he begins. “Honestly it was because I felt guilty about everything, all the harm I’d caused, but also it was because I think things have changed… with you.”

Kylo’s looks down his nose at him. “Your idealism certainly hasn’t changed. Like the day thought I would forgive your betrayal and forfeit all I am for a past that is dead, you still cling to childish notions.”

“If the past is dead, then why isn’t Rey the same?” he challenges.

Kylo does not have an answer for that and it only serves to anger him further. “Get to the point of why you tricked me into coming here.”

“I had to trick you. I didn’t have a choice. If you would have listened, we could have approached one another with respect—”

“You are undeserving of my respect Lazarus!” he explodes, launching from his chair with righteous ire. The use of the traitor’s name on his tongue feels familiar yet foreign, like the mother tongue one has promised oneself never to utter again.

But Lazarus isn’t his name, anymore, Kylo reminds himself. It’s Finn now, the name chosen by his new family. The one I left behind. Bitterness pricks at his insides and Kylo swallows it down, finding his ability to deny the past more and more difficult by the day.

The traitor meanwhile stares up at him with waiting eyes, only the look of desperation etched into his features. Kylo scoffs. It appears everyone is suffering a touch of the desperate tonight… including himself.

“Rey is a part of this war.”
“I’m aware of that.” Kylo rolls his eyes.

“No you’re not!” he counters. “You are refusing to listen to what I’m saying. Kylo, she has always been a part of this war. Snoke has been looking for her for a long time.”

At that, Kylo’s blood runs cold. “What do you mean?”

“General Organa has only been able to gather the minimal information on Snoke’s interest in Rey, being that he wants her. No one else has been willing to break their silence during interrogation. And we also know that Snoke changed tactics once you didn’t kill her. He must have realized she is something significant to him. And I would hazard to guess that the supreme leader intends to have her, by whatever means necessary.”

“Maul.” Kylo whispers, his chest tight. This has never been about him killing her. Then why tell him that he will have the honor of killing her once Maul finds her?

Kylo’s heart stops. Does he know?

“The compass. If you get your hands on it before anyone else does, destroy it Kylo. Forget about Skywalker. For Rey’s sake… and yours.”

“You’re going against your own general by asking me to destroy it.”

He nods solemnly. “Yes.”
Chapter End Notes

PLEASE REMEMBER TO LEAVE ME SOME FEEDBACK!
CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM IS WELCOME!
FOLLOW ME ON TWITTER IF YOU WISH!
ALSO CHECK OUT THE LIVE TWEET THREAD WHERE I DO PROGRESS
FOOTNOTES/UPDATES!

Extra Notes & Links:
- Lazarus Ren = lauz - ar -us [a name symbolizing rebirth, most notably in the
  Christian faith]
A/N: Time to heat things right back up because Kylo ain't about to let his empress give him pleasure without returning the much awaited favor. ;D But first?! Angst. I'm sorry it was necessary. Also, I had written the angst scene while totally forgetting that Finn had already told Rey about Ben killing Han. *facepalm* I made adjustments accordingly, but I could have missed something. Let me know if I did!

**SONG INSPIRATION:** [Change - Deftones (Cover by Violet Orlandi)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V5sYHkz9QG4) (delicious rhythm for the smut)

**CHAPTER WARNINGS:**
- profanity
- fights, angst, mentions of murder & past questionable behavior,
- graphic depictions of oral sex, p*ssy worship, mild praise kink, sniffing kink, soft Kylo giving Rey the tender sex she deserves
- post coitus cuddling (not sure if anyone hates that but adding it anyway)

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

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"Take me I'm alive.
Never was a girl with a wicked mind.
But everything looks better when the sun goes down."

- Make Me Wanna Die / The Pretty Reckless

---
Bodhi whines.

It’s been almost a week and he still refuses to approach Rey, though he does keep a moderately close proximity to her person. Protecting her, she knows, but still frightened of her scent, how it has changed. Not to mention all the trauma he endured after that fateful night when she disappeared.

She glances back at him meandering in the tall grass while she sits under the roof of the gazebo, enjoying the feel of the crisp autumn breeze. Paige had been the one to find him at one of the little rescue centers near Rosewater, no more three-weeks-old, mangy and abused, skittish of everyone. He had always trembled back then, in desperate need of body heat.

When Rey had found him sitting on her bed Christmas morning with a velvet red bow wrapped around his neck and a note from the Ticos she had wept. Back then, she never entertained the idea of having a pet, but seeing his floppy ears and big brown eyes her heart had simply melted on the spot.

*Bodhi* was Rose’s idea, which probably was for the best, because the only names that had come to Rey’s mind at the time had been Moose or Copper. Bodhi fits him best. The animal pauses and looks up at her, innately aware of the direction of her thoughts and she smiles at him, clicking her tongue encouragingly, yet he maintains his distance.

Not allowing it to bother her, Rey looks away to the night sky, a thing she has been doing more and more lately. She misses the dawn, though, the break of the morning sun over the sleepy horizon as it electrifies the clouds in those vibrant wake-up colors.

She misses its warmth.

It’s a unique kind of warmth, beginning as a thrill at the base of one’s spine, a whisper of possibilities that makes one’s stomach jump with anticipation before tumbling headlong into a break for the precipice of potentiality. Like the look of *his* eyes as he’d gazed down at her in the throes of passion, a discombobulated mess of warring hunger and capitulation shaking her to her very bones. No one had ever looked at her that way, like the world itself had spun off its axis and she was the only thing keeping them from spinning with it. Her heart whispers the word, but she dares not say it, not even in her mind. Such flights of fancy should be discouraged, especially in these types of situations.

But she trusts him… as much as that terrifies her.

And what’s more?

She scarcely knows anything of his past, only that he seeks revenge; more probably, than any feelings he harbors for her. He is a man who fights a war against his own mother, loyal to a monster so she’s been told, a traitor to his own species and a killer who won’t think twice if someone stands in his way.

Should she be so foolish as to believe he would choose her over something he has sought most of
his life? Of course not. A part of her yearns for it, nonetheless.

With the passing week, Maz has checked in on her as well as Ruelle, the latter visiting twice and scolding Rey for still refusing to open the bags Kylo had specifically bought for her. After thirty minutes of bickering Ruelle had finally convinced her to try on a few outfits. Rey ended up, by no stretch of the imagination, liking the only non-black ensemble of the bunch. She wears it tonight.

From the corner of her eye she catches the flashing streak of a shooting star and her lips break into a smile. Perhaps there is room to hope. She wonders idly when Kylo will return, a blush suffusing her cheeks as she relives the memory of his taste. Sharp and electric, like the man. The wolf. Her core throbs with desire and she traces her neck, thinking of how rough he had been, how that next night found her throat raw, yet the power of her actions had still crackled over her skin like a lingering clap of thunder.

Rey licks her lips, wishing for him.

Time ticks by and she drifts deeper into her own thoughts until her ears pick up on the distant sound of an approaching car. She shoots to her feet, looking out across the long expanse of Maz’s vineyard some two miles to the main road. Bright headlights cut through the gloom as they turn onto the driveway and make their way up to the villa. She recognizes the headlights at once and her heart flutters in her chest. Bodhi takes notice as well, a warning bark interrupting the drone of cricket song.

She hurries for the house, a whirring sense of excitement buzzing through her veins. As he arrives he swings the car around the circular drive to the front terrace and she bounds down the steps, giving him little time to exit his car before crashing into him and taking his unruly black locks into her hands. He moans against her mouth and drags her flush to his body at once, drinking her in with frenzied impatience as she nips at his lower lip a little too hard, fangs raking tender flesh.

“Easy.” he chides.

Rey ignores him, forcing up his chin with her nose and staking claim to every inch of exposed skin she can find, suckling and biting his neck until he pivots, slamming her up against the side of his car and grinding into her.

“I said easy!” he growls, forcing his hips hard enough to hurt.

She releases a soft gasping mewl and glares at him. “Where have you been?”

He doesn’t answer at first, holding her there with his hands cupped on her ass and his eyes growing hazy. Then, shaking his head to clear it he releases her and steps away. “Busy,” is all he says.

Her anger spikes, though she holds her tongue, assessing his appearance. Unease radiates off of him, he also appears far more haggard than when last they met… and he already beared the look of a man in need of a century’s worth of slumber the first night they met.

“Something’s wrong.”

He glances at her, a pained tremor flickering under his eye and tensing the corner of his mouth faster than he can hide it. He tries however, looking out at the city lights on the horizon.

“Something is always wrong.”

A nasty tightness balls in her chest. “Is it…?”

“No. Paige and Rose are safe as far as I’m aware.” But there is an edge to his tone she doesn’t
“I know your master wants me dead, but I need to see them. I need to know—”

“Paige has been taken in by the Resistance.”

His statement gives her pause. “So—so she’s awake? She’s okay?”

“I don’t know that. All I know is that they have her.”

Rey frowns at him. “You don’t seem particularly surprised about it.”

A veiled emotion passes over his face quicker than she can decipher it; then, it vanishes. Shaking his head he starts for the house, leaving her gaping after him. *What the hell?*

“Hey! Don’t you walk away from me!” she shouts, chasing him down and kicking the door open.

“This isn’t your house.” he reminds her impassively.

“Oh, piss off! I could care less if I damaged the fucking drywall! And don’t do that!”

“What the hell?”

“That deadpan thing you do when you want to irritate someone! I’m asking about my friends! Tell me what happened!”

He glances around the room, fixating on an inconsequential painting of a raging sea surrounding two indistinct figures.

“Damn it! I know something has happened, Kylo! Now tell me, or so help me God I’ll—”

“You’ll what?” he asks, his lips softening in that devastating way that makes her knees go weak.

Rey clamps her jaw shut, fury livening her veins. “I’ll rip your throat out with my bare teeth!” she seethes, the words cutting through the air like daggers.

A dark shadow of delight passes over him. “You would, wouldn’t you?”

“Yes.”

“You’d punish me for my past sins. A fitting end don’t you think?”

*What?* She hesitates, her furor momentarily guttering. “What are you…?”

“Would you afford me that kindness, Rey?” He takes a step closer, hand outstretched. “Would you?”

She shakes her head. “You’re crazy.”

“Astute.” he remarks.

“Sarcastic prick.”

Kylo shakes his head as if to convince her of no intended disrespect before continuing on that vein. “And as an astute individual, you must see where all this is leading.”

“I’m not going to play games with you.” she retorts waspishly.
“I’m not playing games, Rey. Look at your life, what’s happened to you.” He motions his hand up and down at her and swallows, his adam’s apple bobbing at his throat. “This life isn’t one you can learn to accept.”

“Don’t change the subject!”

“You are not someone made to live without the sun.” Another shuffling step.

Tears, abrupt and unwanted, prick at the corners of her eyes and she feels that powerful swell of wrath diminishing altogether. “Stop.” she whispers.

“I was born to this life, Rey.” He stands close enough now she can smell the lingering sunlight on him.

Her heart aches at it.

“I’ve spilled blood, taken countless lives… and I’d do it again. Remember that, Rey.”

_Murderer. Monster._

“Just stop.” she presses back against the door, feeling it slip shut behind her.

He invades her space, his heat everywhere, enveloping her like a blanket. “Even if you hadn’t been bitten by a vampire that night I would have done it myself against your will. I’d have made you mine without a second thought of taking you away from your life, your family.”

Rey is trembling now, staring up into his impossibly dark eyes like a wild animal too mesmerized to strike. They glint brutally, two waning crescents of amber amid a landscape eclipsed. “I don’t believe that.” she says, her voice sounding unsure even to her own ears.

He grins, an unnatural twisting of the mouth that makes her chest ache all over again. It looks as if the mad beginnings of a scream, a tireless scream that, she hazards to guess, was long ago stifled by his own hand.

“You have no idea of the things I’ve done. If you did, you would know better.” The octave of his tone drops so low an involuntary shiver crawls up her spine.

“Tell the truth then… and shame the devil.” she hisses.

He drags in a stunned gasp, staggered by her challenge.

A part of her teeters in triumph at confounding him, while another holds fast its breath because this has been the very thing she has refused to confront. *How far does his sin go?*

He stares at her for an eternity, so long the intensity of his gaze muddles her focus and she thinks he will go on staring until she has dropped her eyes, giving this confrontation over to him, but she won’t. He should know such things by now. So it surprises her when instead his eyes avert to the windows, though he never quite finds a particular target.

Silence lapses between them.

The heaviness grows.

At last Kylo sighs, drawing back and sauntering over to the couch. He collapses upon it with a subsequent huff, this one shriveling in his shoulders and deflating his earlier bluster. Rey watches from the door as he tears his fingers through his hair and drops his head into his hands, elbows
resting on his thighs. He is a broken man wrought with shadowed angles.

She straightens, squaring her posture and approaching him, chin held high. He will tell her the truth tonight, one way or another, though a hidden part of her cowers at the idea of knowing. She stops inches from the couch’s arm, hands dutifully at her sides… waiting.

His arms fall, hands coming to dangle before his knees and he looks out in front of him, but what he sees she cannot see. The memories contort his expression, first with frustration, then grief, and behind it all she senses a burgeoning awareness, a shifting of pieces that perhaps had not fit into place until now.

“I killed my father.” he whispers.

This part she knew. What she doesn’t know is. “How?”

“I took his life with my own sword. I did it right in front of my mother.” Each word falls like a stone in a chasm, echoing off the stillness.

Sickening disgust washes over her at once, unchecked, unavoidable and she utters the only thing her vocal cords can muster. “Why?”

He closes his eyes. “Because it was necessary.”

“Necessary?”

Rey thinks back to Maz’s story, what little the old witch did tell, of Leia Organa’s love for a human mate, how she had not the heart to turn him and staring now at the fruition of that pair who seconds ago admitted to murdering said human mate, his own father… in front Leia.

“The truth about my family is a well kept secret among both our kinds. Immortality did not begin from my mother, or my uncle. It began from my grandfather. That much I had known, but what I was never told was that it was my uncle who betrayed and killed him. I eventually learned this truth… after he had made the same attempt on me.” Kylo pauses, looking down at his hands.

“Snoke was the one who tried to warn me of my uncle’s treachery. And afterward, he was the only one to promise the truth. About everything. My father’s life was a necessary price to pay.”

Rey gapes down at him and shakes her head, the world seeming to fold in on itself in violent motion. Too much information too fast. She tries to take a step back, but a large hand shoots out and wraps securely around her wrist, leading her to the eager arms of her wolf.

In the face of this truth, the disgust multiplies along with her confusion at his story. Honest or not, she cannot help feeling there are pieces, very large integral pieces, missing from his tale. And murdering his own father for the sake of a master who she has been told is a hellish demon. It doesn’t add up and that only makes it worse.

“But why your own father?” she asks again, unable to shake the feeling of second-hand betrayal coiling around her heart.

“He was a human. My mother had already violated the laws of our kind by allowing him to remain so. Judgment for such crimes is death… to both parties. What I did was mercy.”

Neither of them speak, Kylo allowing the silence to close in around them like a veil, while Rey stares away at some distant point on the wall, unsure of what to think anymore, who to blame. There is no solid answer and it angers her. While feeling revulsion at Kylo’s actions and judging them by a simple standard of right and wrong would be easiest, she admits—albeit reluctantly—
that this is impossible to do. Impossible because no side is innocent. No side is either completely black, or completely white. Reality is a perplexing monochrome, etched in varying shades of gray.

The warmth of his cheek presses to her stomach and she watches with detached wonderment as he inhales her scent, nuzzling along the curve of her ribs and taking the material of her blouse between his teeth for a moment. Then releasing it.

“You’re wearing the clothes I had bought for you.” he states offhandedly.

She doesn’t reply.

Kylo glances up into her eyes and she is shocked to find a sheen of wetness there… and something else, though he hastily conceals it behind a chuckle. “I was hoping you would wear black, but you chose the only thing not black.”

The corner of her lip quirks involuntarily.

He leans down and inhales her scent again, lifting up the hem of her blouse and placing an open-mouthed kiss below her navel. His mouth journeys farther, tongue painting broad lavishing lines over the jut of her delicate hip bones as his arms come around to hook at her waist. Her own automatically lift up to his shoulders, the resulting action of her fingers burying themselves in his hair inescapable. The texture makes her think of petting a large wolf, fur slightly coarse yet silky and she drags her fingers along his scalp, raking them firmly down the back of his skull to his nape. His rumbling sigh tickles her flesh and she melts into him.

A week’s worth of desire blossoms from her core despite the unease still rolling through her gut and she bites her lip, considering the scene before her.

Kylo unzips her pants, nuzzling each new patch of exposed flesh before taking the lip of her panties between his teeth—the only black article of clothing she happens to be wearing tonight—and tugs. His dark gaze flicks back to hers as he stretches the elastic, releasing it a second later. Delight cascades down her thighs at the sensation and she exhales breathlessly.

“Rey.”

Her name lingers in the silence, a soft requesting of permission and she takes his face in her hands, absorbing the raw array of emotions she sees there. With a single deliberate nod from her, he rises, dwarfing her small hand in his larger one and leading her to her bedroom.

There he proceeds to undress her gradually, piece by piece, planting a garden of affection across every slope and curve as it is exposed until at last she stands naked in front of him, nipples pebbled and pink and aching for his touch. But he merely steps back, dropping his hands to his sides and studying her.

Rey averts her gaze, realizing a warm trail of slick has already gathered at the nest of her thighs and he will see. How can he not? The light will catch just so and his eyes will draw to it like a moth to a flame and—there! His gaze ignites the second he locks in, mouth parting as if an awe-struck priest witnessing the birth of Christ, pupils blown wide, chest heaving in reverence.

“Lie back on the bed.” he murmurs huskily.

She bulks, moving to cross her arms before choosing instead to place her hands on her hips. “Not until we’re even.”

Kylo raises a curious eyebrow and she motions to the very blatant lack of his own nudity.
Understanding dawns on him and he smiles devilishly. “It’s my turn tonight, little vampire.”

Oh right. Control. She supposes it’s only fair after last week, but that does not mean she has to like it. Not one bit.

Acquiescing to his command, Rey sinks back onto the terracotta-colored duvet, running her fingers over the sewn floral textures and looking at him expectantly. Her legs are conspicuously closed, the friction from stepping back and taking a seat only adding to her growing frustration. She knows he can smell her. As if to punctuate her thoughts he steps forward, scenting her with a gluttonous inhale.

He lets out the breath with a tremor through his shoulders. “Part your legs.” he orders.

Rey obeys, opening them with only the most modest nibble of her lips and coloring of her cheeks as she recedes back to her elbows, feeling thoroughly exposed under his burning eyes. His fingers flex at his sides and he approaches like a lurching beast, all rolling shoulders and purposeful hands as they settle on her knees. She allows her head to sink onto the bed, but she watches his every move as he lowers himself to his knees.

The two hold the challenging silence for ages before Kylo moves, bracketing his hands at the apex of her thighs and spreading her legs all the way until her they rest in a haphazard indian style. She can feel the teasing chill of the air from how wet she is and, more importantly, she can feel her slick dripping to the duvet beneath her as she thinks fleetingly of first experiences. This will be a first for her tonight.

Kylo dips forward to savor her scent more intimately and she gasps as he ghosts his lips along her inner thigh, picking up a trace of her slick. It coats his mouth with a provocative sheen and her own falls open, eyes going wide at the sight of him and a primal heat so absolute grips the muscles of her cunt. It spasms impatiently and that damnable smile is on him again.

He nuzzles her leg, voice teasing. “I think you like being told what to do.” Taking a single finger to her slit, she mewls restlessly as he draws upward to the sensitive pearl of nerves. Then, he brings the digit to his mouth, sucking it clean. “Yeah… you do.”

Her arousal spikes and she wriggles uncontrollably, legs wanting to circle around him and latch shut, dragging him down and planting his mouth right where she needs it, but she contains herself, honoring their unspoken rule for now.

Kylo scales up her body, deliberately allowing his pants to rub at her pussy and her back arches, nails digging into the thick material above her. He comes close to her ear, breathing raggedly. “I won’t be quick tonight. I’m going to take my time, you filthy minx.”

She grins and closes her eyes as he nibbles his way back down her body, lingering at her breasts to show them some much needed attention—

— but not enough.

An indigent huff turns to a hiss as he rubs his hands up under her ass, cupping her cheeks and urging her to lift up. She complies, planting her feet and angling to meet his face, uncaring that her pride and glory knows no more secrecy. Dropping her hands to her sides, she flattens them along with her feet to help maintain her balance. And waits.

Rey does not wait long, because the next second finds her rolling her head back at the sleek press of his tongue over her folds. He works with patient, unhurried meticulousness, kissing her sex until
her hips jerk with earnest. Next he moves along her inner thighs, branding fresh bruises into her flesh and making her wail.

This is so unfair.

It only gets worse when he dabs his tongue inside her, once to measure her reaction, which appears to be satisfactory by the grin crinkling his eyes, then twice to elicit the same reaction again. She writhes, her bottom half an altar suspended on wavering legs with her cunt as the offering to his ravenous hunger.

Slow ravenous hunger. Her mind grumbles.

He’s going to work her leisurely into oblivion, so unlike how she had driven him into a maddening fervor last week. She reaches up to massage her needy breasts, arching her back and planting her feet more firmly to keep balance. This puts her at a higher angle for his questing mouth and his hands squeeze the cheeks of her ass, a possessive growl rumbling in his throat. It vibrates over her nerve-endings and she calls out, surprised by the intensity of feeling. This most certainly is not fair!

“What I— God! Can’t you just—”

The babble pouring from her cuts short as he takes her sensitive bud between his teeth and bites just enough to make her scream. He shocks her further by plunging two fingers inside, curling and lazily working her cunt until she relinquishes a shuddering sob and her muscles flutter into orgasm. It’s slow and drawn out, not the conflagration she seeks, but her back bows nonetheless and her arms fly above her head for purchase, tearing at the duvet as she turns her face and bites into the tender flesh of her bicep. Blood coats her tongue, yet this only seems to heighten the experience and she floats back down a minute later.

The presumptuous wolf between her legs smirks at her, his lips glistening in the bronze lamp light. “You were a good girl. You didn’t move. I think I’ll give you one more treat for tonight.”

“Meaning slow again?”

And by the look of his expression, she’d say yes.

Her hackles rise. “I don’t want to be a good girl.”

Kylo leans forward, flicking his tongue playfully at her still pulsing core and her legs jump. “I know, but you’ve been so obedient for me, Rey.” His extolling purr sends a traitorous shiver down her spine and her toes curl.

Then he rises, stepping back and lifting his shirt over his head. She watches enrapt as he rids himself of all unnecessary articles, each one tossed uselessly to the floor until he stands before her like she has always wanted him to, naked, hard and focused solely on her.

Rey’s breath quickens at his approach, her stomach doing somersaults as he crawls up the bed, hovering over her on hands and knees. Witnessing him from this angle and looking down to see his cock wet with precum makes her hands move of their own accord, skating up his arms and molding along the planes of his shoulders to his back. She revels in the power of his physique, the beast in her murmuring. Mine, all mine.

And how must she look to him? Legs sprawled lecherously under his gaze and her hair a tangled mess behind her. He wipes a stray tendril from her eyes and she leans into his palm. The kiss he gives her reminds her that tonight will not end quickly, nor will it satisfy the more primal desire in her for something fast and hard and brutal, but she finds that perhaps she can live with that.
Breaking the kiss she looks down to observe him as he reaches between her folds, wetting his fingers with her slick and massaging it along his shaft. As he lowers his hips she angles her own to meet him, feeling the head of his cock brush her entrance. Her heart thunders in her chest and he takes her chin, directing her gaze to his. They breath, once in, once out; and he pushes.

Her eyes widen at once, nails digging into his shoulder blades at the pinching sensation of being stretched, but she paces herself, focusing on relaxing her body. Kylo takes his time, lingering with every inch, watching her intently as he sinks further and further when, at last, he fills her completely.

The two let out a shuddering breath.

Kylo allows a short space to pass before he shifts his legs to a better position and, at once, sensation explodes over Rey’s lower half like the spark of an exposed wire on gasoline. She moans luxuriously as he pulls back and eases forward, this time finding her body much more accommodating. A second thrust, a third and before long, he establishes a tantalizingly slow and thoroughly maddening rhythm.

Rey attempts to pick up the pace on occasion, but Kylo immediately pins her to the mattress, holding her down until she settles and he begins again. She emits a petulant grunt at this and he smirks, leaning down to nip at her jaw.

“Not tonight.” he says.

Lifting her chin defiantly, she fixes him with spiteful daggers, though this only seems to drive him deeper, harder, slower. Rey drags her nails over his shoulders to his chest and digs them in vengefully. Blood dots his skin. Kylo growls, earthy and low as he tilts his head back and a curtain of his sweat-drenched hair falls over his forehead.

He looks so lovely when he is unkempt like this, the hazy lamp light casting warm hues over his alabaster skin and the dark slants of opaque shadows behind him on the walls. The desire to bite him surfaces in her mind; however, she finds the voice hushed tonight as she stares into the cosmos of black-gold above her, permeating her with the insatiable need to be nearer, so near she could wrap his skin around her own and settle into his chest, maybe make a home there.

His angle changes slightly and her mouth falls slack as the rigid head of his cock taps at the hidden place inside of her that makes her body sing like a choir. Her back arches off the bed in earnest and he cradles her up to him, continuing to build them higher and higher. His pace remains torturous to the point of tears and she moans against his neck, biting hard enough to remind him of her fangs. He chuckles in reply and gives her a sweet kiss.

“Damn you.” she curses against his lips.

Kylo’s smirk turns to a grin and he snaps forward once, hard enough to make the entire frame of the bed shake. Rey screams out, gripping onto him for dear life as her climax hits like a wave, leisurely and unending. Wave after wave of euphoria blanketing out over her nerve-endings akin to the heat of summer and she releases a sob. Kylo bends down and slants his mouth over hers, drinking in her cries as he finds his own release, his cock pulsing with the heat of his seed. The sensation surprises her by making her climax a second time, this one far longer than the first, and she relinquishes his name, his real name.

He grunts in reply and peppers her with chaste endearments all over her cheeks before pulling out and repositioning them with her back nestled against his chest. She hums contentedly and falls fast asleep to the tender rumblings of his voice.
It’s raining. And cold. And loud.

Loud like someone left the TV on and the local channels are all not but static loud.

No… it’s even louder than that. It reminds her of the train from Hazel street station, only it sounds as if she is standing right in front of it, which is terrifying.

Her eyes snap open to find herself looking out over a half-moon cliff. The sky above roils with chaos and lightning while the scene below her churns like a world-sized drain. Crashing tides and jagged rocks warn her just how close to the edge she actually is and she whirls around, stopping short in her tracks at a new sight.

A peculiar hole in the ground. Lightning forks across the sky, extinguishing the shadows for a fraction of a second and she sees blood, a ring of blood surrounding the hole.

What is that?

“A door.”

She jumps at the voice, frantically looking for the owner, but finds no one. Dread takes root in her belly and grows.

“They hid you from me, little one, but I finally found you.” The voice sends an unnatural shiver down her spine and she grimaces in disgust.

“Who are you?!?”

“Look in the mirror and see for yourself.” It laughs maniacally.

“Tell me!”

“When the time comes, I will be whole again. And I will be free.”

Rey wakes from the nightmare with a start, bolting upright in her bed, heart galloping wildly in her chest. It’s only when Kylo’s solid arms curtain around her that she realizes the dream is gone. She is in Maz’s villa with a werewolf whispering in her ear.

“What was it?”

“Just a bad dream. It’s nothing.” she assures him.

He kisses her temple and draws her back down under the sheets. “I have them, too. They pass away in time.” he says.

She wants to find comfort in his words, but the mysterious voice from the dream lingers, along with a growing pain behind her eyes.
Chapter End Notes

PLEASE REMEMBER TO LEAVE ME SOME FEEDBACK!
CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM IS WELCOME!
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FOOTNOTES/UPDATES!

Extra Notes & Links:
[...]
A/N: I'm remiss that it's not Halloween every day, tbh, so this chapter bears some nostalgic things because reasons. I suppose you can consider this installment getting you into the spirit of things? Several months early? ;) And we finally get to a part I've been wanting to write about forever! Hux's and Rose's interactions! But I lied about the smut for this chapter, unfortunately. This chapter kinda took on a life of its own so... Yeah. XD Feedback is my fuel, so don't be shy! Let me know what you think about this project. ;3 Oh and just in case there is any confusion, the next chapter will have a minor time jump. Enjoy! o/

SONG INSPIRATION: Die Alone - A Pale Horse Named Death (I can see this playing on the radio as Ruelle drives Kylo to safety. ;D)

CHAPTER WARNINGS:
- profanity, derogatory use of the word c*nt
- hand-cuffed Rose, man-handling
- violence, gore descriptions, beheading

See the end of the chapter for more notes
Her body lies draped across him, one leg curled possessively over his hips and a cheek pressed softly to his chest. He relishes their entwined scents, now indistinguishable in the drowsily lit room and he delights in the feel of her steady breath ghosting over his skin. She’d almost broken the flesh last night in her lust. Kylo cannot help the thrill that ignites in his belly. Denying his morbid obsession with her actually marking him has long since past.

The very thought of her fangs embedding into his flesh does devilish things to his lower half and before he can stop himself he’s hard, letting out a guttural moan when her leg rubs him in her sleep. She reacts languidly, grinding against him and making his fingers hook into needy claws, desperate to roll her onto her back—asleep or not—and take her again; but aside from that being extremely rude, which he's sure she wouldn’t mind, he should leave soon. Now preferably.

Though that’s nearly impossible with the pleasant heat of her body and the smell of her all over him, saturating him. The events of last night play through his mind for the thousandth time, the shyness of Rey’s face, the restless jerk of her hips as he’d tasted her, how her red-tinged eyes had rolled back in lewd satisfaction. He closes his own and hums contentedly, feeling for the first time a sense of gravity, of focus—

—albeit a focus frayed at the edges by agitation.

Snoke will eventually find out what Kylo has done, what Hux has done… and he will definitely find out about Rey. Kylo would be an utter fool to think the old serpent has lost his edge over the last few centuries of stalemate between the First Order and the Resistance. Kylo recalls Snoke’s cruel reply to his failure in attempting to retrieve the compass.

His supreme leader must already realize something is out of place, that Kylo himself is different. It’s only a matter before he and Rey are found out and the unfortunate truth is this: he will not be separated from her.

He cannot.

A part of him hopes Snoke intends to keep her alive, kept as a bird in a cage, but alive nonetheless. Though if Snoke’s intention is to have Rey killed, Kylo must spirit her away himself. He cannot trust anyone, least of all the Resistance.

His mind travels back to his exchange with Finn, the bizarre way things had unfolded, how a deal had been hammered out before Kylo truly realized the words coming out of his mouth. An exchange. Paige Tico’s protection for the release of Jessika Pava. It had been simple enough to free the Resistance wolf from her holding cell when no one was looking.

But that poses another nasty certainty. His pack will find out and when they do…

“We are so dead. All this for her, master? Is she worth that much to you?” Ruelle’s voice floats
through his mind.

“Yes.” he had said. Nothing more.

And Ruelle, ever faithful and unquestioning amidst all of this, had merely nodded, her expression resolute. She did not deserve him putting her into this position. Despite the circumstances of her introduction into his pack, Ruelle remained his most trusted knight. Young and reckless perhaps, but loyal, and Kylo would take loyalty with its faults before anything else.

And what of the traitor? Finn?

Thinking of him by that new name still sits uneasily on his tongue, but Kylo has found himself more and more addressing the fallen knight as so. After all, he was and continues to be the closest thing to a brother Kylo will ever have; yet can he trust him?

His instincts say yes, but the skeptic in him maintains doubt. Kylo chuckles to himself, the action barely stirring Rey. The truth is, Kylo had already extended an olive branch of trust the moment he walked willingly into Maz’s office and listened to what Finn had to say. He further tied his own noose when he made a deal to rescue and return Jessika Pava for the Resistance dealing with Paige Tico.

It hadn’t taken much effort, not with his pack unsuspecting of his motivations, and the triplets operate as a single entity. If one should leave, the others will follow. The same concept applies in battle. Should one advance, the others will also attack, even if it stands against Kylo’s orders, which, thankfully up until now, it never has.

The request for Pava had nothing to do with strategy and everything to do with Rey, his compassion for her own attachments and feelings. Though Kylo has resisted this exasperating fact, he cannot deny it. His remaining card against Hux has been taken off the board… by his own hand. A deadly gamble, one he hopes Hux will not act upon, but Kylo has his own suspicions about Hux’s odd behavior lately and he hopes for the same amount of vexation in the future.

The Resistance and their motives are far easier to read than his red headed adversary, but there is certainly something...

A distant vibrating, almost imperceptible from behind the closed door of the bedroom catches his ear. Belatedly he realizes it is coming from his cellphone. He purses his lips, glowering at the door accusingly, and the reality of the world beyond it. It’s easy to forget that world when one has a satisfied lover entangled in their arms.

Nevertheless, Kylo carefully disentangles himself from her, gets dressed and sneaks out of her room, closing the door silently behind him. The first touches of sunrise glow from the horizon, a dimly washed out yellow. Bodhi sits near one of the large living room windows, his ears pricking forward at the sight of Kylo and his tail wagging.

“So you trust me now?” he whispers and lets the dog in.

The animal greets him with a single sniff, likely noting the traces of Rey on his body before trotting into the kitchen and to eat some kibble. The animal still favors his injured leg, but Kylo notes the marked improvement since he saw him last. It gives him comfort, knowing Rey does not just have herself out here in case the worst should happen.

But he will be here.

No matter where in the city he is, no matter what he’s doing, he will race here and end whatever
threat Maul poses for Rey. Regardless of the old warlock’s magic. Regardless of Snoke. He won’t let them have her.

He finds his cell on the coffee table, likely having tossed it there when he’d collapsed on the couch last night. He couldn’t remember. Rey seems to have that effect on him, which he should find unsettling, but he doesn’t anymore.

Swiping the screen he finds a text… from Hux.

< . . . We need to talk. Meet me at my apartment up town. Now. . . . >

Kylo stares at the message frowning.

Ignoring it, tossing his cell aside, taking a long stretch in front of the windows to soak up some predawn light before heading back into Rey’s room—that would be far more preferable than answering Hux’s bothersome summons.

The weight of his gun at his hip worms its way into his awareness, a strangely familiar presence he had all but forgotten these last few weeks. And the sword resting on a plaque in his apartment, he had forgotten that, too. Realities Kylo had chosen to ignore.

Things are turning bad. He can feel it over his skin like an electric charge.

Making up his mind he replies to the text and leaves, casting a single fleeting glance in his rear-view mirror.

An hour later he arrives to the sunless living area of one very agitated Armitage Hux, cheeks dashed pink and lips twisted in an awkwardly painful grimace. From the look of his hunched stance the wound Snoke gave him hasn’t fully healed. Pity that.

A whiff of something tangerine tickles his nostrils and he wonders at it, recognizing it from somewhere. And there is another scent, distinctly human.

“What do you want?” Kylo asks, arms crossing over his chest.

Hux shoots him a venomous glare. “Your head on a pike as it were, but unfortunately such fancies are out of my reach now.” He pauses, sparing a glance at the hallway to his left. “I want your help with something.”

Kylo scoffs. “I ascertained that much. The real question you should be asking is if you’ll get it.”
“Careful Ren. All it would take is one phone call.”

“No, if you’re dead.”

Hux smiles humorlessly. “Then who would have your back when Snoke finds out about what you’ve done? Surely not your knights. You know better than to trust them.”

“I don’t need anyone guarding my back.” he bristles.

“Don’t be so petulant.”

Kylo takes a threatening step towards him and Hux raises his hands, not quite in surrender, though there lacked the familiar sense of animosity they regularly shared. It makes his stomach twist into uneasy knots.

“Don’t make this any more difficult than it already is, Ren.”

The level-headedness of Hux’s tone boils his blood and he takes a more resounding step forward, eyes darkening. “After the thrilling game we’ve been playing? A little difficulty seems a rational outcome, general.”

Hux sighs, a long dragged out sound that tunes Kylo into something he had not noticed before. The heavy bags under Hux’s eyes, the pressed quality of his mouth that seems less fastidious and more brittle at its edges. Hux spares a look at the hallway again, turning back to Kylo with a sardonic expression. “You really are an insufferable cunt.”

“Get on with it.” Kylo snaps.

Hux sets his jaw, discomfort winding his spine so taut he can hardly walk without looking as if the normal stick wedged in his ass has been replaced with a redwood of terrifying girth. Kylo watches him walk down the hall which he had previously been staring. Seconds later Hux returns and Kylo’s eyebrows rush to his hairline.

The round angry face of none other than Rose Tico scowls back at him.

“This is a trick.” Kylo hisses.

Hux rolls his eyes. “If it were I wouldn’t be alone and injured with only a human who wouldn’t lift a finger to defend me.”

Kylo stares at the two dubiously. Rose has fared rather well these last few weeks it appears. Aside from a lack of sleep dulling her skin and the apparent redness and swelling around her eyes she looks shockingly alert.

“I figured you’d been lying to me this whole time, that you’d already killed her.”

Hux scowls off at the wall, his hand on Rose’s shoulder less a courtesy and more a precaution. “I wanted to,” he mumbles.

“What stopped you?”

He doesn’t answer.

Kylo notes how well put-together her clothes look, how she isn’t wearing the same set he had seen her in all those days ago, but a crisp pair of jeans and a modest if not expensive top colored the shade of cobalt. The handcuffs binding her wrists appear out-of-place on her unbruised skin and
Kylo thinks that perhaps she has never worn them until today.

Rose takes the shared silence as her opportunity to speak, or yell. “I wanna know where my sister is! And Rey! Tell me, or I swear I’ll—”

Hux’s sharp pull cuts her short, but it does nothing for the acid fury in her eyes. She hurls them like daggers at him with a familiarity and a passion Kylo almost misses. And the way Hux’s hand lingers…

The man has never liked touching anyone, least of all a creature he deems beneath his station.

Out of the blue Rose explodes on him, shackled hands flying up for his face, though his reflexes outmatch hers and she ends up flush against the wall, cuffed hands pinned above her head.

“Stop.” he whispers through his teeth.

Rose holds her ground for several long seconds, though eventually concedes, glancing wistfully at the door. Kylo knows her acquiescence is only because she realizes any attempted opposition would prove fruitless, for now anyway. In spite of that, she flashes Hux a vicious snarl for the sake of it.

Oppositely, Hux continues to hold her, breath laden with an unspoken emotion and fangs protruding from his open mouth. The two stand frozen this way for a minute longer than they should. Then, Rose’s lashes flicker and her stare finds the floor. Hux drops the hand holding her cuffs and steps away, posture returning to its old unyielding form.

He focuses his attention to Kylo. “Unkar Plutt is dead. Everyone who recently worked for him and knew the fledgling is dead. The nurse who looked after Paige Tico is dead, too.” he says.

Kylo’s eyes go wide, knowing the perpetrator before his mind registers the full context of Hux’s words. “Maul.”

“Yes. He is killing anyone connected to your girlfriend, hoping to bring her out into the open, or the hunter. Preferably both if Maul has it his way.”

“It’s dangerous, drawing this kind of attention.” Kylo shakes his head in disbelief.

How had he not heard about this?

Hux shrugs. “You know our supreme leader has never been a patient man. You and I can both attest to this… as much as it pains me to share anything with you.” He wrinkles his nose. “Nevertheless, Snoke’s impatience could prove a blessing in disguise. What I need from you is concealment.”

“For you? Forget it.” Kylo laughs incredulously.

“No. Not for me.”

“Who then?”

Hux’s eyes drift over to the other occupant in the room and Kylo gawks in astonishment.

“I’m still going to kill you before this is over.” Rose snarls from the corner of her mouth, refusing to look at either of them. “It doesn’t matter what hole you stash me in, I’m still going to hunt you down and drive a blade through your heart!”
“As you have so eloquently put it before and as I recall you no longer possess that special blade your sister gave you. Regardless, you would serve me no purpose rotting away in a pit.” Hux drawls.

“And what purpose is that exactly?” she asks icily.

He doesn’t answer.

Kylo focuses on him, perplexed. It appears—or at least it’s being portrayed, Kylo assumes—as if Hux bears feelings for this human, which stirs a trace of empathy in Kylo, though therein lies the rub. Can Kylo trust that this isn’t an act?

He has no way to know for certain.

“Answer me!” Rose shouts.

Hux ignores her, keeping his focus on Kylo. “Can you help me or not?”

“Help?” Kylo smirks.

“Yes.” Hux grits out.

He considers his adversary before replying. “Either of us betraying the other to Snoke now would ensure both our deaths.”

A tendon along Hux’s neck twitches.

“I’ll help you… on one condition.”

“Name it.”

Connix scowls from the passenger side of a waiting car as Kylo leads a very wrathful Rose Tico to Finn who holds one of the back car doors open for her. The two men share a cursory glance as Rose hesitates, glaring between them, then begrudgingly climbs in. She makes doubly sure to yank her shoulder from his grasp the second her ass hits the seat, face positively murderous.

Kylo conceals a smirk, thinking that perhaps they could have gotten along under different circumstances. Though she lacks experience, Rose Tico possesses an instinctively acute will to act, regardless of what stands in front her. In layman’s terms, she has balls. Big ones. He can see why she and Rey grew close.

Finn waits until Rose’s legs are tucked into the car and shuts the door behind her, shaking his head
“Do you even know what you’re doing anymore?”

Kylo leaves the question unanswered, slipping into his vehicle and driving away. He stares pointed ahead at the road, lost in his thoughts until he meets up with Cadoc thirty minutes later to conduct the fifth and last unnecessary sweep of the recently abandoned four-room house down past Rosewater Park.

Poe Dameron hasn’t returned there for days and very little trace of him was left behind. Kylo knows they won’t find anything new, but he needs to do this to center himself, or maybe to remind him of his goal? It doesn’t matter why. All that matters is that it’s something to keep his mind busy from the day’s bizarreness.

He observes the passing houses idly as they turns down a crumbling street.

All Hallows Eve ended several days ago, but some residents still maintain their decorations, slumped in jack-o-lanterns lit by crooked candles, the mired faces grinning out from modest porches, toilet papered trees, dancing skeletons and the occasional Dracula standing sentinel at a resident’s front door.

Kylo scoffs at the irony of that. If only they knew what lived beneath the pretty veneer of their city.

The First Order recently learned that Dameron had begun renting the house some months ago, but had vanished the night of Tekka’s death like a ghost. No trail, not a crumb nor a clue as to where he might be hiding now. Nothing.

As he pulls into the rutted driveway Cadoc checks his weapon, not bothering to pass Kylo his usual nod and exits the car without command. Kylo watches his subordinate carefully as he walks up to the door, Kylo’s fingers white-knuckled around the steering wheel.

Control. Remember to keep control.

The abnormal chill for this time of year ruffles his hair as he steps out, closing the door after him and ignoring the desire to challenge Cadoc’s mutinous behavior. Later, Kylo promises himself. If not for the simple act of disobedience, then because the house of cards he currently teeters upon is beginning to tumble. He can feel it, like the initial tremors of a terrifying earthquake beneath his feet.

Leaves rustle and blow about.

Kylo enters the house, never looking at Cadoc.

The two begin in the bedroom, searching over furniture already picked clean of anything remotely resembling evidence and checking inside the walls just in case the last four times had proven an error in observation. Nothing is found, not even signs of a trap set for them, which Kylo finds all the more vexing today.

But maybe it’s just his nerves.

Just the same, the longer Dameron remains hidden the more troubling this scenario becomes. Lately, Kylo feels like a player completely unaware of the rules for a game he never asked to play, or better yet, like a piece on a board he has no control over at all.

The gathered information shows Dameron purchased this rent house over a year ago, which would mean he has been in this city watching its nightly events for quite some time. Snoke had not been
pleased to hear this from what little Hux had described.

Kylo quickly obliterates any thoughts of the general, still uncomfortable with the fact that he had just contacted Finn as a favor for the ginger haired twat.

*What if the house of cards has already fallen,* he wonders.

“Master, I think I found something!” Cadoc’s voice calls from the cramped kitchen.

Kylo hurries to the him. When his eyes hit the spot Cadoc is pointing gooseflesh breaks out over his skin.

They couldn’t have possibly missed this in the other sweeps. Kylo’s wide eyes flit to Cadoc than back to the slip of paper. Someone had been here… recently. Picking up the torn sheet, Kylo brings it to his nose, hoping to find even the faintest remnants of a scent, but instead his face twists up in disgust and he shoves it away.

*Wolf’s Bane.*

The paper is soaked in it.

It reads:

*You are the door. She is the key. Now all he needs is the star map and its reader.*

P.

A chill runs up Kylo’s spine as he reads the words over again, and over, and over. With each read through another chill wracks his body, another blanket of gooseflesh, another stuttering heartbeat, because he knows—somehow he *knows* —those words were written specifically for him.

“What do you think it means?” Cadoc asks, not oblivious to Kylo’s overt reaction.

“I’m not sure.” he mutters.

“You’re lying.”

Kylo’s glares at him, finding the man’s gnarled expression twisted into a mask of disgust. “Excuse me?” he inquires calmly, though there is nothing calm happening inside of him.

Cadoc emits a scornful huff. “You’ve been lying for a while now and Dabria has been keeping your secret like the good little girl she is, hasn’t she?” His eyes flash malevolently as he advances on Kylo. “See I couldn’t figure it out at first, not until I followed her one night. You I might not be able to track, but she led me true.”

Kylo’s stomach plummets and his mouth goes dry as the words settle in on him like a slow rising tide of tar, dragging him down and choking him in disbelief.

He knew this day would come. He had always known.
“And I knew if I waited,” Cadoc continues, lips peeling into a wolfish grin, “that I would see the reaL betrayal. And I did.”

Kylo’s stomach churns with rage and the beast in him roars possessively. He had seen them! Cadoc had seen him and Rey, had seen her when she’d been on her knees and—

Does Silas know? The triplets?

His muscles lurch as he gazes instinctively at the door, wanting that instant to make a run for his car, rush to Rey and—if they have not already taken her—hide her away. Anywhere. At this point he would contact his own mother for help because…

I love her.

The phrase beats in his chest like a resounding drum and he finds himself lost in the gravity of its meaning. He pictures her hazel eyes, the dust of freckles over her shoulders, the slim prettiness of her ankles; how he’d like to run his hands along them, worshiping the elegance of their shape. He recalls her soft, rhythmic breathing as she had slept atop him, warm and alive after their lovemaking. All his.

Be some miracle, Kylo centers himself, calling back his fury and anchoring it just behind his voice. “Do the others know?”

Cadoc’s grin broadens until he’s naught but glittering teeth and cold, calculating eyes. “What do you think, alpha?”

I think you’ve outlived your usefulness.

Kylo holds his glare, opening his mouth to speak—

—when Cadoc surges forward, slipping the hidden blade from the scabbard at his back and aiming it directly at Kylo’s throat. Kylo darts away, though not fast enough to avoid a nasty slash and the sting of silver burns like fire. He hastily draws his gun, earning a sharp bark of laughter from his knight.

“You going to shoot me down like a dog, master? Is that how you repay your knights for their servitude?”

Kylo draws his knife with his opposite hand, brandishing it at Cadoc. “Do not pretend this has anything to do with honor. You seek power and position, nothing more.”

“Likewise do not pretend your ambitions are any less selfish, father-killer.” He snaps, waving the fingers of his free hand distractedly in an attempt to lure Kylo’s gaze.

The statement is meant to rile up Kylo’s emotions and it almost works, but Kylo knows his knights, he trained them himself; however, Cadoc in his mortal life had already seen the likes of war and as a werewolf he has proven the limitless reaches of his brutality. Kylo keeps his head, steadying the beast inside him. He must be precise.

“Does anyone else know?” Kylo repeats in a snarl.

Cadoc takes a swipe at him, a playful jab rather to gauge his opponent’s reaction. “What if Snoke knows? What do you think he plans to do with her, Kylo Ren? Eat her in front of you? That would be our supreme leader’s style, wouldn’t you agree?”
“Tell me now, Cadoc, and I will make your death painless.”

He laughs raucously and bears down upon Kylo with a sudden upward strike. It misses Kylo’s chin by millimeters and Kylo spins on the balls of his feet, balancing to the left and aiming for Cadoc’s ribs. The other wolf realizes his master’s counter swiftly enough to flip the hilt of the blade in his hand and drag it down into Kylo’s wrist holding the gun.

The weapon clatters to the floor and the two stagger away from each other, Cadoc with a fresh gash on his bicep Kylo hadn’t even realized he landed. He nurses his wrist, attempting to stifle the rush of blood down his fingers and glaring at his adversary with blazing eyes.

“You stink of her, you know. She has clouded your judgement.” Cadoc whispers, bowing low and bringing his dagger close to his body.

He intends to strike up from below again, a trademark of his style and Kylo sees it coming. He reacts accordingly and twirls behind Cadoc in a single fluid motion, bisecting the wolf’s back in a downward, diagonal arch that rips clothing, muscle and hopefully a vertebrae or two. Cadoc tumbles forward into the table, knocking it over with his weight and howling in rage. As he turns, Kylo is already barreling toward him, fist and palm pressing his blade outward for its intended target.

He would have made it, straight through the cage of ribs to the betrayer’s heart if not for the abrupt explosion of gunfire around them.

Shouts follow and Kylo watches in stunned silence as the glint of a sword swings from the back door exit of the room, which now stands ajar, straight for Cadoc’s throat. Seconds later a head hits the floor, rolling a trail of blood into the hallway.

Bullets pierce Kylo’s shoulder and abdomen—silver-tipped, his mind groans—and he staggers back, still too shocked by the sudden intrusion. Smoke fills the room, burning at his eyes to the point of tears and stinging his nostrils like wildfire. He strains to see the new assailants, but all he can make out are two silhouettes. They advance on him and he would have picked up his gun, but he finds his body failing. His limbs grow heavy, too dense to lift even their own weight and his thoughts flit around his grasping mind like manic birds. He can barely focus a coherent thought on the pain let alone any rational course of action.

The bullets must be coated with something, like wolfsbane but much, much stronger. Hunters. It has to be.

“No Kor Sella! Leave him!” a male voice barks.

“He’s Snoke’s Master of Ren! He needs to die!” another one fires back, this one female.

“Not yet!” the man argues.

Kylo attempts to turn the blade in his hand, intending to rest the business end against his forearm in a defensive posture, but his legs give out from under him and he falls to his ass, hitting so hard his bones jar under his skin. He considers this is how he will die, beheaded so easily by two hunters who had set a trap when he has spent the last six centuries chasing a vengeance that seems to belong to someone else.

When had he stopped believing in the certainty that his only purpose in this life was killing the man who had caused all his anguish? When did he start considering the possibility for more? Blackness swims around the edges of his vision and numbness threatens his extremities, moving
over him like a slow motion wave.

“He’s vulnerable, Poe! We can take him out, then we can find the girl and deal with her!”

“Damn it I said—”

Out of nowhere a new shadow darts onto the scene, brandishing a firearm Kylo knows all too well and aiming it into the smoke. Three shots echo out in the chaos and Kylo hears the distinct sound of a bullet ripping the flesh and a sharp cry.

Then, arms slip around his chest and Ruelle’s thick scent wafts over his face. “You fucking owe me if we live, do you hear me? You owe me fucking big time!”

He opens his mouth to speak, but no words come out. He only smiles, hoping she can see the sincerity of it before all around him dims and winks out.

Ruelle looks over at her master lying unconscious in the passenger seat, blood drenching his clothing and his skin chalk white. Gripping the stirring wheel, she makes up her mind on a choice she knows he won’t be happy about.

In fact, he might be furious.
PLEASE REMEMBER TO LEAVE ME SOME FEEDBACK!
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ALSO CHECK OUT THE LIVE TWEET THREAD WHERE I DO PROGRESS
FOOTNOTES/UPDATES!

Extra Notes & Links:
[...]

Chapter End Notes
A/N: I have recently acquired a new computer that lacks Photoshop, atm, so no new graphics for now. Buuut, the long-awaited werewolf smut has finally arrived! I wasn't exactly sure how to work it in once I'd written the end of the previous chapter, but I figured out how to make it work and made it smooth. Well, not exactly smooth. ☺ Enjoy! o/

SONG INSPIRATION: Personal Jesus - Marilyn Mason Cover & Wolf Moon - Type O Negative (I couldn't pick a fav. song for the smut, so I linked two instead. 😊)

CHAPTER WARNINGS:
- profanity, Rey's filthy mouth
- slapping, aggressive sex, Kylo wolf's out, wild shape-shifter f*cking basically... with a supernatural wolf man... which is totally fine

ART BY PANDACAPUCCINO

Lastly, don't get too comfortable because everything goes to hell in the next chapter.
Some of you will hate me. *hides*

See the end of the chapter for more notes

[...]

“*The world was on fire and no one could save me but you.*

*It's strange what desire will make foolish people do.*

*I'd never dreamed that I'd meet somebody like you.*

*And I'd never dreamed that I'd lose somebody like you.*”

- Wicked Game / Chris Isaak
Rey sits with Bodhi’s head resting on her knee, an empty bag of blood in her hand. It’s the first time he has allowed any part of her to actually touch him and she should be thrilled, but her mind is elsewhere, a deep frown marring her features.

Three nights ago she had woken alone, drenched in sweat with her heart thundering from a fresh nightmare that had chilled her to the bone. The voice had called to her again, beckoning her up to the cliff, to crimson hole in the earth… and a cave therein. Inside she had heard the roar of the surf, felt the spray of it soaking her hair, her clothes and witnessed a bizarre light shining off the walls. *Like a prism,* she had thought.

“*Look in the mirror.*” the voice said.

Then she saw it, a curious arch of glass hollowed out on a far wall, drapes of moss and overgrowth acting as nature’s curtains around it. At its very center, she thought she spied her silhouette, hazy and scarcely distinguishable in this low light. Around her, the walls had glittered, like a map of diamonds… a map of stars.

“*Come closer.*”

She dared a step forward—

—and her heart flew to her throat.

Behind her stood a shadow, nebulous, undulating like a reflection upon water and she jerked around, sure she would find it standing inches away, towering over her, but there was nothing. Only the crooked fenestrae of the cave from which filtered in rays of moonlight.

“You’re looking in the wrong direction, child. I am here.” the voice chuckled, coming from the mirror.

Fear prickled along her skin, so unsettlingly real that she’d felt her stomach churn nauseously. The thought of what waited in that reflection, what face might be staring back out at her sent charges of terror up her spine. Because she—

“*Remember.*”

Somehow, somewhen, she did recall something.

A woman adorned in blue, soft white petals wreathed in her hair.

A blood-curdling laugh in the dark.

And a man… a broken man with burned and twisted hands reaching to a burned and twisted sky.

Putting out her own trembling hand, she steeled herself with an intake of air and brushed aside the
moss drappings, swearing that no matter what she saw she would not run. She would stand and face it.

Suddenly, a pair of strong hands—impossibly strong hands—jerked her around and latched onto her neck like talons, choking the life out of her. She instinctively grabbed at anything that was flesh, clawing like an animal as her muscles burned, capillaries burst and heavy darkness surrounded the edges of her vision.

“How did you get here?! You shouldn’t be here!” the aggressor snarled. “Leave! LEAVE NOW!”

Through her haze, she was drawn to a pair of electric blue eyes, inhumanly bright in the dimness, like firelight to a moth. The spitting flames drove into her like two ruthless fire irons, suspending her in place like a mounted animal and not letting her go.

She’d wanted to scream, to kick and bite and tear and—

“You know this place.” the attacker had whispered. “Who are you? Answer me fledgling.”

The power in his voice made it impossible to disobey. She’d relinquished her name with no more than a jagged exhale, something inside her refusing to defy him.

“Rey…” He speaks the name carefully before leaning close, so close she could see the glint of deadly canines. “Never come back here again.”

The next moment she’d found herself bounding up in bed with a scream caught in her throat and tears streaming down her cheeks. Hope in seeking Kylo’s warmth had dwindled when she found she was alone and she had set for hours afterward, shivering against her knees.

Since that night a leery unease had set in on her and with the building agitation from being cooped up here in this lush hideaway, her thoughts kept meandering back to the same place.

No more waiting. I’ve waited all my life.

Outside the night stars glimmer at Rey shyly behind a heavy veil of clouds and she reaches unconsciously, settling her hand on Bodhi’s head and combing her fingers behind his ears. She is so distracted she fails to see his eyes soften and the delighted twitch of his tail. It should thrill her that he has finally allowed her touch, but her mind remains a knotted mess of worry too preoccupied for much else.

“I’m not a coward and I’m not a child.” she murmurs aloud.

Kylo, Ruelle, Maz, Finn… each of them has shielded her from potential threats and she’s had enough. She should have had enough months ago, but the clash of emotions after her change into a vampire had left her desperately seeking purchase amid the fiery trail of her life. Like a comet, it had suddenly exploded out ahead of her and left her with no other option but to hold on.

In the beginning, it had been impossible to accept, though eventually, one always learns to adapt to their situation. As negative and unwanted as it may well be.

Giving Bodhi’s head one last unconscious scratch she rises from the couch and walks outside. The animal follows, slipping out beside her as she shuts the door.

The thought of meeting this elusive assassin, Darth Maul, enters her mind and she honestly considers just starting for the road and not looking back, come dawn or daylight she would meet this murderer head-on. But something Maz had said suddenly weighs on her mind.
“You must realize how much Kylo has already put on the line for you. He doesn’t, the stupid pup, but you must. He’ll need your clear head before it’s over. I’m sure it’s obvious by now, but he reacts irrationally when it comes to you.”

If she were to reveal herself it could endanger Kylo.

But she cannot sit still forever. This hiding and waiting game has never satisfied her. All her life she has fought her way out of cages, from one to the next and this one, as welcoming and indulgent as it is, remains the same.

Hopefully, Maz will stop by later and Rey can speak to her, reason with her that she is just as capable of taking care of herself, that she can help Kylo, protect him if necessary.

If only Maz had a landline.

For days now Rey has planned on stealing Kylo’s cell in order to contact Rose, but she doubts her friend still possesses her own phone. Rey has to know how she’s doing, though; she needs to. Hearing her friend safe from someone else is not the same as hearing it from Rose herself. That and Rose would see reason with Rey’s desire to leave here. She would stand with Rey’s decision to fight in the open.

She feels so cut off from the world and she hates it.

That’s when she hears the familiar sound of a vehicle turning down the private road and an excited grin steals her lips. She bounds for the front yard, hoping to see Kylo’s headlights cutting down the long driveway when she stops.

That’s not Kylo’s car, or Ruelle’s… or Maz’s.

Rey does not recognize it at all.

Her heart quickens, her skin crawling with unease. She fades into the shadows of the big house as the car approaches, glancing behind her at the tree line. It’s dense and heavily shadowed, which could provide her some protection. If she has to she will make a run for it. Bodhi snarls at her side and she reaches for him, comforted by his warm body pressed against her leg.

The car pulls up and around the circle drive, coming to a stop at the front steps and Rey waits just out of sight, the furniture of the terrace allowing her some extra needed cover. Bodhi pushes in front of her, his tail rigid behind him.

When the driver exits, however, her mouth falls open at the sight of him.

“Finn?” she stutters.

He spots her and makes his way toward her without explanation, a cold mask of determination on his face. Bodhi barks at once, rushing at him without warning and Rey has to scramble to make it between them before someone loses trachea. Turning her back to Finn she puts her hands out defensively and attempts to console Bodhi’s rabid snarling.

“Rose mentioned you had a dog. Didn’t know you’d found him, though.” Finn asserts nonchalantly, not even remotely bothered by Bodhi’s glittering jaws.

“Kylo found him.” Rey snaps, though not entirely at Finn. Her unease grows and she turns to face him. “Why are you here? Where is he?”
Her suspicions are partially confirmed when a look of strain crosses his features, but he conceals it back under his mask. “Come with me. It isn’t safe here anymore.”

“What about Maz?”

“Rey—”

“No! You tell me what’s going on first!” Her outburst makes Bodhi begin to bark again and she has to shush him.

“Get in the car,” Finn commands, taking hold of her arm and pulling her in his direction.

“I said no! You tell me what’s—”

“Get your pretentious blood-sucking ass in the car before you get us killed!” a voice barks.

Rey glances over Finn’s shoulder to find none-other than Kaydel Connix glaring at her from the passenger side. Beside her is another woman Rey does not recognize, hair woven in a braided ponytail along her shoulder and comely features set with a hard frown.

“No,” Rey whispers, looking back at Finn. “You will tell me just what the hell is going on before I go anywhere with you.”

“Kylo is hurt.”

Rey’s heart stops. She wants to form words, but her throat will not comply. Instead, she stares dumbly at Finn with her heart pounding in her skull.

“Come on Rey. We need to get you someplace safe.”

At last, she complies, following him to the driver’s side back door and sliding into the seat, letting him shut the door behind Bodhi as the animal hops protectively into Rey’s lap.

Finn takes the drive at near max speed and they are on the highway in a flash. All the while Bodhi snarls between the three wolves, his hefty weight pressed into Rey’s lap and acting as an anchor; exactly what she needs at this moment.

“Maz is missing.” Finn breaks the stony silence. “Her club has been burned down.”

“Darth Maul?” Rey whispers, her body trembling.

“Yes,” the unnamed girl beside her growls as she peers out the window, a distant look of hatred darkening her face.

Kaydel leans around from the front, ignoring Bodhi’s warning croon. “That and some dead bodies, humans you might have known, bloodsucker. Your old boss, some acquaintances and a nurse who looked after Paige Tico from the hospital.”

Rey shakes her head in disbelief before finally finding her voice. “Why?”

“Because you have a heart.” Kaydel deadpans.

“He had hoped it would draw you out.” the unnamed girl adds tersely.

“What about Kylo? Where is he?” Rey feels her face heat up with embarrassment at how her tone gives her away.
Kaydel scoffs and turns back to facing the road while the other girl doesn’t answer. It’s Finn who happens to nullify her fears. “He’s alive and healing. Not conscious yet, which is a relief.” Then, a pause. “He’s not as bad off as I’d made out, but I needed you to get in the car.”

Anger flares under Rey’s skin. “You tricked me?”

His sheepish grin reflects in the rearview mirror. “Would you have come with me any other way?”

No, she thinks, though this does nothing to dull her irritation.

“Where is Ruelle?”

“Hopefully convincing the First Order on her bullshit fable that Kylo is just missing, but who knows. Maybe Snoke has figured out her ruse and she’s already dead.” Kaydel shrugs.

“I’d be more concerned about the other Knights of Ren.” the unnamed girl murmurs, a tremor wavering through her hands.

“I’d be more concerned about Darth Maul,” Finn speaks over them.

Silence falls and Rey pulls Bodhi close, finding comfort in the heat of his fur, the calm thud of his pulse. Hunger tingles at the back of her throat, but she ignores it easily, too preoccupied with the information dump she has just experienced. A part of her wants to cry, maybe for customary’s sake, but she cannot find the will. All she can do is sit numbly in her seat, closing her eyes and burying her face against the pulse point of Bodhi’s neck.

Rey arrives to a secluded cabin far into the forest past the city, farther than she or Rose have ever traveled before. The unnamed wolf walks with Kaydel out to a path leading into the trees and Finn leads her toward the cabin.

“Don’t mind them. Jess is still upset about what happened. You can’t blame her.”

Jess.

Rey catalogs the name away in her memory and asks. “What happened?”

“She was tortured by the triplets.”

Finn gives no further explanation to this and opens the door of the cabin. Rich light pours through and the sharp scent of astringents follows. Rey wrinkles her nose at it, her heightened senses enough to make the odor sting her nostrils. Bodhi offers an excited whine and rushes in first, leaving Rey gaping after him until she too catches the familiar trace of cedar and musk.
Her feet move of their own accord, hastening across the threshold and into the living area, which appears to have been turned into a makeshift hospice room. Kylo lies sleeping on a cot too small for his overflowing limbs and his exposed chest is mottled with red puckered patches of healing flesh. Rey’s hand reaches involuntarily to her shirt collar, tugging worriedly at it. His hair is a matted mess, pants coated in dried blood with what appears to be his shredded top piled atop a nearby table with various medical tools and his lips are a shocking white.

“It’s not as bad as it looks.” someone says behind her.

Rey whirls, finding a prim and poised Leia Organa watching her, the woman’s deep-colored eyes flitting between her and her son. The intensity in that stare curls a vine of unease in Rey’s gut as she makes note of a very obvious similarity.

They are devil’s gold, just like Kylo’s.

And there is a knowing in them.

A blush creeps up Rey’s neck into her cheeks.

Leia’s mouth curls ever so slightly, but she overlooks Rey’s reaction, focusing instead on Kylo. “He has been shot multiple times. The hunters had the bullets coated with wolfsbane, hemlock and another herb we have yet to decipher. The concoction caused dizziness, numbness and vomiting before loss of consciousness. Unlike humans, however, werewolves are immune to the deadly effects of hemlock.”

“So he’ll wake up?” Rey migrates closer, not liking the lack of expression on Kylo’s face.

“Shortly, yes. His blood loss is moderate, but he heals quickly. He always has.” Leia speaks this latter part almost imperceptibly.

“He’ll be angry when he wakes.” Rey opines.

Leia steps closer to her, passing Rey a pointed glance from the corner of her eye. “I suppose then we’re lucky that you’re here.”

The blush in her cheeks grows hotter and she averts her gaze to the far wall. Rey welcomes the silence that follows, not exactly wanting to continue conversation with the mother of the man she has fucked in ways she wouldn’t dare admit aloud, and by the obscure twinkle in this woman’s eyes, she knows.

“Rey?”

Her heart leaps at the familiar voice and she turns, spotting its owner gawking at her from the kitchen archway. “Rose?” she stutters.

The other girl’s face breaks into a smile, tears wavering in her eyes like water over stone. Then, another face steps out beside Rose and Rey’s heart soars.

“Paige!” A choked sob of elation leaves her throat.

The three collide seconds later, hugging each other fiercely as their laughter echoes around them. Rey holds so tightly to Rose a part of her warns she might break her ribs, but Rose appears barely affected and pulls her closer. Paige surrounds them with her sheltering arms and kisses both of their
foreheads, which makes Rey cry even harder, the action reminding her of all those times she had felt envy towards Rose, all those times she had yearned for a family she never realized she already had.

_They smell like home_, she thinks; Rose’s soft tangerine and Paige’s maternal lavender. How she has missed them.

They part eventually, each wearing a stupidly joyous grin.

Rose speaks first. ‘You’re alive! Paige and I had been so worried! Then we were attacked and…’ she pauses, her eyes traveling to the unconscious eyesore in the middle of the room.

“I was taken the hospital apparently.” Paige picks up for her sister. “I just woke up a few days ago. I’m glad you’re alright.”

Rey frowns. Alright is a very broad term of feeling.

The shift of her mood seems to affect the entire room, Rose especially.

“So… you’re a vampire?” she asks warily.

Rey opens her mouth to answer but finds herself stung. She can understand Rose’s mistrust surely, but that doesn’t make it hurt any less. “Yes.” she murmurs. “The night those vampires attacked us…”

Rose nods. “The one who bit you.”

Rey looks down at her shoes, unsure of what else to say.

Paige suddenly takes her hand. “I’m sorry Rey. I should have done a better job of protecting you. I should have been there.”

“You couldn’t have known. Don’t do that.” Rey forces a smile.

“You don’t understand.” Paige shakes her head, meeting Rey’s stare earnestly. “Poe had promised me he’d make sure you were never caught up in this mess.”

Rey shakes her head. “What?”

“You were never supposed to be involved, but that night in the subway happened. Before we could get to you the vampires had found you and…”

Rose puts her arms around Rey’s shoulders, which she realizes have grown abnormally tense. The pieces finally fall into place and she gasps. “Are you a hunter?”

Paige laughs humorlessly. “A poor example of one in training.”

Rey cannot stifle the betrayal that grips her chest and turns to Rose, accusation in her tone. “Did you know?”

“No one knew, only Poe,” Paige answers for her, eyes dropping to the floor. “I’m so sorry Rey.”
It shouldn’t have come as a surprise to Rey all the hidden things happening right under her nose. Paige, a hunter-in-training. She had kept the secret from everyone, including Rose and the way Rose had responded to some of Rey’s questions about the vampire who held her captive suggests she has secrets of her own.

Rey supposes it’s only fair. She has secrets, too.

An abrupt explosion of sound erupts throughout the cabin, sending all three girls from their seats and into the living room. A shattered lamp lays scattered across the floor near the entrance and the bed where Kylo had lain is vacant. Instead, he stands all of his imposing six feet above his mother, forcing her to angle her chin high to look him in the face.

“Where am I?” Kylo inquires icily.

“Safe. No one in the Resistance or First Order knows you’re here.” Leia offers, her expression resolute.

“Where is Ruelle?”

“She’s the one who brought you here.”

“Don’t lie to me, general.” his glare darkens.

Leia scowls. “I may have kept truths from you, Ben, but I have never lied to you.”

“Don’t call me that!”

“Kylo!” Rey blurts out, though shocked by her interjection.

He whips around, nostrils flaring with a gasp as his eyes zero in on her. “Rey…”

She bites her lip at the softness in his voice and before she can blink he’s on her, crushing her to his chest in a possessive embrace which she welcomes. But she’s still angry with him is she not? Mad that he had made her take him so slowly that night, unwilling to appease his baser instincts and give her the roughness she sought. Or perhaps it was the chilly space left in her bed after she’d woken from that awful nightmare.

“Stop being an asshole.” she snipes, glaring up at him.

Kylo seems not to comprehend her words at all. “You’re not hurt,” he whispers, leaning back to do a quick scan of her body.

“Of course not, idiot. You are.”

He blinks. “No, I mean—Cadoc. He saw…” Kylo hesitates, seeming unsure of his next words. “He knows. About you. He could have told the others. I thought that…”
Rey breaks away from his stare, suddenly self-conscious of all the eyes watching them around the room. She would pull away from him, but his hold on her is steel.

“Well, I’m fine. Just fine. Thanks.”

When she looks up at him again he wears a concerned scowl, as if trying to pry from her all the emotions he cannot see. A thread of his thoughts surfaces in her mind and she cannot deny the warmth that spreads outward from her chest, soothing down to her toes.

‘I was afraid I’d lost you.’

The desire to kiss him flits across her brain and she stamps it out, citing her anger and the lack of privacy as her reasoning to ignore this urge. Someone clears their throat and Rey blushes profusely, wriggling her way out of his arms and standing a few paces back. Kylo looks bereft, but the emotion passes swiftly, his face hardening into a cold mask as he glances at Leia.

“Where is Ruelle?” he asks again.

“She has returned to the First Order to convince them that you are missing, a temporary alibi. One I doubt will live for very long.”

Kylo scoffs. “If it lives at all. Snoke will kill her if he thinks she’s lying, or worse. Not that you care.”

A muscle under Leia’s left eye twitches, though she holds to her resolve. “It’s not entirely a lie. Half truths are far easier to believe than you’d think.”

“I’ve no need for a lesson in politics.” he snaps.

“After the game you and Finn have been playing behind my back, I would think you’d have some appreciation for such trivialities.”

The wolf matron’s words carry a heavier meaning and unspoken history passes between them as Rey watches, gauging their reactions. Kylo does not so much as offer a snide huff and simply turns away. Leia on the other hand levels a calculating scowl at his back.

“I am no one’s ally but my own,” he mutters.

“As you have so eloquently shown in the past.”

Rey feels the electric charge of his rage, ushering in like a storm fraught with lightning and she half expects him to lash out. Rose and Paige even slink back into the kitchen, watching the exchange cautiously. Thankfully, however, he remains composed. Mostly.

“Needless to say, your supreme leader will not show the same leniency to your knight that I have shown to mine.”

Kylo cuts a glare over his shoulder at her. “Which is exactly why you’re losing.”

“We’re both losing. For centuries we have battled one another, killed each other over a past no one remembers.” Leia counters.

“Except you and Skywalker is that right? Since you recall it so accurately.” he spits venomously, his hands curling into fists.

“And you believe Snoke told you the whole truth? Don’t insult the fact that you are my blood.
“You’re smarter than that.” she fires back patronizingly.

“Your blood?” he chuckles emptily. “Is that why you sent me to a man who intended to murder me in my sleep? Is that how much being your blood means to you?”

Leia shakes her head. “Luke was wrong—”

“That’s putting it lightly!” he hisses, stopping her short as he shoves past her toward the door.

“Don’t you walk away from me, Ben Solo! I forgave your sins a long time ago! It’s time you forgave me and my brother ours!”

He ignores her, shoving open the door so hard it bangs the outside wall and shivers feebly with the impact. Rey watches him disappear into the stygian treeline, a look of shocked discombobulation on her face. The air of the cabin only thickens further with tension as Leia turns to Paige.

“Where is Poe Dameron?”

Paige raises a skeptical eyebrow at her. “Just because you saved me, does not mean I’m on your side.”

Leia appears frustrated, though unsurprised. “My brother is not a threat to humans. If Dameron has taught you anything about being a hunter, you would know this from the histories.”

“It’s not your brother we’re worried about.”

“What then?”

“If you know the histories as you say, then you would know your brother didn’t just disappear because of his failure with your son.”

Leia pinches the bridge of her nose and closes her eyes as if to stave off a migraine. “If you’re talking about the Gate of Starfall, then I can tell you that it doesn’t exist. It was a lie begun by Snoke in order to rally others to his cause.”

“Legend says that this gateway opens into a place of great power, a dark place filled with monsters even more terrifying than the likes of your kind.” Paige pushes on, ignoring Leia’s cynicism.

“I know the story.” she snaps. “Supposedly a powerful warlock remains locked away in that place with my brother guarding the only door of his escape. It’s just a story!”

Paige stares at her, unmoved as silence falls over them.

Rose glances at Rey as Rey finds herself eyeing the nightly shadows outside. With the blitz of jarring information in the last twenty-four hours, which seems to be a weekly thing now, she finds herself unable to fully process it, especially the eerie shiver that had crawled up her spine at the mention of Skywalker and a door.

Her nightmare resurfaces and she shakes her head, attempting to clear it, but it refuses to withdraw.

Rey focuses instead on the easiest of her emotions, anger, and stomps out of the cabin after her petulant, oversized wolf. She finds him almost a mile into the woods fifteen minutes later, pacing in front of a gurgling brook.

He stops once catching a whiff of her scent, the pinched rage on his face softening.
They stare at one another for a long time, Rey crossing her arms in order to maintain her air of agitation, but his nude chest in the checkered moonlight from the treetops is extremely distracting.

“It’s chilly out here.”

She rolls her eyes at his out-of-the-blue statement about the weather and looks away to the stream.

He dares a step forward, emotions warring on his face. “I’m sorry for…” his voice dies off and he purses his lips, plush and full of color, which a part of her is thankful for.

She waits.

And he merely looks at her, his words seemingly caught in his throat. She knows what he means and it only makes her blood boil hotter.

“Rey, I’m sorry for every—”

The reaction comes out of nowhere, driven from the pit of her stomach by a black rage that leaves her panting, but his apology is too much. She lounges forward, slapping him hard across the face, so hard she draws blood. His eyes go wide in shock and she gazes up in horror at his broken lip, her emotions a conflicted mess.

What had happened to her was not her fault and much has been taken from her, but the last thing she wants is pity, or remorse. She is not some fragile heirloom meant to be kept locked away, stifled like a flower without sunlight.

Breakable she may be, but not fragile.

Rey straightens, glaring up at him with renewed contempt. “I don’t like apologies.” she declares, using his own words against him.

His nostrils flare, the thin ribbon of blood trickling down his chin before his tongue swipes some away. Her core pulses at the action, a delightful tingle spreading down her thighs as the air around them thickens, bewitched with a turbulent, maddening heat.

She slaps him again, this time angling her nails inward and producing three fresh welts on his cheek. “I don’t like waking up alone, either.”

He towers over her, the crescents of his eyes glowing in the darkness like matching blades and Rey takes a careful step back, spine remaining taunt, shoulders rolled back. She tilts her chin up and his lip curls at her expression of defiance. He advances, both of them moving deeper into a thicket of trees until she feels her back hit the solid width of a trunk, though before she can escape, his hand wraps around her neck, pinning her in place.

She glares up at him, a small smile toying with her lips. Never in Rey’s life would she have believed these kinds of games thrilled her, but they do. Oh, how they do.

“Did you have another nightmare?” he asks huskily, referencing her earlier statement.

“Yes,” she replies.

“Did it frighten you?”

Rey feels his fingers caress her skin even as his grip around her throat tightens and whispers. “Yes.”
Kylo leans close, brushing his nose up her chest, bunching the material there; then along her collarbone, her jawline, inhaling her scent like a drug. “I should have been there to make it better,” he hums. “You smell so good when you’re like this.”

Fear, the beast in her grins. It is our aphrodisiac.

Fear, she nods—

—and slaps him a third time.

He staggers back, real fury swirling in his stare now and she grins, daring the monster in him to emerge, to take her like she has needed him to since the night she witnessed his bestial form. His muscles ripple and his skin quivers as a low roar builds in his chest. Clothes rip and fall away as she watches him grow, larger and larger until his silhouette blocks out the treetops, eclipsing her in his shadow.

Rey isn’t sure how her clothes end up on the forest floor, but in the next second, she finds herself flush against the unforgiving bark of a tree with his bulk preventing her escape and her body trembling with excitement. He forces his muzzle into the crook of her neck, breathing in possessive huffs and raising her hips to meet his. She bites viciously into her lip, her fangs piercing flesh as he rubs his cock against her weeping cunt and setting her veins ablaze.

God, she’s already so wet.

It’s just as well. The more questionable side of herself has fantasized for weeks what it would be like—him taking her this way, all monster and fur and teeth, snarls and grunts and animal musk. Her eyes drift down between them to witness the blushing pink of his human flesh gone, replaced by a rich and lovely sable. She smiles, angling forward and nuzzling along his throat to relish the coarse texture of his mane.

Kylo croons encouraging, then without warning, rams up into her, burying himself to the hilt and wrenching a scream from her lungs. The sensation of pain and pleasure bleeds her eyes crimson and she throws her head back against the tree. He grinds her down onto him, not bothering with gentleness tonight.

She growls his name, willing him to push harder, faster, deeper.

The lewd slapping of their bodies drives her mind feral and she digs her nails past his fur, anchoring into his flesh as he pounds into her, again and again, and again, filling her with the sensation of him; over and over, harder and faster.

But it’s coming too fast, and there’s no way to stop it.

Seconds later, she cries into the night, the muscles of her cunt squeezing around him like a vice and drawing a brutal roar from his chest. He tosses his head back, maw opening and filling the air with savage noise as he rides her hard through her orgasm, finding his own with one final violent thrust. Her legs quiver uncontrollably as he spills into her and her vision whites out, bones humming with the sound of his guttural howl.

She sinks uselessly onto him, her body too exhausted to maintain its weight and she burrows into his embrace, listening to his thoughts as they rush up to her like leaves caught in an autumn wind.

‘Mine.’

‘So tight. Perfect. Beautiful.’
... love her.
A/N: This chapter was difficult to write. 😁 And the next few will not be easy to read, either, but I promise a happy ending!!!

** Also, I've posted my new LotR A/B/O Reylo project, Oathbreaker for anyone interested! Chapter two goes up before the next update to this project!

**SONG INSPIRATION: Cassandra - Theatre of Tragedy & (for anyone interested, this would be the type of music I'd expect at one of Snoke's Red Masques)

Nymphetamine Fix - Cradle of Filth

**CHAPTER WARNINGS:
- profanity
- Kylo walking around naked and his mother witnessing it? Is that a problem for some?
- torture, character forced to witness torture, major secondary character death, descriptions of morbid sorcery and gory decapitation

See the end of the chapter for more notes

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“Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.”

- Paradise Lost / John Milton

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Kylo should have seen this coming. He had known his master too long, but like with all ironies, distraction had proven a potent lure. He had grown comfortable, reckless, and distraction had crept
in like the night, taking hold while he was lost in the dream of her.

Now he will pay dearly for it.

‘You’re so like your mother, kid, focused solely on your goal. It’s a talent to be sure, but beware. It’s also a deadly blindspot.’

For the first time in centuries, Kylo does not bother shutting out the voice… or the guilt. Instead, he embraces it, clinging to the image of his father’s face like a helpless child.

The grand ballroom is coldly lit, draperies of crimson lining the walls, diamonds and gemstone curtains glittering from the ceiling around the obnoxious emblem of the First Order and a sea of vulturous empty faces glaring back at him. The night of the Red Masque, a night of death.

“Good of you to finally come home, Kylo Ren.” Snoke grins from his perch.

And placed protectively between his knees is Rey. She sits with her legs tucked under her bottom and her head bowed, a crown of white flowers woven into her hair. Snoke has also had her adorned in ceremonial red robes, their long skirts pouring over the steps of the throne like blood. Silver shackles weigh her wrists and neck, evidence of sap burns rubbed into her skin.

Vervain, his wolf growls.

Not lethal, but enough to keep her still, docile against the pain.

Snoke’s hand rests on her head in a possessive gesture that makes Kylo’s blood boil and he feels his heart hammering so hard he knows the cage of his ribs will shatter. Then, Rey looks up at him and the fear he sees in the wide, hypnotized quality of her red eyes rips the floor right out from under him.

He swallows hard, doing everything in his power to keep his breathing steady, his mind clear.

He should have seen this coming.

- 0 -

- 7 DAYS EARLIER -

- 0 -

"Do you think it wise, going back to Snoke without telling Rey?" Leia asked.

He glowered out at the midday sun. “Frankly that’s none of your concern and just because one of my subordinates sought you out does not make us allies, either.”

“Yes.” she smiled. “Everyone seems adamant to remind me of that lately. You, the hunters… yet somehow we keep finding ourselves here, don’t we?”

Kylo huffed, running a frustrated hand through his hair. He could never hide his feelings in front of her. She made it practically impossible. Swallowing a ton of his pride he muttered. “Thank you.”
“You’ve no need to thank me, Ben. I would have helped regardless.”

She was firm in not giving up on that name and he hated how she looked at him now, the ghost of a smirk tilting her lips, hope shining in her gaze. Most of all he hated being indebted to her.

He recalled the night he’d woken in the cabin, the argument; then Rey. A blush suffused his cheeks at the memory of his mother’s face as she had witnessed him strode up to the cabin naked as the day he was born with a lightly dozing Rey in his arms. The way Leia’s expression had opened, mouth agape and lashes fluttering wide with acute understanding. His mother knew. And Kylo had been powerless to shield that knowledge from her.

“Ruelle doesn’t agree with your plan, either.”

Kylo scoffed. “You’re on a first name basis now?”

She approached carefully, looking out the window of the cabin to the lake where his eyes currently wander. “She cares for the well-being of my son. I’m not above forming relationships based on a mutual goal.” Leia remarked matter-a-factly.

Kylo refused to reply and continued staring at the placid water’s surface.

The silence stretched, growing heavy.

Leia pursed her lips, seeming to choose her words carefully. “I’m glad you had her by your side. She is loyal and—”

“Don’t! You’ve no right to mention loyalty to me!” he snapped abruptly.

Festered ancient wounds of the past pulsed with renewed ire and Leia scowled down at her folded hands.

“What Luke did was unforgivable.” she murmured.

He shook his head, walking away from her.

“But he must have had a reason to have done—”

Kylo reacted instantly, throwing the nearest furniture he could grab and caving in a nearby wall. “That’s so like you! I don’t know what I was expecting! You haven’t changed at all!”

Leia squares her shoulders, undeterred by his booming growl. “And you killed your own father! Is that any less unforgivable?”

“I won’t apologize for my actions.” he sneers. “What I did was well within the law of our kind. And you had every chance to turn him. You chose his death long before I ever…” but he couldn’t say it. Somehow the word seized his tongue, freezing him to the spot.

Leia caught his hesitation and took advantage of it, her words dripping with venom. “Do not pretend you murdered your own father for the sake of our laws. You did it for Snoke. And if those claw marks down your back are any indication, then I suggest you consider reacquainting yourself with our laws.”

Kylo bit his tongue, wanting to throw more furniture, but knowing it would only prove his petulance.

“You’re in love with a vampire.” Leia continued. “Snoke himself forbid such a union centuries
ago. Where does that leave you, Ben?”

He didn’t answer her.

He couldn’t.

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1 DAY EARLIER

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Finn met him hours after his fight with Rey. He should have known Leia would tell her; that and Rey was acutely observant, a quality he so treasured about her. Though in this instance, he had found it… confining. The fewer people he had to worry about in this plan, the better. As for the plan —

“It’s a stupid plan.” Finn opined.

Kylo scoffed. “I didn’t ask you here for your opinion. I asked you here for your help.”

Finn smirked. “I’m flattered.”

Kylo’s left eye twitched, his patience worn thin. “You know I still want to kill you, or have you forgotten that, traitor?”

The word had little meaning anymore, and both men knew it.

“Don’t strain yourself.” Finn chuckles.

Ignoring the awkward moment, Kylo plowed ahead. “Find Maz.”

“You sure she’ll help us?”

“After what Maul did to her club, I’m sure neutrality is no longer on the table,” he whispered, then adding. “Find the hunter, too, Poe Dameron.”

“You mean the one who tried to kill you?” Finn asks incredulously.

“He wasn’t trying to kill me. Just find him, find Maz and be ready for my call. And don’t tell the others.”

“What are you planning?”

“You’ll find out soon enough,” Kylo said as he disappeared into the trees.
The cell rang ceaselessly before he answered in his clipped tone. “So you’re not dead. I’m thrilled. Snoke has the whole Supremacy out searching for you.”

“Shut up and listen.” Kylo snapped. “We make our move at the Red Masque.”

“What are you bloody mad?”

“It’s the only chance we have.”

“At what point?! He is surrounded at all times during this event. You know that!” Hux growled, the exhaustion in his voice heavier than Kylo had ever heard it before.

“We don’t have a choice,” he stated coolly.

“I never agreed to this.”

“You agreed to this the night you blackmailed me.”

A long silence.

“Can Phasma be trusted?” Kylo finally asked.

“I’m not sure.” Hux grated out.

“Then find Mitaka and be ready for my call.”

Kylo had been such a child, his hopes of keeping everyone hidden now a fool’s dream in the face of this nightmare. And at what cost? His desire for vengeance led him here and what did he have to show for it?

Shame. Only shame.

Sparkling flukes and sharp, cold bodies dressed to the most decadent extent of wealth fill the chamber, their human thralls fawning over them with the scent of blood like an oppressive mist in the air. The Red Masque is a celebration of extravagance and the temporary throne at the center of the room is no exception, elevated by a marble platform and outfitted with gold trimming.
Atop this platform, kneeling in front of Snoke’s throne, are four people Kylo had hoped to never see there, one of which he is shocked to find he feels sympathy for at all. Hux glares back at him, his usually pinched expression abnormally slackened and his cerulean eyes alive with terror. Following the line of other kneeling figures, Kylo is filled with a sense of helplessness so strong he nearly stumbles to his knees—

But his mother’s proud expression stops him short. She lifts her chin, holding him high as the world around them closes in, the sea of empty faces leering and giggling like a pack of ravenous hyenas.

Snoke waves his hand so silence them and motions for the last in line to be brought forward. Ruelle. Kylo watches with dismay as his own knight, Silas Ren, bring her forth, his unforgiving hands shoving her down the steps to crumble at his knees. She hits the floor with a sickening sound and looks up into Kylo’s eyes. His instincts yell for him to rush forward, to protect her, but all else warns against it.

Snoke observes them, placing his hand back atop Rey’s head and petting her hair covetously. Kylo frowns at Rey, bewildered by her lack of response when suddenly she erupts, fingers hooked into claws and aimed at Snoke’s face. Though before she can launch off the floor, the supreme leader comes down upon her with a punishing grip and she emits a growling yelp, the emotion draining from her face and her body crumpling like a doll. Kylo surveys the scene with utter terror, stunned by his master’s unfamiliar show of power.

What is this dark magic?

Kylo’s stomach turns at the possibilities.

“Rise Ruelle. Stand before of your Master of Ren.” Snoke orders mockingly, settling back in his seat.

She does so with difficulty, her bloodied limbs quaking.

Kylo swallows hard, his hands balling into fists as she bites her lip. A scant shimmer of tears waver at the corners of her eyes, imperceptible to those farther away, but Kylo sees it and it pierces his heart. He wants to reassure her, convince her that the situation isn’t fast racing toward a fatal precipice, but he realizes he’d only be trying to convince himself.

“She is loyal to you, Kylo, so loyal, in fact, that she attempted to conceal your treachery from me when questioned. Truly a pity. I envy such loyalty.” Snoke motions to Silas, who lets go of Ruelle and genuflects before him. Grinning, Snoke carries on. “Your other knights, however, should not be trusted.”

Kylo’s glare flashes at Silas’ exposed back, wanting to rend the lesser wolf into, to mutilate his corpse and piss on his bones. Ruelle’s warning glance stalls his anger enough for him to take a steadying breath, but this only proves temporary. The fresh gashes along her cheeks and neck are enough to set his blood on fire.

How could he have allowed this to happen to her? She is his responsibility, his fellow pack member… his family.

Snoke’s chuckle draws Kylo’s attention. “Alas, as commendable as Silas Ren’s efforts may have been, I’ve known for quite some time about your treachery.”

Of course you did. Kylo’s eyes cut up to those arctic pits atop the throne, the hate in him
overflowing, manifesting as a metallic taste at the back of his throat and growing hotter, sharper.
“So enforce the law,” he drawls.

Snoke laughs, raucous and grating on the walls. “Well, well, well. It looks as if my presumption before was incorrect, Kylo Ren. You are the heir of Vader. All the same, I cannot enforce the law upon you, dear child. I need you alive.”

The word is poison to his ears, a condescending jab that leaves his mouth mobile, tongue working over teeth in an attempt to swallow back the humiliation the word brings. But humiliation soon mingles with confusion as he considers the rest of the supreme leader’s statement. What could he mean by, ‘I need you alive’?

Glancing at his left, Snoke nods to a shadow waiting behind his throne and the dread in Kylo’s gut suddenly unfurls, spinning out of control and seizing his muscles in a snake-like grip. The scent of dark magic perforates the room as Darth Maul steps forward and Kylo moves at once, aiming to place himself between Maul and Ruelle. He never makes it. The triplets, appearing from within the crowd, surge upon him, tearing his feet out from under him and driving his chest into the floor. Air rips from his lungs in a rush as their knees grind into his back and he strains to look up at Ruelle.

“Stop Kylo!” she yells.

“I would heed your subordinate’s suggestion.” Snoke intones, flashing a smirk at Maul.

Maul mirrors it, the gleam for murder in his hellish orbs as he closes the distance between him and Ruelle. Kylo’s nostrils flare in panic and he bares his teeth, a feeble attempt at a warning that Maul ignores completely.

“Did you think I wouldn’t suspect an attack tonight? That I would sit idly atop this chair without a plan of my own?” Snoke spreads his arms, motioning to the kneeling figures before him. “As you can see, you have been outplayed, Kylo Ren. Your choices led you here. Now you must face them.”

Before Kylo can respond Ruelle emits a strangled yelp as her body is flung backwards into the stairs, her spine cracking against the marble. Kylo growls in fury, nearly breaking free of his captors if not for Silas turning and kicking him solidly in the chin. Blood fills his mouth as he watches the next few seconds unfold helplessly. Maul strodes up to Ruelle, bare hands flexing and spirals of shadow wisping below his fingertips like silken tendrils. The young wolf rises unsteadily, self preservation hardening her face into a snarl and she meets her opponent head on, barreling at him with lithe speed.

But she is easily outmatched.

Kylo screams, possibly a word, maybe to stop—he doesn’t know. All he does know is that he can only watch as a member of his pack collides with the merciless hand of an elder and is hoisted off the ground. Her lovely face opens wide, jaw seeming almost to unhinge as the shadow tendrils invade her lips and Kylo relinquishes a second scream, this one long and unending. It tears through his body like a maelstrom, echoing up to the ceiling and shaking the very foundations of the mansion.

Ruelle’s body spasms, her beautiful eyes rolling back to white as the warmth of her skin dwindles and her flesh withers. Maul draws her close, slanting his mouth over hers in a morbid kiss of death.

Then, it’s done, the light extinguishing from the sightless gaze of a skull’s face.
Kylo’s heart stutters… and cracks in two. He grinds his cheek against the cold floor as if that might somehow rid him of the agony, but it only serves to intensify it.

Then, Snoke’s low croon pervades his senses. “You have stung me, Kylo Ren, with your betrayal. You were like a son to me. I gave you your life.”

And something inside Kylo rouses, a strange tremor of awareness he had not felt in ages. He was a boy again, staring through the eyes of youth into the worn blue gaze of his father’s as a smile dimpled the man’s face. Ben mimicked him, desiring more than anything to keep that smile alive.

Han had leaned forward and kissed his forehead, a lifetime’s worth of words said with that single gesture. Elation welled up in Ben’s chest at knowing he had made his father proud and, for once, they sat as equals near the riverside. Not human, not werewolf; only father and son.

Kylo had forgotten that day. He had pushed it so deep into the recesses of his mind that the resurgence of it shocked him. Self-preservation had driven his decision to conceal it on the night his sword pierced his father’s heart and now he remembers why.

Because it had been the happiest day of his life.

“You are not my father.” Kylo whispers, deathly calm.

“No.” he leers. “You killed him. And I am ever grateful for that, Gatekeeper.”

Gatekeeper?

Poe’s letter resurfaces in Kylo’s mind and a dangerous seed of thought blossoms, one where his actions have consequences, consequences he could never have dreamed. In the early days of the war, before Kylo had turned, Snoke spoke of a gateway to a place of terrible power. Though he mentioned it little, Kylo had known he longed to find it. A fool’s errand, Kylo had assumed. And a treachery against their own laws despite them being written by the decrepit snake himself. One was not to deal in sorcery. Not after what happened with Anakin Skywalker.

But perhaps, the blackest treachery lies at Kylo’s feet.

Seeing the realization dawn on the wolf’s face, Snoke speaks loud enough to address all in the room, a sanctimonious grandeur in his tone. “You see, Kylo, the only way to manifest the door was through blood. A sacrifice, but not just any sacrifice.” He quotes then, the ancient words. “Only may the door be revealed when the seed of Immortal blood pierces its heart. Only when the blade of the son be christened by the father, may the key be found.”

Despite being crushed into the floor, Kylo feels as if the world is spiraling out from beneath him and he is tumbling endlessly. The fire in his bones turns to ash and all the will to fight leaves him in that moment.

A lie. It's all been a lie. His mind choruses, over and over as tears wet his cheeks.

Snoke continues on above him, the hunger twisting his face. “See, I didn’t realize in the beginning that this bothersome little fledgling,” he gives Rey’s hair a rude tug, “you had fallen in love with was in fact the one I’ve been seeking all along. Isn’t it ironic?”

“Why not just take her, then if you knew?” Kylo snarls.

Snoke chuckles. “Because I needed all my pieces in place. Now with the Resistance massacred, their general in my grasp and two of the four items required for the ritual in my possession, I would
Two of the four? The compass and the star reader! Kylo suddenly understands.

“Are you sure of that, supreme leader?” He asks, glaring up at his master even as the savage claws of Silas dig into his scalp, attempting to push his face into the floor.

Snoke raises a non-existent eyebrow. “Know something I don’t, Kylo Ren?”

“Maybe.” he laughs. “Maybe not. Hell, I can’t even be sure the bastard took me up on my offer.”

Snoke’s nostrils flare. “What offer?”

“To get all his targets in one place at one time.”

Now, it’s Snoke’s turn for shocked realization as a brilliant flash of light blinds the crowd and the entire room bursts into flames. Panicked thralls and their vampires scurry for the exits, but the doors won’t budge. Explosions rock the grounds and a section of wall collapses. Desperate for escape the crowd rushes for the gaping hole only to be torn apart by attackers outside.

Snoke glares down at Kylo in a rage, however, before he can react a large wolf body plows into him—Finn! About fucking time!—knocking the throne chair down and sending Rey flying. Her body crumples uselessly to the floor, still in a ragdoll state, and Kylo presses his advantage in the chaos to wrestle free of his captors. The triplets evade his attacks easily, instead leaving Silas’ for him while they head straight for Rey.

Kylo moves instinctively in her direction, their eyes connecting for one harrowing moment as the fear in him manifests and becomes tangible. Unfortunately, Silas blocks his way to her, the younger wolf’s sneering face filled with raw grief. Kylo watches coldly over his shoulder as the triplets spirit Rey away from him into the flickering gloom. To the opposite side, Finn battles an array of First Order soldiers as both Maul and Snoke disappear into the smoke.

Silas’ sneering tone barely registers. “... the reason he’s gone! We both knew you’d betray us in the end... matter of time! Cadoc is dead because of you!”

He lunges forward, startling Kylo who barely has time to pivot, swinging low and aiming high as he brings his elbow up into the sensitive collection of nerves at Silas’ armpit. Silas stumbles but lands a well-placed kick to the ribs that leaves Kylo’s knees trembling. Another kick like that will puncture organs. Kylo honestly had not considered Silas’ rage, but the other wolf had loved Cadoc, after all. Kylo should have expected this kind of retaliation.

“When the supreme leader is finished with you and your little vampire bitch, I’m going to make you watch the sun turn her to ash! Then, I’m going to kill you!” Silas’ spits wildly.

“Cadoc’s death was unfortunate. I had no intention of killing my own knight, but he made his choice same as you.” Kylo states calmly.

Silas’ teeth flash and he bounds forward in a rage, exactly what Kylo hopes for. Angling himself low again, Kylo uses his center of gravity to like a battering ram, surging upward as Silas reaches him and sending the other wolf hard into the air. Kylo then positions his hand for the death blow, but a flash of silver catches his eye and he feels the sting of penetration as a blade slices through his neck.

Just like a Knight of Ren, Kylo muses. Resourceful as ever.
He staggers back, hand clamping at his pulse where blood flows.

Silas chuckles lowly. “Do you know how hard it’s been not to kill you, master?”

“Pure agony, I’m sure.” Kylo deadpans as he inspects his bloodied hand.

More sections of the wall crumble as explosions ring.

Silas grins emptily, the words between them decidedly at an end and he removes his gun from its holster, tossing it to the side. When facing a fellow knight, an acolyte of Ren finds modern weapons an affront to the senses. That and Snoke wants him alive.

Kylo settles into his stance, preparing to murder another member of his pack. It happens fast, a shift of hands as Silas charges him; the younger wolf has always been impatient, never allowing the opportune moment to come to him. Kylo snatches his wrists, twisting the blade inward and shoving forward with all his might. Silas chokes out a startled cry of pain as the blade penetrates his abdomen. The two stare at one another for a breath before Kylo rips the blade back out of him and grabs a fistful of hair.

More tears distort Kylo’s vision as he makes quick work of Silas’ throat, sawing through to bone and, with a single violent twist, snaps the vertebrae free. The body falls at his feet, lifeless. His hands feel impossibly heavy, sticky with blood and shaking. He drops the blade and the remainder of his fallen knight, a sigh of defeat leeching what strength he has left out of him.

Shouts echo from outside and Leia suddenly appears beside him, grabbing his arm and hurrying him from the blaze. Smoke blocks out the stars above and the heat of the fire radiates like a furnace. Apparently Poe had one hell of a stash of explosives. Kylo would have to thank him later, he supposes.

“Where is Rey?” Maz hurries up to them, expression tense but no worse for wear.

“Taken!” Finn answers from the rubble.

Kaydel assists him to the ground, his naked body littered with wounds, most of them thankfully superficial. She presses a meaningful kiss against his cheek as she covers him with a trenchcoat and he offers a weak smile of reassurance.

“I couldn’t get to her in time.” Kaydel says, a touch of shame in her voice. “The triplets were prepared for my attack, but I got one of the fuckers.”

Kylo turns to her. “You killed one of them?”

She smirks coldly.

It’s all the answer she needs to give.

“They’ll want vengeance.” he whispers.

“Good.” she replies.

Maz puts her hands on her hips, surveying the blaze. “You’re all lucky I veiled our assault. And take this,” she tosses a small brown bag at Kylo. “It will help conceal you until we figure out how to remedy this mess.”

“You knew?” he asks incredulously.
“Poe.” she motions behind her.

He walks up to the group, eyes guarded. “She gets the gist of it.”

“How did you know?” Kylo demands.

“There are a lot of things I know, but none of that matters right now. Right now we need to worry about getting the fledgling. She’s our objective.”

“What about the compass?” Leia interjects.

“It’s with Paige. I sent her and Kor Sella away somewhere safe.”

“You sure about that?” Finn asks.

“No.” Poe answers testily. “But it’s better than what you idiots have been doing.”

Kylo finds himself stepping away from the bickering, his eyes focused on the waxing moon through the haze of the fire. He walks out to the edge of the trees, the sadness of this night at last weighing down upon him and forcing him to his knees. A pitiful sob wrenches from his throat and he smears his hand over his face, imagining the final moments of Ruelle’s life, cursing himself for being unable to protect her.

She was his family.

“I’m so sorry, Ben.”

Leia’s voice startles him and he jerks around.

She watches him in silence, her posture small, much like a child’s. It makes him uncomfortable, seeing her this exposed, so unlike the hardened woman he knows her to be.

Shaking his head, he avoids her eyes and looks instead to the glowing moon again. After all this time, his path has led him here, standing in the burning light of his master’s stronghold, his pack broken and his beloved ripped from his arms. There is naught else to do. He realizes that now.

“Let’s finish this.” he murmurs.

Leia walks up beside him and takes his hand. He peers furtively at her, studying the way the distant fire glints in her hair, how the tightness in her jaw reminds him of days long ago and he cannot deny the shaky sigh that escapes him. She squeezes his hand in return, looking up to that same moon and nodding solemnly.
Scion of the Scourge

Chapter Notes

A/N: Okay. Now the big reveal for Rey I've been wanting to spiel about for months. It won't come as a surprise necessarily for some, but for this fic, I felt the connection fit perfectly. And I just love the theory in general. A huge thank you to my sis, Midnight, from across the pond for helping me with these last few chapters. She's a fellow Star Wars fan and makes pixels, art and fanfiction, so follow her twitter! 😊 Also, sorry for the delay. I've been ill this last week.

SONG INSPIRATION: Snuff - Slipknot (I played this song on repeat while writing this chapter. I'd also like to say that this song holds a very deep place in my heart, a wound, and Ruelle—I didn't realize until now—reminds me of someone who had been very dear to me... so I apologize if some of this is hard to read. I poured a lot of my heart into Rey's anguish.)

CHAPTER WARNINGS:
- profanity
- descriptions of death & sorrow
- some people will like this reveal for Rey and some won't
- hints of dark Rey

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

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“Loss and possession, death and life are one,
There falls no shadow where there shines no sun.”

- Hilaire Belloc

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Rey comes to, cold, disoriented. For a moment, she wonders why Kylo’s warm body isn’t draped over hers, why she isn’t nestled safely in a sinfully comfortable bed in the middle of the woods with several other werewolves prowling around the cabin. The Tico sisters arguing over grape jelly or strawberry and a dashing hunter taking Paige’s side, while Maz relents a blustering sigh. But there is no cabin. No bed. No Kylo.

Only the chilly hard floor beneath her and the blackness.

She jerks, throwing out her arms and legs instinctively only to come in contact with tight stone walls. Pain jars down her bones and she gasps, the air pressing in on her skin like the weight of sand. A coffin—she is trapped in a coffin! A panicked scream wrenches from her chest as she punches and kicks, hoping her strength can break through the walls…

…but to no avail.

She pulls back bloodied knuckles, the scent filling her nostrils as tears prick at her eyes.

*Where am I?! What’s going on?!*

“Glad to hear you’re finally awake.”

The low husk of the voice drips down her neck like ice water and, all at once, memories flood her awareness. The night Leia had warned her of Kylo’s plan to face Snoke, their subsequent fight, raised voices carrying through the air like daggers. Then, the face of Darth Maul gloating over her as she was abducted and last, the dying light in Ruelle’s eyes.

Rey stifles a sob as agony spears her heart.

She recalls Kylo’s gaze as he had witnessed it while pinned to the floor, helpless to protect a member of his pack, his *family*.

Rey had fought, clawing at the barriers of her mind yet powerless to move as she witnessed Maul murder her friend. Yes, Ruelle had become her friend and Rey had watched paralyzed as that friend’s life was siphoned away. In her dreamlike state she could do little more than stare on in horror at the entire scene, Ruelle’s last words to her playing through her mind.

*“Kylo is a dick. He can’t help himself sometimes. He’s just scared this won’t end well.”*

*“And what do you think?”*

*“Life is cruel, but not everything has to be a shit ending.”*

*“You don’t sound too sure.”*

*“I’m not, but that’s not the point.”*

Rey huddles in on herself, an agony so deep and so vast ripping through her chest that it leaves her gasping for breath. She claws at the smooth surface of the stone, hate vibrating through her bones and exiting her mouth in a venom-filled hiss. “I’m going to kill you!”

Snoke chuckles. “Which is why I must apologize for your accommodations. Thankfully, you’ve not realized the full extent of your power, but we also can’t have you escaping, either.”

“What do you want with me?!” she snaps.
A lengthy silence.

“You have no idea how long I’ve waited for you Rey Sampson.” Snoke’s tone betrays a trace of reverence, which terrifies her.

“What do you mean?” She demands.

“Life has a strange sense of irony, I must say. For Kylo Ren to have been the one to find you still baffles me, but who am I to question fate? That night at the subway station, what did you feel? Tell me.”

She scoffs disgustedly. “I don’t owe you anything!”

Snoke continues on as if she never spoke. “Twas a stroke of luck, I suppose, that you had been bitten. The ritual requires a werewolf and a vampire, but this vampire must possess a connection to the progenitor. I had always assumed Luke Skywalker was that vampire.” He pauses for a moment, musing. “Consider it Fate that the two of you found one another. But I wonder, what will Kylo do when he discovers the truth?”

“Enough of your riddle bullshit. Just say it!”

“Quite the impatient one. I suppose it’s just as well. You see, the prophecy had been misunderstood. I, like all those before me, had assumed the progenitor it was referring to was Anakin Skywalker, the father of us all. An easy mistake to make, I’m afraid.”

Rey knows this old monster is getting to a point. He merely delights in taking his time, riling her up and feeding into her frustration. It gets him off, the sick fuck!

“You see, he and his mortal wife may have sired the twins, both mother and father to the respective immortal races… but it was not they who originated the curse. The grand architect of our whole existence was a sorcerer known as Darth Sidious, your ancestor, my dear.”

Her blood runs cold.

“Ironic, isn’t it?” The grin in his voice is positively glutinous. “Adverse to my plans, not only did Kylo Ren discover the true scion of the very creature I intend to find, but the set of events triggered that night on the subway led to you becoming a vampire. Exactly as needed.”

Tears whisper unimpeded down her cheeks and she opens her mouth, unable to form words. All at once, the dreams of her life make sense. The voice. The pull to that horrid place in the dark. Everything… makes sense.

“No.” The word leaves her in a reedy croak.

Snoke moves closer, his robes whispering like the skin of a snake. “Now you see. I had not even realized the sorcerer’s line had survived, but what a fortuitous circumstance it is. For all Kylo Ren’s faults, he has made me proud.”

The mocking of his tone summons bile up her throat and she swallows profusely, her face twisting into a voiceless sob. This has to be some sort of trick. This cannot be real!

Her nails grind scars into the stone as more blood trickles down her wrists. She reves back and forces all her anguish into a single punch, the extent of its force shaking the lid of the coffin. But it’s not enough to break her free. The sound of chains rattle and she understands. Snoke wasn’t kidding when he said they wouldn’t be taking any chances with her.
“Kylo will come for you and we will finish where it all began,” he says, rising and walking away. The finality of his statement is punctuated with the sharp slam of a door.

Rey lies in the silence, tears dripping into her hair and her mind too stunned to formulate coherent thought. She blinks up at the darkness, wishing the bitter taste of understanding burned into her throat would relent, if only for a moment. However, it doesn’t. It merely intensifies, branding into her with a vengeance and she succumbs to miserable wailing, racking her fists until the flesh is gone and all she can feel is pain.

*My ancestor did this. My blood. Whatever evil he committed is inside of me, too.*

She crumbles under the weight of that knowledge, her sobs echoing back to her from the coffin walls. A part of her suddenly wishes she had never been sent home that night all those months ago. That she hadn’t been waiting on the subway platform where she had first seen those eyes of devil’s gold. Things would have been easier. Paige and Rose would have never faced dangers they had and life would have remained perfectly boring, quiet, with Bodhi waking her every morning as she fended off the stink of his breath.

Something a nurse from Niima Children's Center once told her floats to the forefront of her mind. “It’s easier to suffer when you’re alone, but it’s a lonely life, a pointless life.”

There had been a time when Rey would have found the statement laughable. In her development years, each day was as callously unforgiving as the next. She’d told herself that such attachments would only weigh her down, disappoint her like her parents. But loneliness could only be endured so long… Now, she yearns for those she loves, willingly admitting to her need for them.

The meek sound of approaching steps outside the door makes her freeze and she listens. They near cautiously, pausing at the door before opening it and entering.

Seconds later, an unknown voice whispers, “Lady Rey?”

She holds her tongue.

“My lady, the supreme leader has your friends and he has the compass. You must convince Lord Ren not to find us. You must convince him to stay away!”

*Rose! Paige!*

“Where are they?” she grounds out.

The owner of the voice ignores her question. “If Lord Ren comes for you, then the supreme leader will have all the pieces required to open the gate.”

“What gate? What does he want?”

“Your ancestor may have died in the flesh, but not in spirit. The supreme leader desires his magic. He has survived in a dark place beyond the veil and the prophecy promises who-so-ever resurrects him holds control over him.”

“And how does Snoke intend to resurrect him?”

A beat of silence.

“Through blood and sacrifice.”
Her heart stops. “Who?”
“The descendant of Skywalker.”

No!
“You must keep him away. If the supreme leader does not have him, then he cannot enact the ritual.”

“Who are you?” she demands.

Another beat.
“Mitaka, my lady.”

She faces the voice. “Why are you helping me?” she asks.

“Survival.”

He departs with her listening to his quiet feet disappear beyond the door and at last, she is alone.

The dream should not come as a surprise to her, but it does. They always will, she supposes. But this one is different. More real.

She stands before the mirror from the island, only this time there is no hazy reflection. This time there are two figures, both standing atop a terrace by the sea. They kiss, the colorful raiment of the woman glittering in the setting sun; then, the scene shifts, darkening into a vast but empty coliseum. Again, there are two figures, only this time one of them is an older man draped in shadow. Something about him beckons a shudder up Rey’s spine.

The younger man leans in on the older figure, the kyanite broach of his cloak catching a hint of sunlight. “What of my wife? Can you help me?” he hisses earnestly.

“It is an unnatural thing to cheat death. To never grow old, while those around you wither with time. You are the only man born with such a gift.”

Rey’s insides turn cold at the sage-like purr. That voice! It’s the same voice, the one who promised he would be whole again. The instinct to turn away in revulsion strikes her, but she ignores it, willing herself to continue observing the exchange and understanding on some sick level that this was a memory from her ancestor.

“Can it be done?” the younger man presses, his scowl reminiscent of someone...
Rey frowns, though before she can put her finger on what makes it so familiar, the scene slips out from under her and she falls, tumbling into an inverted sky of collapsing stars. Screams echo around her, a cacophony of endless noise and chaos. She plummets deeper, finding herself staring back into the faces of so many strangers, faces caught in a poisonous web. His web.

The two lovers from before embrace, the man with the familiar scowl and the kyanite jewel placing his hand upon his wife’s pregnant belly.

“I will not let you die, Padme. I will protect you.”

She smiles up at him, velvet dark eyes promising. “Nothing untoward will happen to me, my love. You need not fear.”

Then, Rey is abruptly ripped from the scene again, the world blurring as she witnesses a clash of blades. Two figures — two brothers, the disgusting voice of her ancestor chuckles—dueling amid a holocaust of fire. Nevertheless, Rey understands with the certainty of one who is blood that these two are brothers in bond only. And that bond was broken. Savagely.

“You ruined everything! You are the reason she lies dead!”

The kyanite crystal is gone now, replaced with a beautifully set ruby. Red as blood.

The opposite man twists, barely escaping an attack as he replies in equal torment. “If that were true, Anakin, then we am I here?! You chose to leave her in the hands of a serpent, while I have chosen to not to abandon you!?”

Anakin, Rey repeats the name to herself. Anakin Skywalker.

“Liar!”

“We loved you Anakin! How could you?!”

Something in the whispering white of the other man’s attire speaks to Rey, reminding her of a quiet place in her mind, a safe place. He was someone of great power and wisdom, though his heart had shattered that day. Then she hears it, a string of thought somewhere from this man’s future: “I will end his hold over your children and I will avenge you, my brother. I swear it.”

Eventually, the two figures are consumed by the fire, catching and going up in a flickering dance of ashes. Rey blinks before she is suddenly yanked downwards once more, spiraling out of control into a plethora of ruined stars, each one a life this sordid ancestor had destroyed in his attempts to achieve the only thing that had meant anything to him. Immortality.

“No!” Rey screams, but Kylo never hears her.

His sword pierces through his father’s chest ruthlessly and she doubles over in shared pain, feeling
the weight of the blade running against her ribs, vibrating like a living thing. Then, the cold. It seeps in, numbing her extremities until she cannot move at all. The darkness follows, creeping over her like water as she struggles to breathe. She claws. She screams, the bubbles of her sound seeming to mock her.

“No need to fret Rey. It’s only a dream.” her ancestor murmurs to her.

She fights, knowing this pressure building in her chest shouldn’t be real, but she cannot break free of the nightmare’s hold.

He cackles maniacally. “You’ve known this is where you will end up. You’ve always known. I could make it pleasant for you, though… if you wish.”

The promise in his voice sends terror right through her bones and she wrenches back like a wild animal —

—slamming her skull into the coffin’s sidewall and biting her tongue nearly half in two. She cries out, tasting blood as she cradles her head with her mind reeling. Her fangs themselves seem to resonate with the impact like divining rods and she curses herself, hating whatever god decided she should be the one destined to undergo this hellish ride of torment.

Why me? Why now?

I used to be no one.

That was so much easier wasn’t it? Being from nothing. Coming from shit parents who had abandoned her and left her to fend for herself in a system who cared even less for her wellbeing. She had learned how to survive hadn’t she? She had endured, fought back when it was necessary, ran when it was optimal.

There’s nothing wrong with running.

But if given the option… would she run now?

No.

Closing her eyes, she wills her mind to clear, taking in deep steadying breaths. Everything in life comes with a set of choices. Never has she bought into the whole victimhood schtick, no matter the circumstance. You are what you choose, whether it’s to run, or to stand. You make a choice. And she is not alone. Not anymore.

So what of the blood that courses through her veins and its connection to this ancient monster. What matters is her will, her choice.

“And I have too many people to protect.” she says aloud.

“Now there’s the Rey Kylo risked his silly ass for.” She imagines Ruelle saying, her trademark deadpan expression brightening into a radiant smile. “Stubborn to a fault and foolishly hopeful.”

Yeah. Rey thinks mournfully. Just like you...

“Yup. Ben always did have a soft spot for the hopeful ones. Guess it was because he never had much hope for himself.”

Fresh tears wet Rey’s face. Which is precisely why he has to stay away.
Focusing all her will she envisions his face, remembering how softly his lips had pressed to the crown of her head as he carried her back to the cabin that first night, the naked heat of his body lulling her into a peaceful slumber and his strong arms holding her flush to his heartbeat. How powerful it had been, how steady.

*Ben, if you can hear me, don’t come for me. Stay away. Do you understand? Stay away!* 

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Days pass. Her hunger grows. But Ruelle’s voice keeps her company. At least, what Rey imagines to be Ruelle. They talk of the past, of Kylo, Rose, Paige… what could be after all this is over. Hopeful things for the most part, because Rey cannot allow herself to sink into despair. She must remain resolute.

The first hint that they have made landfall happens to be the ship’s anchor. She had deduced she was aboard a ship some days prior during another of Snoke’s visits in the middle of a storm. The tossing and twisting of the waves was a dead and nauseating giveaway. Snoke had toyed with her unsurprisingly, playing like he might give her some information on his plans, then left.

Rey was getting used to his kind of foreplay.

And she didn’t like it.

What she hadn’t expected was the little visit from Darth Maul. He had entered her chamber, circling her coffin several times, never once saying a word. Nor had she. The two merely endured their shared silence together, her burning to rip his heart from his chest and him simply grinning in the dark. She didn’t have to see him to know.

She had felt it.

She can feel a lot of things now, it seems…

Like the four vampires coming in to retrieve her coffin and bring it up to Snoke who waits on the island. She counts them long before she hears their approach. Snaking down the corridors to her room at the base of the ship. They hoist her up, jostling her softly with their movements as she is carted to the surface. She even senses traces of their thoughts. Fear mostly, fear of Snoke but mainly of — *her*. 

They continue down a ramp, stopping only at the sound of Snoke’s command. That’s when Rey senses another, a new presence she somehow recognizes. A flash of cold blue eyes stabs through her consciousness and she gasps.

“*Father.*”
“Remove her from her confines, but be aware — this place gives her power. We do not want our little key escaping.” Snoke commands.

Rey stills at the sound of the chains around the coffin releasing, then the latches. At last, the lid is lifted and moonlight pours through, bathing her skin in milky blue rays. She shields her eyes only to have several pairs of hands instantly rip her up to her feet and subdue her. The metal shackles sting with vervain. One is fastened around her neck and she glares venomously at Snoke who stands some feet away, his golden robes glittering like the ocean waves.

“Welcome home,” he says, flourishing his arms ceremoniously.

She bites her tongue, choosing not to answer him.

He chuckles. “Such spunk. Look here now.” He points to a pathway behind him and Rey’s chest tightens.

There, at the top of the hill — the gaping hole dressed in crimson and... her mouth falls open at the sight of a man clad in threadbare rags, fierce azure eyes staring out from a face of gnarled grey hair. He stands near the entrance to the cave, tired. Defeated.

Chapter End Notes

PLEASE REMEMBER TO LEAVE ME SOME FEEDBACK!
CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM IS WELCOME!
FOLLOW ME ON TWITTER IF YOU WISH!
ALSO CHECK OUT THE LIVE TWEET THREAD WHERE I DO PROGRESS
FOOTNOTES/UPDATES!

Extra Notes & Links:
[...]
A/N: So I'm super happy with how well the reveal for last chapter was received. I was a tad nervous about it. I've moved the chapter count up a bit, too. This finale is gonna be big. I hope I do it all justice. Lol!

!!! BIG ANNOUNCEMENT !!!
So I've asked if anyone would be interested in this fic being narrated by yours truly on twitter and enough have responded that I've decided I will be recording myself reading this fic as a gift for all the wonderful feedback you readers have given me. I'm not sure when it will be complete, but all the details for this will be posted to the last chapter notes. Keep a weather eye out if you're interested!

SONG INSPIRATION:  Anesthesia - Type O Negative  &  More - The Sisters of Mercy  (at the end of the chapter for build-up definitely)

CHAPTER WARNINGS:  
- profanity

See the end of the chapter for more notes

— Dante Alighieri, Inferno

“Ben, what’s wrong?”
Leia’s voice is a remote whisper to Kylo’s ears, his attention wholly fixated on the space in front of him. He cannot believe his eyes. Not ten paces away standing in the hallway connecting to Hux’s bedroom is Rey, corporeal, gaze filled with dread. He shuffles forward, forgetting himself as he reaches for her, too stunned to speak.

“Don’t come for me. Stay away.”

Her voice jars him and he halts in midstep, strangely agitated by it. Its quality is off, deepened somehow in a way that sets his teeth on edge, that makes his skin crawl. She sounds so unlike herself, endless like an echoing corridor and more — more than one. She is darkened by a shadow he cannot see. He can feel it…

“Ben?” Leia grasps his shoulder.

He scarcely notices. Rey wears the same ceremonial robes she had the night of the mansion massacre, though her skin has changed, too, lost its warmth. Her features are not sharper, but harder. Crueler.

He frowns.

For one unexpected and unsettling moment, he is sure her irises are not white, but black. Red on black.

Then, it’s gone. She is gone.

“Ben?” Leia ventures, her tone strained with concern. “Answer me, Ben!”

“Rey. I just saw Rey.” He mutters breathlessly.

“You saw her?” she utters in disbelief.

He remains silent, staring at the spot where Rey had been, a perplexed scowl etched into his face. Leia comes to stand before him and places her hands on his chest, seeking his eyes. He eventually gives them to her when her hands cradle his jaw.

“What did you see? Did she speak to you?” Leia presses.

“She told me to stay away,” he whispers.

Another second passes when his mother’s show of affection finally dawns upon him and Kylo shifts away, removing her hands from his jaw by her wrists and gently pushing them to her chest. An expression of exasperation betrays her dismay, but Leia merely offers him a strained twitch of a smile. Kylo averts his eyes, finding an open window with a view of the night sky.

“How long has this been happening? The connection between you two?”

He scoffs. “It doesn’t concern—”

“How long?” she asks roughly.

He shakes his head, putting more distance between them.

From the living room, Finn glances up at Kylo, Kaydel napping lightly on his lap. Kylo hates an audience, but his mother has always favored bringing that card into play. Not to mention Hux who is now walking stiffly in their direction, his lips marred by an impatient frown.
The group is lucky his place still exists. With the destruction of the underground Resistance base, Kylo’s apartment and the wood cabin, Hux’s insufferable coffin penthouse was the only option for a strategy meeting.

“What’s going on?” Hux inquires pointedly.


“You saw Rey?” Finn asks from the cough.

Everyone’s eyes center on Kylo, even Kaydel’s who is now awake, and the room seems to shrink. Damn his mother for drawing attention like this. She always knew how to keep him from hiding.

Kylo releases a chafed breath, answering Finn reluctantly. “Maybe.”

“You can see her?” Kaydel regards him warily.

Leia steps forward. “You still haven’t answered my question, Ben. How long?”

He crosses his arms, relinquishing a sigh. “It didn’t start out this way. It was more… like a feeling.”

“Then it grew.” Leia nods.

Kylo looks down at his chest. “What does it matter anyway. It can’t help me find her.”

“I’ve never heard of such a thing,” Hux says dubiously.

“I don’t like it,” Kaydel adds.

Finn rises from his seat, walking up to Kylo. “Is it like the bond shared between the Knights of Ren?” he asks.

Kylo shakes his head. “It’s more than a pack’s bond. Thoughts aren’t just sensations or colors. They are literal words.”

“It’s a bond of twin flames,” Leia interjects.

Everyone turns to her, eyes wide.

“I have never seen it, but I have heard of it,” she explains. “A bond between these two souls once forged is inseparable. If one dies, the other eventually will follow. Legends tell us that the mental tether between flames can be so powerful that they possess the ability to see what the other sees.”

That catches the attention of the room.

“How?” Kylo wonders aloud.

Leia shakes her head. “I don’t know, but I’m sure Maz might.”

“I don’t particularly like working with witches.” Hux opines sourly.

“Who said anyone liked working with you?” Kaydel hisses in reply.

Finn thrusts an arm in between them. “That’s enough,” he growls.

Leia steps close to Kylo as the others fall into an argument over when Maz and the hunters will
return from their supply run, and he looks down at her cautiously. The rich gold of her eyes glitters with a familiar quality of happiness he has not seen in centuries and it summons both feelings of nostalgia and disdain. Nostalgia because, though he might not have wanted to admit it to himself, he has missed his mother. And disdain because, like the ugly shadow of his misdeeds, he is not the same boy from those distant years.

He is Kylo Ren, mongrel of Supreme Leader Snoke and murderer of his own father.

Yet she insists on treating him like the son she remembers.

“You don’t know much of your grandfather and that is my misdeed. I’m so sorry I never explained more to you. I was just afraid, for you, for our family. I thought I was protecting you from that darkness. I realized later how wrong I was.”

“It’s in the past now.” he supplies tersely.

“It is.” she agrees, disregarding his tone. “But there is something you need to know about your grandfather before you act against Snoke.”

As everyone gathers in Hux’s living room Kylo stands off on his own, reaching for an object tied at his neck by a thin strip of leather. A canine tooth. Ruelle’s.

It is customary for alphas to keep something from a departed pack member. In the ancient days, the heart was favored, passed around to each surviving comrades for a single bite while saving the rest for the alpha; but for these modern times, Kylo considers such macabre things outdated.

He had said his farewell to her as she burned on the pyre, taking her ashes beyond the harbor to the forest once the embers had cooled. He had done this alone, his tears offered in silence as she danced in the breeze from the funeral urn, leaving him for higher places, hopeful places, though a bitter part of him doubted such blithe notions.

She was dead.

“You never told me you see visions of her, wolf cub.” Maz pipes up, seating herself apparently where Hux intends to sit. He shoots her a venomous glare which she promptly ignores. “It’s not unheard of, of course,” she continues. “Twin flames are rare, but they do occur. I’ve just never seen or heard of one among immortal kind.”

“Considering your age, I’m shocked.” Kylo snarks.

“Best to keep a civil tongue with me, Ben Solo, lest you wish to lose Rey.”
He bites the inside of his cheek as the others look between them.

“Do you wish to lose her?” Maz challenges, her aged face all hard lines. “You’ve already lost Ruelle. How many more do you intend to lose because of your stubbornness?”

“Why are we even discussing this?” Kaydel cuts in. “Maul captured Paige. We know Snoke requires Kylo for the ritual. Our best option is to keep him as far away from Snoke as possible.”

Finn shakes his head. “But if he wants Kylo so badly, then why hasn’t there been an attack on this place? We’re stretched thin, wounded, and we have no real weapons to defend ourselves.”

“Because he knows I’ll come after her regardless,” Kylo states plainly.

Poe crosses his arms adversely, replying: “With Paige and Rey already in his hands—”

“And Rose,” Hux interrupts brusquely.

“—he has every piece on the board save one. Why should we give it to him wrapped in a bow?”

Maz observes the hunter shrewdly, a secret look passing between them. “Is your intention merely to kill Snoke, then?” she asks.

His dark gaze flashes. “My intention is to fulfill my duties as a hunter.”

Over Poe’s shoulder, Kylo catches Kor Sella throwing the other hunter a sharp glare, though before he can question it, the conversation shifts, focusing on him again.

“How will you stop Snoke?” Leia asks, a hint of fear betrayed on her otherwise impassive face.

She’s compartmentalizing, shielding herself from her own fear. He knows it well. Like mother, like son.

“I don’t know, but I’ll figure it out when I get there.”

Kaydel throws up her hands angrily, shouting: “No way in hell am I accepting a weak-ass answer like that! We’ve all heard the stories of what lies beyond the door! What if they’re true?! What then? And you expect us to just let you waltz into a trap, let Snoke use you to open that door and flood the world with monsters more terrifying than us?! Are you serious?!”

“I will not leave Rey to die,” Kylo states coolly.

“And I will not stand idly by while a stupid person makes a stupid decision!” she fires back.

“That’s enough!” Maz’s fist pounds on Hux’s coffee table—much to his horror—effectively silencing everyone. “Now,” she continues softly, eyes drawing back to Kylo, “Seeing that our smitten wolf prince refuses to alter his plans from walking into a trap, what exactly do you plan to do?”

“Snoke doesn’t possess many weaknesses, but he isn’t without them. He considers himself a master chessman. His arrogance is his ultimate blind spot. That and he has never been challenged, not by anyone.”

“He has the numbers,” Hux interjects.

“Number matter little if you cut the head from the snake before it can strike,” Kylo replies.
“And how exactly is giving you up to Snoke cutting off the head of the snake before it can strike?”
Finn asks skeptically.

“Maul.”

“What?” Leia whispers.

Maz suddenly chuckles. “Clever boy. You suspect impending betrayal.”

“Before Darth Maul was a vampire elder, he was an apprentice for this ancient Darth Sidious. I only knew him during the first years of the war when the First Order rose to dominance, but I became well acquainted with his loyalties then, and where they lie.”

“Which is?” Kaydel queries.

“Power. Whoever resurrects this creature will possess him… and all his potential.”

Finn nods, considering Kylo’s words. “What are you suggesting?”

“A ploy.”

Leia’s frown deepens. “Meaning?”

“Snoke knows me to be impulsive. He also knows the rest of you will never go for a head-on fight —”

“No.” Leia instantly cuts him off. “No, we are not going to allow you to go to him alone. That is completely out of the question.”

“We don’t even know where to begin looking,” Poe concurs, shaking his head. “Besides we shouldn’t divide our forces.”

“If we attempt to hit him head-on, we will lose and everyone will die,” Kylo warns.

“All of this sounds great, but the hunter just stated a glaring fact.” Kaydel butts in impatiently. “We don’t even know where the hell to find them.”

“That’s not entirely true.” Maz whispers.

All gazes return to the old witch.

“Twin flames, once spiritually linked, are bound. Nothing can sever them. They also possess the shared sight, the ability to see through their equal’s eyes.”

“How?” Kylo asks.

“You must open yourself to the ethereal and to her completely, but there lies one danger. When you finally find her, Snoke has the potential to see you as well. You must keep your thoughts hidden.”

Kor Sella speaks at last, her tone riddled with ice. “I am not agreeing to this.”

“And you would abandon your own?” Hux questions skeptically, though his skepticism, Kylo finds, veils a much more visceral emotion. Desperation.

Kor Sella’s russet eyes hone in on him like daggers. “Paige is one of us, unlike you bloodsucker, but that does not mean I’m willing to lose a battle and open the gates of hell!”
“Kor relax.” Poe lifts his hand towards her.

“No! I will not let a bunch of monsters flood the world with more!”

“Kor Sella!” he roars, his sudden outburst brooking no argument.

She glares at him testily and simply turns to leave, storming out the front door and stomping down the hall until her footfalls fade. Everyone watches her go, a weighted silence settling around them.

Kylo wonders at the possibility of success, the likelihood of failure. He thinks of Ruelle and his father, of Rey and his mother’s words regarding twin flames; how one cannot live without the other once bonded. Kylo tries to consider a world without Rey and pain abruptly blooms out from his chest.

*He can’t.*

Leia eventually breaks the silence, her diplomatic tenor resonating. “Why don’t we reconvene later. For now, let’s take a few hours to cool our heads.”

Morning light imbues the city with highlights of sharp gold and feathery pink, the fog wafting over the skyscrapers like water. Rey would have loved to witness it. Leia finds Kylo on the rooftop smoking a cigarette, the first one in a long time. He had bummed it off of Hux.

Their private conversation after the meeting’s end floats through his mind.

“Your support back there was heart-warming, but I doubt it has anything to do with me. This wouldn’t be about a feisty Tico by the name of Rose, would it?”

“Fuck off, Ren. I’m not in the mood.”

“I’m not either.”

“Do you think you can pull it off?”

“Maybe. Maybe not.”

“I don’t even know what the hell I’m doing here.”

“You’re here because you’ve fallen in love with a human.”

“You want a cigarette?”
“I don’t smoke anymore.”

“... You want a cigarette?”

Kylo takes a long drag off said cancer stick and combs a worried hand through his hair as his mother approaches, her attentive gaze measuring him from head to toe. The world below stirs with life as people go about their morning, racing to work or racing home, horns honking and construction jackhammers hammering. Normal life, completely unaware of the dangers waiting in the dark.

Leia steps up beside him near the edge, her hair loose about her face and blowing in the wind.

He takes another drag.

“I’ve never told you this, but before you were born, I had succumbed to the madness of the wolf. I had lost my human form, forgotten myself.”

Kylo pauses in mid-exhale, peering down at her from the corner of his eye. Understanding then dawns upon him. Most of the first wolves, feral as they were and unable to return to human form, were hunted down by Snoke and the initial vampire armies, an outcome Luke had sworn was necessary at the time.

And all along the culprit of the chaos had been his mother.

“Why?” he asks aloud.

She sighs heavily, tears glinting down her cheeks. “For our protection, Luke and I had been separated at birth. I knew nothing about my parents or that I had a brother and I was angry. I wanted answers, but I’d had nowhere to turn. When I was bitten by a wolf and experienced the change for the first time, the anger took over.” She stops, closing her eyes and collecting herself. “I killed and turned without restraint. I was alone.”

A feeling of kinship nearly overwhelms him and he reaches out to her before he can restrain himself, taking her hand in his. Over the centuries he has never allowed himself to admit it, but he and his mother are blood, alike in the best… and the worst ways.

She smiles brokenly up at him, curling her fingers with his. “It was your father who brought me back.”

The confession is unheralded, causing him to flinch as if struck and he attempts to jerk his hand away; but Leia refuses him, tightening her grip.

“He saved me, Ben. And I know you haven’t forgiven yourself yet, but I want you to understand… Look me in the eyes, Ben.”

He obeys, his body vibrating with emotion.

“I forgave you a long time ago. Do you understand me? Let go of your guilt, Ben. If you want to save Rey, let it go.”

A strangled exhale escapes him and the cigarette drops from his fingers. “I… I can’t.”

Leia’s opposite hand cradles his cheek, her having to lean up on the tips of her toes to reach him. “You knew Han never blamed you. You knew I couldn’t either, so you took all that blame upon yourself. My sweet boy,” her fingers trace over his lower lip. “We failed you. All of us and I am so
sorry. Can you ever forgive me?"

He stares at her, speechless. Can he let go of the past? Can he forgive them… and Luke? More importantly, can he ever forgive himself?

“Mother—"

Leia draws him down to her and kisses his cheek, holding his gaze. “You are strong. No matter what happens, you are exactly where you were always supposed to be.”

His heart aches with bittersweet emotions and childhood memory, recalling how his parents had held him, nurtured him, loved him. Not all was loneliness and neglect. He had simply forgotten these things. Even Luke had shown compassion then.

Perhaps he can forgive. Perhaps. Some day.

“Did Maz send you up here to find me?” he asks at last, changing the subject.

Leia smirks. “Yes. Everything is ready. Are you?”

Kylo considers her question, deciding for once to be forthright like he was as a boy. “No.” he grins.

She mirrors it, whispering softly: “Trust yourself. Trust Rey.”

Then she turns, heading for the emergency exit door and disappearing down the stairwell. He follows soon after, glancing back at the brilliant sunrise one last time as a sense of resolution thrums through his veins.

"I will find you, Rey."
Chapter End Notes

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Extra Notes & Links:
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Father Nosferatu

Chapter Notes

A/N: So I took a while weaving everything in for this chapter and I greatly enjoyed delving into Luke's past, his making of Snoke and Maul, why he did it, their betrayal and Ben's fall. I know I've said this multiple times, but I honestly cannot believe this project is almost complete. My blood, sweat and tears have gone into it and I'm so grateful for such wonderful support from my readers.

SONG INSPIRATION: Poppaea - Theatre of Tragedy

CHAPTER WARNINGS:
- blood & gore

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing, Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortals ever dared to dream before…”

— Edgar Allan Poe, The Raven

Lightning blankets the sky and icy rain pounds the island as waves crash against the sharp cliff faces, creating a cacophony of sound. Under the rocks and jagged hills, Rey looks up from her chains at the sensation of dark forces reaching out to her from the depths. Whatever gateway exists on this island is very old and very starved. The vortex of energy moves and undulates like a writhing fetus in a womb, a husked out womb of a desiccated mother.

She cringes away from the feeling, shocked by its darkness.
It’s so heavy. Like death.

The distant memory of the night she was bitten resurfaces out of nowhere with a vengeance, clawing at her mind like a desperate animal lost at sea and she shakes her head as unexpected tears trail down her cheeks. Rey recalls her despair, how she had thought the briny water filling her lungs would be the last breath she ever took. And the pain at her neck where the vampire had sank his virus into her skin…

Vestiges of repressed human fear latch onto her, reminding her of her vulnerability, her once fragile nature of mortality back when she was merely a girl from the forsaken Niima Children's Center and working for an abusive alcoholic in a mechanic shop on the harbor. Rey Sampson. Abandoned Daughter. No one.

Then, comes the hunger, bottomless, all-encompassing, the intensity of the cramps radiating out from her gut sharper than her vampire self has ever experienced before. Her fangs distend and she emits a surprised grunt of pain when a fresh wave of something yanks at her insides as if to eject her from her own body. She trembles at the sensation, dread settling in her chest.

What the fuck was that?!

Across from her Luke Skywalker utters a strangled sound of distress and Rey looks up, startled. He sits dejectedly at the opposite side of the cavern, his tattered robes draped about his sprawled legs and his hair hanging limply about his sullen face. His eyes remain closed, breaths whistling out through his teeth like small gusts of wind.

After their introduction, Snoke had led both her and Skywalker into this place, not a word spoken from anyone. Rey had gaped flabbergasted at Skywalker’s almost dismissive response to the vampires as they shackled him, the herb they had used to coat the shackles cutting fresh lines of blood into his aged flesh. She had wondered at these wounds, how a powerful vampire such as himself, the father of all vampires, could be so affected by it.

He shouldn’t be, her instincts told her.

Yet he is.

Why?

“Can’t you do something?” she intones, glaring at him.

He does not reply.

Rey’s eyes drop angrily to the manacles at her wrists, the chains snaking out over the layers of her ceremonial skirt and glittering in the dim light like the many droplets of moisture along the walls. These mediocre confines in any normal situation would do little to restrain a vampire. But that’s just it, isn’t it? This—whatever this is—is not a normal situation.

There is something in the air here, she deduces. Or perhaps, in the soil and rock.

Something that hums and lulls one into a false sense of calm.

Dread begins in her anew and she jerks at the chains, rattling them loudly despite the turbulent chorus outside. She gazes to the entrance, hoping to spot any betrayal of movement, but sees nothing. What Rey truly hopes for is a chance to observe Paige and Rose. After hearing from the stranger, Mitaka, that they had been captured, she has sought to connect with them, even if only catching a glimpse. At least then, she would know that her family lives.
Her attention focuses on Skywalker again. He broods motionlessly, his gaze fixed on his open hands.

“Why are you here?” she asks.

No answer.

“Your sister has been fighting a war against your own kind and yet you’ve never once come to stop it, to help her. Why?”

Nothing.

“You can’t expect me to believe you didn’t have the means.”

His eyes snap up at her, blazing with… accusation.

She ignores it, pushing forward. “I would have thought you’d be more terrifying. Not so—”

“Old?” a voice says from the entranceway.

Rey’s spine straightens at once and she scowls at the golden-clad figure of Snoke. He sweeps in with serpentine grace, grinning unabashedly at Rey, then Skywalker. The latter, of course, maintains his detached silence.

“You are wondering why he doesn’t look young like his twin. The answer is simple. This place,” Snoke pauses, gesturing around him with his hands. “It is a parasite. Much like a vampire, it must feed.”

Rey watches him warily as he turns away from her, walking up to the expansive mirror wall, the Gate of Starfall. It swallows the light like a gaping mouth, reflecting back only a pale silhouette of his ugly gnarled face.

“Humans used to worship here, long into the bygone ages before history was written. It was said none lasted very long. A few years, then these shriveled corpses would throw themselves over the cliffs in hopes to reach the world beyond the door.”

Maul enters, his reflective eyes hard on Rey and a crescent grin revealing his feline fangs. She avoids both him and Snoke, and shoves her focus onto Skywalker, hoping he will look up from his cursed hands.

“Skywalker has also been using his supernatural abilities to shield this place, keep it hidden from me. But with a little spellwork and a compass, one can find almost anything.” Snoke purrs, his hand reaching out and stroking the mirror surface. “Even the gateway to Chaos.”

So that is why he is so weak.

Pity tugs at Rey’s chest as she studies the father of vampires, a myriad of questions poised at the tip of her tongue. But he cannot be completely gone, can he? There must be something of Luke Skywalker left. He had come here to safeguard this gate from Snoke, yet that begs a far more pressing question. If both Snoke and Maul are as old as they suggest, then that would mean Skywalker turned them. Why?

“Your scowl suggests you’re still lost.” Snoke chuckles, his voice drawing near. He waits for her to look at him before he continues. “I was turned to clean up Leia Organa’s mess, to cull the werewolf menace and the carnage they wrought. Back then werewolves were feral, unable to take human
form ever again. However, the efforts of my armies were not enough. Magic was needed, so against Luke Skywalker’s better judgment, he sought out an old enemy and struck a deal: magic for immortality.”

Rey glances over at Maul and he flashes her that crescent smile again.

Snoke elaborates further. “As you can probably guess, dark magic is a dangerous tool, one most cannot wield. It takes the training of a great sorcerer, the very one, in fact, that trained Darth Maul —your ancestor.”

Rey’s eyes widen in shock.

“I did what was necessary.”

All heads abruptly turn at the sound of the guttural hiss and Skywalker glares up at them, teeth bared.

“Aye, you did old friend.” Snoke agrees. “As did we—”

“When you betrayed us.” Maul finishes.

“And I would do it again, only this time I would make sure to destroy this place!” Skywalker snaps.

Snoke laughs, long and loud. “Destroy? Look at what it has done to you. You can barely stand. Once the great father of our race. Now, a feeble old man. No. This place cannot be destroyed, not even by you. It was only a matter of time before I found my way here. Thanks to your nephew, of course.”

Luke bows his head, shoulders trembling. “My nephew was never supposed to be a part of this.” he grounds out.

“No. He was supposed to remain the lovechild that saved your sister’s humanity.” Snoke taunts cruelly. “Alas, you lied to him and attempted to murder him in the night. How was I not supposed to tell him the truth when he came— heartbroken —seeking my wisdom?”

“Half-truths,” he growls.

Rey turns away from the confrontation, remembering the vision of Kylo’s face as he had killed his own father, the devastation there. Her chest aches at the memory.

“Just as easily said into a mirror, Skywalker,” Snoke replies airily, his voice echoing off the cave walls.

“I was protecting him!”

Maul strolls up to Skywalker, gaze shimmering with malice. “Yes and it was you who drove him to become Kylo Ren. So concerned with our influence over him. You should have been more concerned with our influence over you.”

Silence falls over the cavern and Rey takes her chance.

“Where are Rose and Paige?”

Maul peers at her from the corner of his eye and Snoke turns to face her fully, a shark-like glint in his eye. “You will see them soon enough.”
“Where are they?!" she shouts, her patience gone. “Tell me! I need to know!”

Maul approaches and she feels a sudden chill washing up from her toes. It blankets out over her legs like cement immobilizing her and she glares up at him, chin quivering.

“What you need little fledgling, you will get soon enough.”

They depart, leaving Rey alone once more with Skywalker.

Hours pass and the storm subsides. Sunrise is near. Rey can feel it.

Skywalker has not moved.

In the time since Snoke and Maul left them, Rey has tried to bait her counterpart into conversation with easy topics like the island itself, its geography and plant life. She has even tried a thing as trifle as the weather, but the old bastard never so much as offered a glance in her direction.

She supposed it would only be a matter of time before she moved onto the hard material.

Now is as good a time as any.

“You tried to murder your own nephew?”

A shift of movement—right there, in the shoulders.

She tries again. “Why would you do that?”

This time the movement is immediate, a sharp jerk of the head in her direction, ancient eyes boring into her. She matches his glare, lifting her chin.

“Well?” she says.

“You shouldn’t be here.” He deadpans.

*Like in her dream…*

“I’ve gathered that. Now answer my question.” Rey drawls.

His beard shifts with a sardonic smile. “The second you touched that compass the fate of the world was sealed.”
“What does that mean?”

“What do you think it took Snoke centuries to find this place? He was waiting for the descendant. *You.* Only your blood could awaken the compass. The hunters were supposed to keep it hidden from the world.” Skywalker lets out a disgruntled sigh. “Lot of good they did.”

“Wait. You were in league with the hunters?” Rey asks surprised.

He laughs. “In league isn’t exactly the description I’d use, but yes. We both saw the necessity of keeping the object secret.”

“What about your sister and her war?”

“Keeping this gateway sealed was the only thing that mattered to me. I had lost my family long ago.” Skywalker whispers.

“You mean abandoned,” she says accusingly. “And you still have yet to answer my question. Why would you attempt to murder your own nephew?”

He avoids her gaze and instead fixates on the mirror wall in front of them.

“Answer me!”

“Because I was arrogant. I had assumed I could protect him. I was wrong. I failed him. I failed Leia and Han. I failed them all.” He relinquishes with a choked exhale.

Rey looks down at her hands, unsure of how to respond to his candor. She swallows, thinking of all the events that led her here, how they had changed her, strengthened her. “It doesn’t have to end that way. You aren’t dead yet, are you?” she murmurs.

A space of silence. Then, a surprised huff.

“No, not yet.” Skywalker replies, conflict twisting his voice.

“Good, because I’m not going to let them win.” Rey asserts roughly.

“Bold words, fledgling.”

She shakes her head, loose hair dancing before her face. “I don’t care. I didn’t ask for any of this and I sure as hell didn’t ask for those I love to be slaughtered.”

“No,” he agrees, “but sometimes winning means taking a loss.”

“I refuse to lose anyone else!” Rey declares stubbornly.

Something passes through his eyes. “Evil men care little for the lives of others.”

“Then help me! Help your family! Let’s stop this together!”

He stares at her with a peculiar expression, though he never answers.

Rey bulks, opening her mouth to hurl a flurry of insults at him when, out of the blue, she feels a bizarre tingle down her spine; then, a strange vine of warmth weaving through her ribs. It curls around her heart and she gasps.

“*Ben!***

Rey ignores him, straining to pinpoint Kylo’s presence. Unfortunately, his voice is nearly lost to
the span of distance between them, but she claws at the connection regardless, reaching for him.

“...—ey!”

His visage flickers in and out like a candle as he materializes in front of the mirror wall, hair a
disheveled mess and lips parted in elation at the sight of her.

“Re—!”

“What are you doing?!” she demands. “Snoke will know you—”

“Snoke—going to die.”

His statement catches her off guard and she realizes his intention at once. “Don’t be stupid! He’s
expecting you to come!” she hisses.

Kylo takes a few shuffling steps forward. “This was inevitable.”

She shakes her head. “Don’t play into his hand!”

Their connection grows as he moves closer.

“With so many lives hanging in the balance, I don’t have a choice.”

Rey closes her eyes, tears of anger burning behind them. When she reopens them Kylo stands close
enough to reach for her, and he does. She stares down at his bare palm, marveling at how warm it
appears in the cold dampness of this pit. So alive. She extends her fingers to caress his—

Instantly, a potent force lashes out through both of them and she emits a startled cry of—pain?
Rey is not sure, but it pulses with the same kind of intensity, her nerve endings thrumming with
such sensation her brain short-circuits and she digs her nails into Kylo’s skin. He grits out a sound
close to a snarl, but she can scarcely hear him. There is another sound, a steady drone that seems to
work its way up from her bones and outward, mushrooming over her skin and engulfing her like a
cloud.

She sees planets, moons, stars… and a depth of light she never knew existed.

Kylo clings to her hand, his eyes locked with hers as they sink further, pulled by whatever force
comes from inside them. It is ancient; this, at least, she knows.

Images flash before them: faces, interactions and places. Old and new, happening and
unhappening, though each one linked by the thread of their connection. Rey smiles despite herself,
the boundless feeling of awareness flowing through her like a never-ending river.

“Almost there Kylo! Don’t let her go!” a hazy voice shouts.

Maz?

Rey frowns at him. “What’s happening?”

“Don’t let go of my hand,” he whispers.

‘I won’t,’ she wants to say, yet something draws her attention. A foreign shadow that creeps out
beyond their light. It moves slowly, but definitely… like liquid.

“What is…?”

“Precious one,” it purrs.

Rey’s insides turn to ice. No!

“Yes.” it leers.

All at once, a vein of blackness pierces their link, flooding through them like poison and Kylo screams, a dreadful, blood-curdling tonality that grabs hold of Rey’s heart and squeezes it with a vengeance. She scrambles to keep Kylo’s hand laced in hers, but the connection is closing… and the blackness is spreading.

“Kylo!”

“I fou—it!” Maz’s voice wavers. “Get him out—there! Get him out now!!!”

And just like that, the connection snaps in two. Rey tumbles backward out of the vision, her jaw hitting the unforgiving rock floor and blood instantly tinged her mouth. She forces herself up on her shackled hands and jerks around to find Skywalker’s mortified expression fixated on her.

In the deep fissures of her mind, she can still hear that voice. “Oh, precious one. I will show you the true face of hunger. We will experience it together…”


He has spent centuries on this godforsaken spit of land guarding this godforsaken gate to that unfathomable pit where the monster who destroyed his family bides its time, waiting for the one thing that can set it free. Now she is finally here, sitting in front of him with tears streaming down her cheeks, the crimson of her robes glittering in the low light… and his nephew’s heart in her hands.

The same nephew he had betrayed.

A memory of Leia the morning Ben was born pervades his thoughts for the first time in centuries. He sees his twin sister’s face and how it had been alit with such joy, such pride. Her newborn son in her strong arms, the rose-blush of childbirth still tinting her cheeks and her powerful embrace protecting him from the world.

Motherhood was her greatest beauty.
Han had stood quietly, the small smile on his face a permanent fixture of elation. Ironic that the same ghost of a smile often graced Ben’s lips before everything was swallowed up by shadow and death.

Because of his choices—Luke Skywalker’s.

He supposes his father had felt much of the same guilt after making a deal with a demon to save his beloved’s life. Hunters were supposed to know better, but Anakin Skywalker had been no normal hunter. After the disease that ravaged his mother’s village, he had found himself untouched, immortal. *The first.* It was only a matter of time before someone came seeking to take that power.

And his own children—his *grandchild*—became the very monsters his kind hunt today.

Luke glares down at the aging skin of his hands. *So much for keeping the gateway sealed for all eternity.* He supposes it had to come down to this eventually. Darth Sidious had haunted the Skywalker family for hundreds of years with the ensured promise of his escape from the netherworld. What better way to do it then through the love of his nephew for Sidious’ own descendant.

The fledgling, Rey, turns her attention to him, discombobulated and perplexed. “Kylo… Kylo—he __”

“The veil between this world and that hellish realm beyond the door is growing thinner. We have you to thank for that.” Luke interrupts sharply. “And the thinner it gets, the more fragile the barrier between you and your ancestor becomes.”

“He hurt Kylo… through me,” she whispers.

Luke regards her deliberately. “Not enough to stop him or his mother from crashing the ceremony, I’m sure,” he smirks.

Vampire soldiers suddenly enter in a flurry of dark shining uniforms and they fall silent, watching as the group drags two human girls to the center of the cavern. Luke suspects they are Rose and Paige, the two names Rey had asked about earlier. As if to confirm his suspicions, the fledgling lets out a feral noise and her teeth flash violently. Unfortunately, both human women are too unconscious to witness her show of concern for them and they are unkindly dumped onto the ground.

There is one abnormality, however; a missing vampire, one Luke knows to be a direct servant of the supreme leader. Dopheld Mitaka. He should not be missing considering Snoke had ordered him to look after the compass.

*Where have you gone?* Luke wonders.

Snoke arrives moments later, a fresh streak of blood painted down his neck and his mouth twisted into a macabre grin. “It has begun.”
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Chapter End Notes
Leia had watched it happen in slow motion, the face of her son suddenly stricken by an unforeseen attacker, then his body spasming uncontrollably and toppling to the floor in a boneless heap. Others had rushed around him in shock while Rey’s dog, Bodhi, called out in alarm, frantic and cowering in fear. The animal had felt it—the darkness. Leia remained frozen in disbelief, the same fear pulsing through her blood and Ben’s agonized expression as he had uttered Rey’s name burned into
Maz and Finn reached him first, lifting his body and placing it on the couch beside them, while the rest of the room stood with bated breath, their faces drained of color. For all intents and purposes, the plan had worked, Maz had connected Ben to Rey and discovered the gate’s location, but what no one anticipated was interference…

And there was only one monster Leia Organa knew of who could wield that kind of power.

Darth Sidious.

“How is he?” Maz’s voice drags her out of her stupor and her head snaps up at once.

It takes her several long seconds to realize what the old witch is asking before she answers, her gaze fixed on her son’s unconscious form. “No change.”

“It’s only been a day.” Maz comments. “He will wake when the time is right.”

Leia shakes her head. “What happened to him?”

“The monstrosity Snoke intends to channel reached through the girl. I don’t know the extent of the damage, but I know Ben will be fine. It’s going to take a lot more than that to weaken him.”

Despite the reassurance in Maz’s words, Leia finds herself doubting. If Sidious had wanted to kill her son, the logical side of her argued, then he would have. Furthermore, Ben is a necessary component in opening the Gate of Starfall. There would be no benefit in stopping her son from getting to Rey, another necessary piece in the puzzle.

So what happened?

The little Leia knows of Sidious she had learned from her brother in the ancient days when the vampire council still ruled with some semblance of order. Those were happier years, years when her son and his father had known nothing but their unbreakable bond and the perfect world which allowed, without constraint, the union of a werewolf and her mortal beloved.

**A falsehood.**

One told to Ben until the deception could be hid no longer. Leia recalls when he had learned the truth, angry and ripped apart by the nasty whispers of the council behind Luke’s back…

“She lies with a human. What impropriety!”

“*Her familial link to our father-maker does not absolve her of such treasonous perversion. She is an animal like the rest of her breed! This should have been contained prior to that mongrel pup’s birth.*”

“He could foment a second war.”

“Yes! General Snoke should have executed her along with the rest of her infectious spawn after the war.”

“I have heard whispers… Lord Maul had intended to kill her himself, however, he was stopped.”

“Twas Luke. He could not bear a world without her.”

“Human sentiment.”
“Costly.”

“Foolish…”

Leia smiles bitterly at the memory of her son’s watery eyes as he had relayed the conversation to her, confused and terrified by its meaning.

“Why do they hate us so, mother? And father? He means them no harm.”

She had given him the only answer she knew. “Because predators fear their own shadow and we are that shadow, my precious moon.”

His eyes reminded her of the night sky in those days, velvet deep like her own before the wolf had awoken inside him.

She misses them now. She misses Han, too.

“The others are restless. Kaydel and the hunters intend to leave here without Ben.” Maz informs her.

Leia chuckles humorlessly. “He would never let them live it down.”

“No. Shockingly the vampire is being the reasonable one,” she says, pointing to Hux.

“Do you think we can trust him?” Leia asks.

For centuries he has been an enemy of the Resistance, nearly hunting them into extinction alongside her son and his fellow wolves. But as with any long war, lines begin to blur. Unfortunate then, that the lines have always been blurred for her… or fortunate? She has not decided yet.

“I wouldn’t concern myself with him. Like your little wolfling, he is preoccupied with matters of the heart.”

Leia frown. “Who?”

“A human I suspect. I overheard him and Ben talking about one of the Tico sisters.”

Her gaze widens. “That’s unexpected.”

“Is it?” Maz asks. “We do not choose who we love. You know this as well as anyone.”

Leia averts her eyes back to her son’s face, unable to ignore the pang of agony that rings through her heart. He looks so like his father, especially in this light. “After all these years, I believe that Han had known all along that Ben planned to…” her voice trembled, the word trapped in her throat, “but he went anyway. I had held out hope for so long, but after—”

“Your family has suffered enough at the hands of Darth Sidious. You must stop blaming yourself for all this death, princess.”

“I’m not known by that title anymore,” Leia says emptily.

“That title never left you.” Maz smiles.

Leia is silent for a moment, accepting the witch’s statement, if only because she must retain the fire of her strength for the real battle ahead. The thought of facing off against Snoke and Maul both thrills and terrifies her. And to finally come face-to-face with the scourge which has plagued her
family from the beginning? It is surreal.

“Do you think we can win?” she inquires cautiously.

Maz looks around the apartment at all the faces, speaking quietly, “We have no other choice. Failure is not an option.”

An unexpected knock sounds at the front door and everyone freezes. Hux hastily grabs a weapon and throws a glance around the room. Finn nods reassuringly, which he promptly rolls his eyes at and approaches the entrance, his muscles coiled like a spring.

“Who is it?” he snaps.

Shuffling. A heavy body hitting the door. Then, a groan.

“M—Mitak…”

At the sound of the voice, Hux instantly rips open the door and a pale man drenched in blood falls onto him, nearly knocking him to the floor. His arms reach out instinctively, steadying the stranger and helping him into a chair. Everyone is on their feet at once, watching the scene unfold warily.

“What happened to you?” Hux demands, but the quiver in his voice is unavoidable.

“Tried—take… compass. Snoke,” he stops abruptly, choking up crimson.

Everyone can guess how that sentence is meant to finish. Leia emits a sigh. Snoke and Maul must have nearly torn Mitaka apart when they found out he intended to run with the compass. The escape alone was a testament to this vampire’s sheer will and Leia thinks someone of his caliber could have been quite the soldier in her ranks.

*What difference does it make now? Vampires, werewolves, we’re all just trying to survive.*

“What if he was followed?” Kor Sella questions guardedly.

“No,” Mitaka grits out. “No compass. No p-point.”

Leia opens her mouth to speak but a startled groan draws the attention of the room—

—and Kylo bounds up from the couch, the scent of blood heavy in his nose. For one terrifying moment, he sees Rey’s face and is sure it is her blood. Then, he spots a vampire he never thought he would see again.
“Mitaka?” he croaks out.

The rest of the room comes into focus around him and he staggers forward, his limbs unsteady as if encumbered by phantom weights. What had happened on the other side? He recalled connecting with Rey and taking hold of her hand, then pain and a voice …

It had chilled him to the bone.

“Kylo,” Mitaka utters, his throat struggling with a swallow. “I came to-to warn you.”

“Of what?”

“The girl is his descendant. She is his vessel!”

Kylo’s jaw drops. “Rey? No, that’s not possible.”

Yet everything begins falling into place.

Mitaka has been at the foot of Snoke’s throne for decades, all the supreme leader’s secrets whispered in his unassuming presence as he listened. But Kylo still cannot believe it.

Striding forward, he grabs Mitaka forcefully. “What else do you know?”

Mitaka leans into his hold involuntarily, ugly black veins spidering up the man’s neck. “Your sword was the beginning,” he murmurs.

“What does that mean?” Kylo shakes his shoulder.

“F-first act to open… the gate. The son must kill his father. Then—”

“—all things are set in motion. A door to possibilities opens,” Maz finishes, standing up and walking toward them with wide, dismayed eyes. “What begins a thing, ends a thing!”

Kylo processes her words, realization striking him like a bolt of lightning and he finds the shared expression of horror on his mother’s face as well. This all began with Anakin Skywalker, the father of immortality, tricked by a sorcerer because he had been hellbent on saving his beloved. Then comes along a Skywalker descendant, murdering his father in cold blood—an act of pure corruption—and triggering the needed set of events for this sorcerer’s rise.

Now history has aligned again…

And Kylo’s own beloved stands on the opposite side, a vessel of the very scourge he means to end.

He shakes his head, whispering. “I won’t do it.”

Leia approaches him carefully. “Ben—”

“I won’t kill her!” he snarls through clamped teeth.

“Then perhaps you should just stay put,” Kaydel suggests sharply.

Kylo throws daggers at her, replying simply: “I’m not doing that, either.”

Mitaka abruptly interrupts them with a succession of coughs and both he and Hux hold the man upright in his chair, but it is no use. He is deteriorating before their eyes, the black veins winding
up his cheeks and fresh blood, now no different than the consistency of mud, belching from his mouth. It reeks of death and it is darkening by the second.

“Hux, go down to the harbor and ready your cabin cruiser,” Kylo orders urgently.

Mitaka shakes his head frantically. “No! You must stay away!”

“That’s not an option.” Poe chimes in.

“Unfortunately not,” Hux agrees, then glares pointedly at Kylo, “and despite recent events, I do not take orders from you.”

Kylo cocks an eyebrow at him. “Now is not the time for petty rivalries. Either you’re in this fight, or you’re not. Choose.”

Hux relinquishes a thorny grumble but concedes, standing up and exiting the apartment with a flourish of his trenchcoat. Finn moves to help Kylo ease Mitaka onto the floor, his body barely able to hold himself up in the chair anymore.

“I didn’t give my life for you to lose this war.” he gurgles weakly.

“I’m not going to.” Kylo deadpans.

Mitaka dies quietly and without fanfare, the sickening veins spidering up into his eyes and bloating them with blood. Finn lays his head back and brushes his hand over the vampire’s face, closing those eyes one final time. The room all shares a moment of silence for him until Kaydel breaks it.

“If that isn’t reason enough for us to lock Kylo away, I don’t know what is.” she declares testily.

“But you heard Mitaka, we have an actual chance to kill the creature.” Kor Sella insists.

“I heard him well enough and we’re not doing it. We’re not gonna kill Rey!” Finn argues.

Kor Sella scoffs. “Then what the hell do you propose we do?”

Ignoring them, Kylo gets up and heads for the door.

“Where are you going?” Leia asks, though he never answers.

He never even turns to acknowledge her as he passes through to the hallway, slamming the door shut behind him. The elevator ride down cannot move fast enough and then he’s in the driver’s seat of his car, reaching for his keys to start the engine.

The passenger door suddenly opens and Leia slides into the seat.

Kylo glares at her. “I didn’t say you could come.”

“I didn’t ask permission,” she retorts with the same edge of sarcasm.

He bites the inside of his cheek, irritated, yet he knows arguing over such trivialities will only waste more time, so he starts the engine and barrels out onto the highway. Running all the red lights, he nearly causes two traffic collisions on the way to his apartment which Leia scarcely bats an eye at, but the furtive pursing of her lips is unmistakable.

Kylo pulls into the garage a short time later and the two travel in weighted silence up to his floor. Inside his apartment Leia watches with keen eyes as he walks to his bedroom, pulling the heavy
weapon down from its plaque and retrieving its sheath from a draw inside his closet. Her measured quiet eventually annoys him beyond his threshold of patience and he glares up at her.

“What?” he grunts.

Though Kylo knows precisely what. This is the blade that murdered his father. He wants to run, to hide from her probing stare, yet he can only look away petulantly, tangled up with emotions he cannot put words to. He never expected to feel this kind of vulnerability ever again, yet here he is, looking to his mother for the proper reaction.

Say it, he thinks. Blame me. I deserve it.


The question throws him at first, then he understands what she is asking—the astral projection with Rey and Darth Sidious…

Emitting a weary sigh, he replies, “I feel different, more awake, I think. I don’t know. I don’t feel anything wrong which… scares me.”

Leia understands at once. To have witnessed such a startling show of dark power, yet for the receiver seem practically unaffected? What are the odds? And he does feel different, which means what? Neither of them knows.

She decides to switch gears. “You still won’t change your mind about this?”

His shoulders stiffen at once. “No,” he answers tersely.

She focuses down at her hands, smiling dolefully. “I knew the answer. I just had to ask the question one last time.”

He checks his Glock, inserting a fresh clip of silver-tipped bullets. “I’ve made a lot of bad choices in my life, but this is the only one that matters,” he admits.

“Well, you’re not making it alone.”

“You’ve given me no other option,” he complains, though the edge in his tone has diminished.

She walks forward, placing her hand on his shoulder and squeezing it reassuringly. “As I said, I don’t ask permission.”

The boat ride to the island is, for the most part, uneventful, but ten miles from their destination,
they hit a wall. Literally. A massive storm cell churning in the sky and impossibly powerful winds that nearly capsize their boat. Thankfully, Hux maintains control, holding the cruiser steady against the waves until reaching the island, though just barely.

Lightning strikes one of the jagged escarpments near them, sucking in the sound and driving it back outward with an ear-popping boom. Stinging rain bites at their faces and Kylo notes several water cyclones on the ocean in the distance. Lightning strikes again, this time lighting up the entire sky.

It’s the concentration of energy, he realizes.

“This was unexpected,” Kaydel yells over the noise.

“We stick to the plan. You, Finn and Hux take the west side. The hunters and Maz will take the east.” Kylo says.

“I don’t like it,” she opines.

Hux throws a bag of explosives over his shoulder, replying sardonically, “What’s to like?”

“I’ll confront Snoke in the cave, while my mother waits in the shadows with the sword.” Kylo continues. “No one is to make your move until my signal. We’ll only get one chance at this. Understood?”

All give a concise nod.

Leia, on the other hand, regards him with a cryptic smile, one she tucks away the second his eyes meet hers.

“Let’s move!” he snaps.

As they clear out, Kylo stops Kaydel. “Take this,” he says, offering her his gun. “The triplets will have it out for you. You’ll need the extra firepower.”

She makes a face and for a moment he thinks she will refuse him, though she ends up snatching the weapon and tucking it into the lip of her pants. “Thanks,” she mumbles.

After she is gone, Kylo walks up to Leia, shifting the strap of his sword’s sheath from his shoulder and handing the weapon to her. “Let’s hope this works.” he murmurs.

Thunder roars around them, drowning out his words, but his lips are expression enough for his mother.

“It will. I have faith.” She draws him into a hug, whispering in his ear, “I have faith in all of our family.”

Kylo grimaces, understanding exactly what her words are suggesting, though he is unsure he can accept the idea of faith, let alone forgiveness for Luke Skywalker. However, he cannot worry over that now. There is a greater enemy at hand… and Rey needs their help.

He follows the crumbling path with no resistance from First Order vampire, but he can feel them. It comes as a shock at first, their curious pulse on the periphery of his awareness, each like a lone flickering in the dark. And the dark—well, Kylo has never experienced anything like it. He swallows uneasily, hearing that rolling echo of laughter in his head and wondering if it actually is only in his head.
‘I will show you the true face of hunger.’

That presence had chilled him to the bone.

And it seethes just beneath the ground of this place, eager for freedom. If Kylo is forthcoming with himself, he can understand why Luke would come here to safeguard the gate, why he would abandon his sister after nearly attempting a murder on his nephew. After all, had Kylo not been seduced by Snoke’s deceit? Had he not foolishly trusted an even greater lie than those his uncle and his mother had spun him about their family’s past?

It matters little now.

He continues up the hill to the crimson-stained rocks at the crest of the island. There he finds the entrance, a gaping maw of blackness. His mother will be entering from the water, sure to remain concealed until the precise moment. All he can do at this point… is hope. Taking a deep breath, he jumps.

The rocky floor greets Kylo faster than he anticipates and his knees crack painfully against its surface. A low grunt escapes him and he quickly jerks his head around, scanning the chamber as his eyes adjust to the eerie gloom. He spots Snoke first, donning a sly smirk and standing near an expansive wall of what appears to be reflective glass. Next Maul, swathed in night robes and vulturous eyes glowing like demonic lanterns. Then the Tico sisters, tied at the center of the room with their dirty faces pointed in his direction.

And Luke… staring out at him from a gnarled face much older than he remembers. Kylo frowns, taken aback by the near-white quality of his hair, the heavy wrinkles around his eyes. He looks as if—

“Ben!”

Kylo’s heart stutters to a halt.

At the opposite side of the cavern, shackled to a chain that Maul holds safely in his hand, Rey gawks at Kylo with incredulous anger. Their connection spits and snaps like a livewire and he absorbs all she feels in an instant: shock, gratitude, dismay, rage… and helplessness. Kylo gets to his feet.

“I would have thought you’d have this place crawling with First Order vampires,” he says, directing his statement to Snoke.

“With the quest for knowledge, sacrifices must be made,” Snoke replies, faux compassion coloring his tone.

Kylo’s jaw drops. “You killed all your vampires?”

“Not all, only most.”

“Why?” he implores.

Snoke steps forward, sweeping his arms outward and allowing the fresh ebony and golden raiment he wears glisten like liquid. “To feed the gate, of course. You did not think it was as simple as a single sacrifice, did you?”

Kylo shakes his head, sparing a furtive glance at Maul. The elder’s lips draw up in a hidden grin and Kylo could almost laugh. He was right to suspect treachery, not that he would do much now to
protect his supreme leader from it. Those days are long past.

“So… I’m here. What now?” he drawls.

‘I told you to stay away, you fucking idiot! I told you!’ Rey’s thoughts lash out at him like jagged glass.

*I’m not going to lose you.* He responds simply, his eyes locking onto hers. *No matter what.*

“Now we shall begin.” Snoke purrs, nodding to a side entrance to the cave.

Kylo turns to find the remaining werewolf triplets along with Phasma leading Finn, Kaydel and Hux into the chamber, beaten, subdued. His heart plummets as Maz and the hunters are brought in behind them, Kor Sella appearing mortally wounded. Poe has also sustained heavy injury, enough to weaken his ability to fight. The smell of their blood permeates the air and Kylo closes his eyes in dismay.

Surprise had been one of the key elements in their plans.

“Darth Maul, bring the vessel forth.” Snoke orders.

Maul does as bid, yanking Rey’s chain and forcing her down beside the Tico sisters. The three women look between one another fearfully and Rey’s lower lip trembles, her eyes brightening to their feverish red.

*Hunger.*

The smell of Poe’s and Kor Sella’s blood must be driving her mad. An image of what he saw in Hux’s apartment resurfaces in his mind, Rey’s chilling gaze… and those black eyes. *That was Sidious.*

Kylo takes a shuffling step forward, but Maul is on him at once, looping his arm around Kylo’s throat and bringing him down to his knees. Kylo struggles, but to no avail.

Snoke then pulls something from his robes— *the compass* —and motions to Phasma. “The star reader must now invoke the ancient lines.”

Phasma nods and yanks Paige Tico to her feet, hauling her up to the mirror wall and kicking her knees out from under her. She collapses, crying out as she hits the ground and her sister begging hoarsely for Phasma to stop. Maul chuckles near Kylo’s ear at the scene.

“You cannot win. Not even Snoke understands the true nature of what lies beyond that gate and I am going to enjoy watching it tear him apart, and then the world,” he whispers into Kylo’s hair, low enough Snoke will not hear.

“Rey will not allow herself to become your devil.” Kylo hisses back, cutting his eyes at the elder.

Maul tilts his head mockingly. “Watch her.”

Snoke drags Luke to his feet and approaches Paige with the compass, offering it to her. “Open it.”

She glares down at the offensive item with dread, but will not take it from him.

Snoke cocks an eyebrow at her challenge. “Open it, or I will open your sister’s chest and eat her heart while you watch.”
Kylo glowers at Luke, incensed by his uncle’s unwillingness to act. Luke made Snoke. He can easily toss the old snake about like a ragdoll… unless of course, he can’t. Despite Maul’s black magic, he also should be subject to Luke’s command, but not if Luke lacks the strength to give it.

This place has fed upon him like a parasite, leaving only an old, weakened man.

Paige swallows and takes the compass in her hands. It shines blue at her touch, bathing her face in cold light giving it a quality of death the likes of which Kylo has never seen before. The room falls silent as she caresses her fingertips along the rounded edge of the compass, working her way inward. Her eyes widen as if in a trace and her fingers move in tighter swoops, following a pattern he suspects not even she can see.

*Shink!*

The soft metal click reverberates throughout the chamber and the compass releases, exposing a dial of glowing lines and at its center, a bright lodestone. In front of Paige, the mirror wall comes alive with a map of the stars, constellations glittering brightly against the glassy depths.

Snoke steps close to Paige, placing his hands on her shoulders. “Now, point the lodestone down the path.”

Paige obeys, looking up at the mirror dreamily and walking to the largest constellation depicted.

“Hydra. I should have known.” Snoke laughs.

As Paige places the compass up to the glass a deep groan rumbles from the world below and the mirror wall wavers, shuddering like water. Beyond it the darkness begins to move, writhing like a serpent’s coils Rey suddenly screams.

Kylo yanks against Maul’s hold, but he keeps him in check and all occupants of the cavern watch in horrified fascination as Rey tears at her face with her hands, clawing the delicate skin like a maddened animal. When she pulls her hands away to reveal her eyes, the icy chill seeping through Kylo’s gut spreads to his chest and he calls out unintelligibly—her name? A plea? He cannot be sure.

But the hateful pools of ebony surrounding vampiric red are a certainty. Her fangs distend, longer than he has ever seen them, and a cackle leaves her throat that twists Kylo’s stomach with helpless agony.

“Rey!” he howls. “REY!”

“Now the game truly begins.” Maul murmurs, letting go of Rey’s chain.

It hits the ground, twinkling demurely as she rises to her feet, the eyes of a stranger staring out from her claw-streaked face. They are the eyes of Darth Sidious.

“Yes, at last.” Snoke croons. “I have two human lives to offer you, Lord Sidious.”

A smile tears her lips upward in an exaggerated leer to reveal that she no longer possesses human teeth, only a maw of needles. She turns, focusing her eyes on Paige and Rose yells, trying to draw her attention.

“Rey! No! You can fight it! Rey! Don’t do this!”

The trance-like state Paige was under for the first part of the ritual instantly dissipates and she
whirls around to face Rey, fear overtaking her expression.

“Rey, Rey please. It’s me. It’s Paige.” she beseeches.

The cackle sounds again, low and unsettling. “You say this as if it is supposed to mean something to me.”

“Because it does! Because whatever this is, you can fight it!” Paige argues.

The creature in Rey remains silent, choosing instead to advance on her and work her into a corner of the chamber. Rose struggles against her bonds, but can barely move and Kylo watches powerlessly as the situation spirals into a hellish nightmare.

He reaches through their connection wildly, trying to find some thread of Rey, but she is buried deep beneath the coils of the monster inside her. Still, he persists, digging frantically at the darkness. However, what he comes upon is a fractured mess, despondent pieces of a whole unaware of their wholeness.

‘What has he done to you?’

Or perhaps these fractures have always existed inside her. Kylo had only been too blind to see them, too absorbed in his own pain. All it took was one precisely placed blow and Rey would shatter.

“Listen,” Paige whispers, “I forgive you, okay. No matter what happens. Rey, I forgive you.” Tears stream down her face and Rose wails from her position on the floor, but Rey’s expression never changes.

Not even as she pounces on Paige and Maul thrusts Kylo to the side, snapping his arm back until the bone snaps and Kylo screaming in surprise anguish. He hits the floor as Maul barrels for Snoke, taking the fellow elder by surprise and skewering him like a pig with his bare hand. The triplets fall into action as well, striking out at small scatter of remaining Snoke loyalists as Phasma turns her eye on Kaydel.

Kylo struggles to his feet and watches as Rey tosses Paige’s limp body to the side, her neck nothing but shredded flesh and exposed bone. Rose screams in heartbroken rage and pulls so hard against her binds the skin of her wrists and ankles split open. From out of nowhere, Hux rushes in to drag her away from the fray.

“Where is the seed of Skywalker?! The ritual must be completed if I am to be whole!” the possessed Rey snarls.

Maul turns from his mutilating of Snoke’s body and grins at Kylo, but before he can do anything a streak of grey slams into him. Luke Skywalker pummels the betrayer into the ground with animal fury and Kylo stares on in bewildered amazement. His uncle is helping him.

“Ah, Ben Solo, the son of Leia Organa, grandson of Anakin Skywalker and Master of the Knights of Ren. We meet at last.”

His attention darts to possessed-Rey and he stumbles backward, pain lacing through his broken arm. “Let Rey go.”

She chuckles. “No.”

“You can’t control her forever. She will defy you.” he growls.
“After experiencing the connection shared between you, I have found myself wondering, young Solo, would you ever deny her if she wanted to consume you, make you a part of her, beast to beast?”

Kylo sets his jaw. “Rey is not a monster.”

“But I am.”

“Get away from my son!” a voice roars.

Mother!

She stands near the mirror wall, his heavy sword in her hands and her eyes glinting like steely chips of amber.

“Well, well,” Possessed-Rey tuts. “The queen’s daughter reveals herself at last.”


The creature bares its bloody teeth. “I think I’d rather eat him.”

Leia throws Kylo a measured glance. “I warned you,” she whispers, looking down at the sword—and plunging it into the mirror wall.

The creature screams, a high pitched wailing of shocked fury and the ground beneath them shift, tilting dangerously to one side and splitting down the center. The glass cracks and snaps outward like a web as the portal beyond the gate yawns open into a spiraling tunnel of smoke. Kylo tries to reach his mother, but another tremor shakes the cavern and he stumbles to his knees in front of Rey.

“Ben!” Leia cries.

He looks just in time to see his sword sailing towards him and he catches it at the hilt as the creature spins, reaching for his throat, but Rey’s fingers scarcely brush his skin when the gravity of the portal suddenly pulls—hard—and he and Rey are dragged into the world of stygian gloom beyond the gate.
Chapter End Notes

PLEASE REMEMBER TO LEAVE ME SOME FEEDBACK!
CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM IS WELCOME!
FOLLOW ME ON TWITTER IF YOU WISH!
ALSO CHECK OUT THE LIVE TWEET THREAD WHERE I DO PROGRESS FOOTNOTES/UPDATES!

Extra Notes & Links:
Cabin Cruiser [Click link for details on what it is.]
Hydra Constellation
A/N: Here it is my treasured readers! Only one chapter left! Wow. I've no words for how far this story has come. I'm shocked as hell, tbh, because I never expected to finish this, but here we are. **Also, the POVs for this chapter jump around for the sake of showcasing the final battle. I apologize if it is a little disorienting. Don't be shy about commenting on it. I didn't have a lot of time to edit with NaNoWriMo approaching!** Oh, and this chapter does have a HAPPILY EVER AFTER! Just sayin'. ☺

**IMPORTANT:** I am beginning my own career as an indie author with my debut novel in the works. If you're interested in following my progress, you can check out my [professional twitter](#) & my [insta](#). As of right now, my insta isn't active. That will change.

**SONG INSPIRATION:** [Cry Little Sister - Gerard McMann](#) & (SCREEN CUTS TO BLACK! ROLL THEM CREDITS!!!) [Spellbound - Siouxsie And The Banshees](#)

**CHAPTER WARNINGS:**
- pain train continues
- PRIMARY CHARACTER DEATH
- blood & gore
- secondary character death
- minor character death
- 

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

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dd

="Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove.
O no, it is an ever-fixed mark
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wand'ring bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken."
— William Shakespeare, Sonnet 116
The world opens up like a gaping maw and Hux watches helplessly as his former adversary disappears into the swirling blackness. The fight does not stop however and the screaming woman in his arms yanks him rudely back to the present. Her body heat presses against him as she struggles, clawing viciously at his arms and wailing in a sound he has never heard before, a broken ugly sound of utter devastation.

The thick scent of blood wafts around him and his eyes burn with the thirst, though he muzzles it, intent upon her.

“She’s gone.” Rose whispers hoarsely.

Hux has no way of knowing if she means Paige… or Rey. A part of him thinks she speaks for both. After all, they are her family. Were —were her family. He stares at her face. It remains chalk white, lips equally absent of color and eyes deathly flat, all manner of life leeched out of them. His chest aches at the sight. For the past few months, the unsettling range of emotions he has experienced has left him often bewildered and vexed, but now…

His fingertips graze her cheek, though like a fluke tumbling to the ground and shattering to pieces, her stupor breaks and she fixes him with a burning glare, one that fills him with eerie coldness. “Make them pay.”

He nods compliantly and the two rise in the face of the portal’s violent winds. Screeches and brutal howls echo around them as the storm punctuates with its hellish lightning and Rose turns a frigid eye on the battle. She zeros in on Phasma who is locked in combat with Finn and stalks toward them.

Without warning, Rose seizes a bloodied dagger from one of the fallen bodies and buries it into Phasma’s back. The vampire roars, eyes glittering with rage and Hux startles into action. He reaches Rose in a split second, shielding her from his captain of the guard, once upon a time. The impact jars him hard enough to make his teeth rattle and his skull thums like a beehive.

Phasma grins chillingly and turns back to Finn only to grab him by the throat, lifting him off the ground and squeezing until Hux is sure his head will burst. To their left, Kaydel contends with the remaining triplets, her clothes painted in blood. To their right, Maul throws Luke Skywalker effortlessly against the cave wall, crumbling the gate further and causing the entire cavern to shake.

This entire place is about to fall into that bottomless hell, Hux realizes. Where is Maz?!

“I expected such behavior from these hapless dogs, but not you general.” Phasma glances from Finn to Hux, her face bitter with betrayal. “And for a human …”

Hux stands straight, ignoring the ringing pain in his arm. “Let him go, captain.”
Phasma’s lips peel back in a disgusted sneer. “No.”

Rose makes a move to attack, but Hux snatches her arm. Her first attack had landed only because Phasma was distracted. No way can Rose earn a strike now with the vampire aware. Her age and strength spans even beyond his own.

Phasma laughs. “I think I might rip your spine through your throat, while the general watches.”

“Then do it, after you let him go,” Rose challenges lowly.

Finn claws into Phasma’s arm as his eyes rim with tears and Hux sees the wolf’s attempt to shift, but he can barely retain his consciousness in her grip.

Phasma, as if sensing Hux’s train of thought, tightens her hold. “You’re a fool,” she tells him. And he is, especially for this next part.

Using all his force, Hux shoves Rose backward onto the ground and lunges at Phasma. Phasma turns, thrusting Finn in front of her and uses him as a shield. Hux stops short, pivoting on his feet and aiming a strike at her open flank, but she knows his moves and parries him easily with the weapon Rose had used on her. Fresh crimson spreads down his arm, but Hux ignores the pain and charges forward. By this time, Finn has stolen a modicum of breath to offer assistance and he jams his feet into Phasma’s side—

—though Phasma switches the dagger in her hand, rotating the hilt so the blade aligns with her forearm and drives it upward, slashing Finn across the chest; then, she drives it downward at an angle and into Hux’s ribs. The world comes to a standstill. Pain erupts through him and he gasps as she pulls him close, plunging the weapon deeper and tearing through one, two—three—ribs. A distant scream fills his ears and he wonders if it might be Rose.

“After all these centuries with me doing your dirty work, of all the times you chose never to get your soft hands covered in death, you should have known better,” Phasma whispers near his cheek. “I’m the one who made you.”

Beyond them, Connix is brought to her knees by one of the triplets and the other promptly begins pounding into her stomach, wrenching from her a gurgled wail. Further away, General Organa shields her ailing brother from another blow by Maul, taking the brunt of his fury alone, while the remaining hunters merely crawl along the floor in a pitiful attempt to offer aid.

Hux feels any glimmer of hope abandoning him as he looks from Finn’s face to Rose, her shocked expression contorting into something monstrous. Then, his eyes settle on that gluttonous hole of darkness.
Kylo tumbles, spinning uncontrollably further and further into inky nothingness. But he can feel something, a deepening pulse of an ancient heartbeat which summons primal dread in him. Any inhale is a choking hazard of acrid smoke and the viscous quality of the air clogs his throat as he grabs for purchase.

The body holding fast to him smells of blood, the warmth achingly familiar and he looks up into the face of his beloved, gore-stained and snarling at him like a stranger.

Rey.

No answer.

Beyond, the clouds undulate and dance like endless coiling serpents braiding in and amongst one another, each one consuming the next. Then, everything comes to an abrupt halt, Rey’s body crashing atop his and the wind—if one can call it that—being knocked out of him as his back hits solid ground. The sword in his goof hand clatters distantly to the side and pain reverberates through his broken arm. He takes in his surroundings.

They have hit the surface of somewhere, a desolate place filled with violent shapes. It reminds him of Snoke’s cold and empty throne chamber, all geometric eccentricity and harsh shadows. This place is countless Snoke throne chambers, all stacked atop one another in a labyrinthian-like macabre beehive. And at the top—he shields his eyes against the single shaft of light shining down from there. It is dead light, green with decay.

“You mother was always the clever one.”

Kylo glances over at Rey as she straightens, towering above him with her alien eyes. “What is this place?” he asks.

“Never told her precious boy all the secrets, though. Unsurprising,” she tsks.

Kylo pushes himself to his feet, rising above her height, but this Rey appears unaffected, the barely veiled disdain glittering back at him like a poised knife. “This is your prison,” he whispers.

“And your grandfather’s,” she replies, beginning to circle him.

The mention of Anakin Skywalker chases a shiver down Kylo’s spine. After all the lies from his uncle, his mother, Snoke, he still finds himself desperate to know, to understand the legacy of a man who had shaped his own… and the man himself. The first true immortal.

“You two are of such ilk nature, desperate after a woman you can never keep.”

He exhales harshly through his nose, the words coming from Rey’s mouth like a slap to the face and leaving behind a burning scar. It is said so callously, the emptiness in her tone rendering him speechless.

“The irony of it is delicious.” Rey chuckles.

Kylo looks away a moment to collect his emotions. “Now you mean to kill me.”

“In a fashion,” she murmurs.

The light above flashes and his eyes suddenly catch the glint of his sword several yards away— but
just within reach. If he can divert the monster’s attention away, then maybe… He angles his hips, pivoting slightly to one side and placing his wounded arm behind him. “Then do it,” he says.

“A part of her hates you. You realize this don’t you? She hates you for this life, for taking the sunlight away from her.” Rey pauses, Darth Sidious’ face staring out at him with thrilled malice. “I can relate to that. To be caged in a place of false light.”

Kylo’s jaw clenches. Though he did not turn her that night, the events he triggered still caused the inevitable calamity in her life. The stripping of her humanity, the insatiable hunger of a monster… and the murder of a close friend by her own hands.

“I am in her head. I know her heart. You want to know what she craves most, even more than you?”

“The sun,” he admits, his eyes slipping closed.

“I can give that to her.”

“You would blot it out forever!” Kylo snaps.

“Just the same, would you rob her of what she desires most? Do you not love her?”

Kylo’s hands curl into fists. “I do love her.”

And so he does the only thing he can do.

Kaydel’s body throbs in agony as she endures the heavy fists of her opponent and the silver coursing through her blood like wildfire. They are lost, beaten. The cavern around them trembles and quakes as the swallowing blackness of the gate widens. Thunder and waves roar from the world outside, but Kaydel can only see the eyes of her lover flickering toward her, a split second of communication shared, a lifetime of history spoken.
Kylo darts forward, shoving Rey off her feet and hitting the ground in a roll that barks his broken arm. Throwing out the other, he skids across the biting gravel until he feels the cool hilt of the weapon and his fingers close around it instantly. The smirk on Rey’s face vanishes, replaced by a calculating impassivity as she watches him rise to his feet.

“You going to kill her, boy?”

Kylo does not reply and simply raises his sword, his mind hollow. He cannot imagine the outcome of this decision, so instead, he channels the moment. “Release her.”

Rey grins.

He takes a breath, his chest shaking. “I do not ask twice.”

The grin grows.

*Forgive me,* he murmurs. Will she hear him?

He cannot worry about that now. Planting his feet, he imagines the sweet warmth of Rey’s skin the night he kissed his way down her body and worshipped the flower of her sex. How beautiful her sighs and the sweet depth of ruby in her gaze. He had savored that moment, more than she will ever know.

Clenching his teeth, Kylo takes one final breath and charges, but all the power in his body abandons him the instant Rey raises her hand, index and pinkie finger raised like horns. He freezes on the spot, confounded, and his sword drops from his hand. She strolls forward, flicking her wrist downward lazily and his knees give unto her without hesitation, crashing down upon the graveled earth.

“What?” he stammers.

Rey gloats over him, tapping her skull. “The link between the two of you. When you reached out to her, I made sure to leave behind a part of myself, there inside.” She points to his forehead. “I knew leaving my trust in Darth Maul or Snoke would be for naught, and I was proven right.”

Icy nausea washes over Kylo at the realization of Sidious’ words.

Rey kneels down, picking up his sword and inspecting it. “This was the weapon used to kill your father, christened with his blood.” She runs her fingers along its surface. “Now, it will be bathed in yours.”

 Kylo’s eyes clamp shut, bitterness tainting his tongue. “Rey, fight this. I know you can.”

Rey’s face contorts, the expression beneath her skin seeming adamant to burst its way through. Kylo can almost see Darth Sidious, the old and withered face, yellowed eyes under the crimson, and the remaining hope in him wanes.

“You and your grandfather are the archetypal visages of men driven to madness for the one they love. Always on your knees, easy to maneuver… to manipulate.”

“And you are no different than a disillusioned devil seeking ruin!” someone shouts from the
shadows behind Rey.

Maz steps out from the gloom and Rey laughs. “I should have known. A witch such as yourself couldn’t pass up this opportunity, could you? Though I doubt you’ve told the others.”

Maz’s eyes shift to Kylo momentarily. “Their purpose serves my own.”

“You mean the power you can gain here, or that killing me will cancel out the debt you owe me.”

“I owe you no such debt.”

Rey places the sword at Kylo’s throat. “Is that so? I had thought to keep you alive. You would have proven useful, but now I think I will just kill you both.”

Maz plants her boots, shifting her weight as Kylo experiences a strange warmth permeating up through his bones. It is foreign and alive unlike the arctic void of this place, and there is a voice. Far away, male, but definitely real. Free her. Free yourself.

Shock radiates through Kylo’s being. Though unknown, the voice is instantly recognizable to him. “Grandfather?” he utters aloud.

Rey glances at him, the naked certainty in her eyes faltering.

“Did you truly think you could stamp him out, Sidious? Take what has always been rightfully his?” Maz whispers. “You who condemned his bloodline to such tragedy.”

The sky above rumbles and the single shaft of dead light brightens, cutting through Kylo’s vision. Beyond the combs of the tower, a low howl builds, seemingly coming from all directions. Turning to follow the sound, Kylo spots a silhouette. It lifts its hand, reaching—

—and Rey’s body suddenly breaks for Maz, fingers hooked into claws and lips torn back in a vengeful snarl. She lifts the sword, aiming to rend the old witch in two. At that moment, Kylo’s paralysis breaks and he bounds after her. Driven by the power of Sidious, Rey might be fast, but Kylo is faster, his eyes intent upon Maz. He focuses all his might into his legs, the gravel hisses beneath his feet.

He cannot let Rey be responsible for another innocent death. He will not.

He reaches them just as Rey’s arm swings and he hastily shoves Maz clear. The blade comes down upon his face, slicing him from forehead to chest and he staggers back, unable to cradle the wound now with two mangled arms. Instead, he falls to his knees, blood pouring from the laceration in warm running rivulets.

Above him, Rey’s face abruptly goes slack, the burning ruby amid black guttering like a candle. “Ben,” comes a jagged whisper. “Ben what…?”

Kylo looks up, finding an expression of horror. “Rey?”

“No.” She shakes her head, tears gathering in her lashes.

Kylo attempts to stand, but his legs give out and he falls forward, his hands instinctively going to catch his weight and he cries out in pain. The sound jars the world back into place, Rey’s eyes robbed of their warmth and replaced with Sidious’ chilling hunger once more, and the storm clouds above circling faster, faster.
“Stand Ben Solo!” Maz shouts from behind.

Rey emits a grating chuckle. “The last great hope! Look at him.”

A startled cry rings out and Maz is brought down beside Kylo, her limbs angled awkwardly like an ill-treated marionette. Rey flicks her wrist upward, curling her fingers and Maz’s cry turns into a wet gurgle. Blood fountains from her lips, staining her shirt.

_Free her..._ Kylo’s body shivers as the voice echoes in him again, calm and grounding. _Do not make the same mistake I did._

His eyes fall on the glint of his sword in his lover’s hand and for the first time in centuries, he seeks his father’s face. The man who cradled him, guided him. A man he had killed with his own hands. _Murdered_. What right has he to pray to him?

_Help me,_ he pleads.

Maz wails as Rey suspends her body high above the ground, twiddling her fingers and making Maz dance at unforgiving angles. “Everything will be mine.” Sidious murmurs, Rey’s voice lost.

Kylo’s heart cracks at the sound and he struggles to stand. The stranger’s eyes within his beloved’s face shift to him and Kylo senses the dark master’s power radiating out over his body, threatening to take hold of it again. Only this time, those venomous clutches would tear him apart. But killing him with the sword is more poetic, Kylo knows. A fitting death for a dog of war.

_All these centuries, now come down to this._

“Rey.” Her name departs his throat in a guttural whisper, all the things he wished to say wrapped up in that single syllable. _I love you. Only you. You are in my blood, like the heat of the sun. And I am forever changed._

_Forgive me._

Sidious lifts the sword, tilting Rey’s head coyly to the side. “Can you picture her dying in your arms, boy?”

He does not answer, taking a shaky step forward.

In the ghoulish green of the light from above, Rey’s face is nothing short of monstrous, utterly unrecognizable now. And something akin to dread flashes across Sidious’ expression. “So be it,” he murmurs flatly and directs Rey’s hand.

But nothing happens. The malicious magic washes over Kylo’s body like stone, rushing out and away from him and, for a moment, Kylo mirrors Sidious’ look of surprise.

_Strike now, son._

Han’s voice fills Kylo’s chest and he gasps. Then, he sees them, iridescent figures of fog at the farthest reaches of the tower. A strangled sob escapes him, his heart thick with emotion at the sight of them—his family, all the victims of a cruel beast’s manipulation...

_Free her._ Anakin Skywalker repeats. _She is meant for the sun._

Kylo takes one final breath and rushes forward with the last vestiges of his strength.
Leia senses it at once, the cresting of powerful energy and something else. A familiar presence she has not sensed in centuries. Han. Her heart soars. Even as Maul snatches her throat, hoisting her up and his mouth opening wide, wider than nature could possibly allow; as she feels the first hints of his dark tendrils siphoning away her life, she knows her son is not alone.

With broken wrist and mangled shoulder, Kylo rams into Rey. The two stumble backward across the gravel as he scrambles for the sword, blood and spittle dripping off his chin and his injuries shrieking in protest. Sidious growls behind Rey’s lips, but no further magic can seduce Kylo’s body to obey. He is protected. And the look of abject horror in Rey’s eyes emboldens him further. Their hands lurch along the hilt of the blade, made slippery by his blood.

“Rey!” he hisses. “Hear my voice! You’re strong! Stronger than I ever could be! Know that!”

Sidious roars at him, shoving him off-kilter and he almost tumbles, but his hands hold firm to the sword despite the pain.

“Fight this now! Fight him!”

He feels her through their connection at last, the tether by which they are bound pulsing to life as she claws, battling against the walls which Sidious has encased her within, all the splinters of her consciousness converging like a storm of glass. Magnificent. Captivating. The alien gaze clouds over, slowly growing distant. The bones of her face seeming to soften, creeping back into her skin.

“That’s it, Rey. Come back to me!”

Her fingers spasm and relax their hold.

Then, she blinks, eyes drifting to his own and Rey smiles, a ghostly tenderness tugging at the corners of her mouth. In defiance of the dead light around them, she grows warm, burgeoning like a dauntless flame. A sun. “Thank you, Ben,” she whispers.
He smiles back, but before he can reply, she rips the sword free of his hands and plunges it through her middle.

Kylo screams—

—and Leia hears her son’s anguish. Shock radiates throughout her body and she suddenly grabs at Maul’s face, plunging her thumbs into his eyes. He jerks away, startled, releasing her and careening into the surging attack of her brother. Her older sibling latches onto the panicked elder with animal fervor, tearing flesh where he can. The two spin across the cavern floor as a random shot fires and a gurgling roar of pain cuts short.

Leia looks over to find the hunter, Poe Dameron, with a werewolf killer in his hand, the one Ben had handed to Kaydel. Shortly beyond him, one of the remaining triplets falls, releasing that very Kaydel from its grip. She instantly leaps out of reach of the other, heading straight at Captain Phasma as Poe takes aim again.

The second shot sees its mark when, all at once, the Gate of Starfall explodes outward, sending rock shrapnel and warm body alike sailing through the air. Leia scarcely has time to grab onto something when half the ceiling gives way to the raging storm still engulfing the island.

In the remaining seconds of the explosion, Leia sees Kaydel reach Phasma and Rose Tico toss her a blade. The agile wolf twirls the weapon in her hand, slanting low on her feet, then rocketing upward and severing Phasma’s head from her shoulders. Leia watches as the bodies of Finn and General Hux seem to float as they are propelled back with the force of the blast and out of Phasma’s dead clutches.

Silence falls.

Dead silence.

A cursory glance at her brother reveals him alone, no sign of Maul anywhere. And the look in his eyes tells her all she needs to know. Escape—what the old monster has always had down in spades. Her throat burns with ire and the desire to chase him drags her to her feet, but it is the set of figures at the center of the room as the dust settles that summons her to walk. Maz, beaten and bruised, though capable as she mutters a spell to the receding smoke of the portal. Her son, infinitely more gore-stained with an unconscious Rey in his arms. No… not unconscious.

Leia’s hand flies to her mouth.

And the tangled sob caught in her son’s throat causes her heart to splinter into a million razor-sharp pieces. It is gut-wrenching, filling her head, her body, her very bones and she approaches him with
care, her hands trembling. At the touch of her fingers on his head jerks up to meet her and she
gapes at the sight of his face. A bloodied line bisecting all the way down past his jaw, skin
blackened with bruising and cheeks slick with tears.

And Rey.

She looks utterly at peace, color already departing her flesh making the blood staining her lips as
bright and rich as ever. The open wound at her breast matches the ceremonial robes she wears, her
loose hair caught up in Kylo’s cradling hand. Were that hand a crown, Leia muses achingly, it
would wear no heavier on her head than a feather.

“Ben.” she tries.

He presses his face back into the crook of Rey’s neck, inhaling her greedily.

“Ben?”

Others come to gather around, Rose holding tightly to her vampire Hux as he rests all his weight on
her and Finn nursing Kaydel’s injuries. Luke, on the other hand, keeps his distance, the glinting
sorrow in his stare betraying itself for all the world to see. He waits near Poe who sits dejectedly on
the ground, the head of his fellow hunter, Kor Sella, in his lap. Yet another death.

Leia closes her eyes, running her fingers through Ben’s hair to anchor herself. “Ben?”

“She didn’t deserve this,” he utters roughly. “She deserved to live.”

“No one deserves such a fate.” Leia replies.

He grips her tighter, hugging her protectively to his body.

Leia desires to offer her son a kindness, but she knows no kindness she can give that will fill the
hole carved into his chest, for she knows the feeling all too well, and to see her own son now
grasping his beloved to his chest in anguish. Regardless of the fact that it was Ben himself who
separated her from her own beloved, this is no warranted punishment. She would not even wish
this upon her worst enemy.

A strange tingle percolates through her veins and Leia pauses, glancing up at the sky. The rain has
stopped and the clouds slowly begin to recede. Distant thunder rolls, but it fades to a mere murmur.
She frowns at the premorning daylight and the fading stars above, perplexed, when something
brushes her shoulder and she looks wide-eyed into the face of a woman of ethereal light. Luke
likewise wears an expression of awe.

The woman beams at Leia, her features striking a hidden cord in Leia’s chest and she releases a
shuddering breath. Mother. Turning to Kylo, the woman approaches him, her movements gradual
and weightless.

“Ben.”

He peers up at her dazedly. “I know your face.”

A light chuckle. “My sweet boy.” Then, she kneels, placing her gossamer hand upon Rey’s chest
and whispers something into Ben’s ear. He gawks at her as she closes her eyes… and light
emanates from her hand.

Color pours back into Rey’s skin and her breast slowly rises and, little by little, the wound vanishes
as if it never was.

At last, she stands, passing Leia a secret smile—no need for words; a mother’s love once shared is universally understood. As the ghost turns away she pauses at Luke and Luke’s eyes reflect unabashed tears. Her hand goes to hold his cheek, whispers shared between them, then she is gone, vanished like the fleeing shadows of the night.

“Rey?”

All heads turn back as Rey’s eyes flicker open, the morning light breaking over the horizon into the cave in broken shafts. One spills over Rey’s face and she squints. “Ben?”

A collective sigh of relief passes over the group and Ben kisses her before she can say more. A startled yelp slips past their lips and she pushes him away. From behind him, Rose lets Hux to lean on Maz in the shadows and steps into Rey’s line of view. The two lock eyes and Rey’s lashes tremble and glitter. “Oh Rose, I—I’m so…”

The latter elects not to respond, instead closing her eyes and giving a single sharp nod. Not quite forgiveness. Whether that will ever be achieved is unknown, but Leia knows one thing: that the relationship between the two of them runs far too deep.

Perhaps in time…

Rey releases Ben and rises to her feet, him subsequently following suit beside her. “Darth Maul?” she asks.

“We’ll get him,” Leia assures her. “Of that, you can be certain.”

Rey nods.

Then, Rose’s comment stops everyone cold. “Rey. You’re in the sun.”

Rey looks down at her hands, rosy in the pink dawn glow, and more tears spring to her eyes. She looks to everyone in turn, the shock equally shared on each face when Luke whispers, “Padme believed in second chances.”

“But do I deserve such things?” Rey inquires uneasily.

“It’s not a question of deserving,” Rose speaks up. “It’s a gift. It’s not to be wasted.”

Rey emits a shivering laugh. “I won’t. I would never dream of it.”
Chapter End Notes

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