# The Mating Service

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## Summary

'If Rey had known how quickly she would find her biological mate and alpha through the world wide mating service, 'Match,' she might have considered signing up years ago.'

A sceptic of the leading mate finding service, Rey decides to sign up after too much wine and years of loneliness. She never expected to find her match within days of submitting her samples. Join the two as they are separated by an ocean, Rey in England, Ben in America as they explore their situation. Can Ben convince Rey that he wants his omega for her and not simply their biology and change her mind about the reliability of the mating service?

## Notes

I know I said I would never write more than one fic at a time but here I am after writing this after way too many drinks. I cannot get the idea out of my head...chapters will be short with not too much of a wait between chapters.
See the end of the work for more notes.
Rey-London, England

An advertisement on the television blared in the quiet space of her flat, the particular company claimed to offer a new revolutionary omega suppressant and Rey huffed and promptly turned the offending appliance off. She was on the highest legal dose available of suppressants already. She had been ever since she presented as an omega at the age of fourteen, she had never experienced a heat either thanks to the medication. She had no need for it, not without a mate or an alpha to see her through it. Once or twice, she considered weaning herself off the suppressants for a while and finding an unmated alpha to experience it with but alphas were territorial, and casual did not compute to them. Attachment was inevitable, their possessiveness notorious, so she pushed the thought from her mind; she wanted to save herself for her mate anyway.

That brought her attention back to the piece of literature in her hands.

Rey surveyed the brochure perched on her lap as she thumbed the pages, sifting through it, front to back. The message was clear, the information detailed and well thought out, it displayed the alpha, omega and beta symbols in colourful, bold fonts. They displayed their scientific findings in the form of simple graphs and an assortment of pie charts, they were kind on the eye and easy to follow and analyse. On every page, the one hundred percent long-term success rate of the relationships matched through the service was plastered in italics and coloured ruby red. It was enticing. The longevity of the matched relationships were apparently lifelong; it meant that the couples matched through the service stayed together for the rest of their lives.
They only furthered their claims by spreading testimonials and photos of couples who met through the service on nearly every page. She rolled her eyes, not quite believing the authenticity of their smiles. It all appeared so fake and forced as they shoved their results in her face. She was not bitter but it did rub her wrong, she was in want of her own mate and doubted that they could find them for her; it felt like an oddly impersonal way of meeting the person she intended to spend the rest of her life with.

The service proclaimed that they would find your match with a money back guarantee in the event you fell into the one percent fraction that they were unsuccessful in locating mates for. Rey could not help but feel she would inevitably fall under the one percent if she decided to sign up.

She had heard of ‘Match,’ before, it was the leading and most successful mating service in the entire world, they taught about it in schools, they urged children to sign up as soon as they turned eighteen and most followed that instruction. Despite the constant advertisements and television commercials displaying the evidence of the service’s success, Rey had always questioned it and chose not to sign up which was almost taboo in society. It was a voluntary service after all, although some campaigned for it to be made mandatory and governed by the government and health department.

Some had called her selfish and others supported her decision. Her mother had begged her to think of her destined mate and how they might have already signed up and offered their samples for testing. Rey thought it was artificial, an odd way to find someone, she wanted to fall in love, experience heartbreak, heal and try again; it was raw, humanistic and natural.

Moreover, she was always unsure of their methods, how could they designate or locate her mate through biology alone? All they required was a sample of her blood, saliva and the pheromones from her mating gland. The samples were then transferred into Match’s database and cross-referenced with all the unmated individuals in their system, it was a worldwide operation. Sure, they might find someone who was biologically compatible with her, but what if they did not connect in a personal way. She wanted someone to want her for her, not her status as an omega or because biology demanded it of them.

Rey had been unwilling to take the plunge but as she neared twenty-four years of age and she witnessed all of her friends matching through the service, she thought it might be worth the chance and that she would allow herself some slither of hope and trust in the widely used service.

Alphas were the most prominent and active users of the service and new advertisements urged more omegas to join the service to counteract the unbalanced sections and influx. As an added incentive, the courtesy would be free of charge. There was nothing for her to lose, she would not have to pay and there was a very real chance that she could finally meet someone.

It was tempting even if she did not expect to find her alpha. Rey knew loneliness well, all of her friends were paired and mated and she was the third wheel, the straggler. Knowing her luck, she would end up as one of the poor souls in the one percent that ‘Match’ could not find a mate for. Maybe it would act as karma for her denying the chance to sign up as soon as she came of age and ignored all attempts to entice her for six years, six lonely years.

What if her mother was right and she had left her alpha alone in the world due to her ideals about love and trusting fate to bring her mate to her? What if they had joined the service and thought they were in the one percent? The idea made her heart clench and race, she craved companionship and it was obvious that leaving it to chance or fate was not working.

She brought her wine glass to her lips and threw back all of the contents. She was light, almost free
of inhibitions and so she plucked her phone from the coffee table and dialled the number from the brochure before she could talk herself out of it.

xxx

Arranging the sign up appointment was easier than expected. When she revealed that she was an omega, the customer service representative practically squealed down the line and informed her of the details and what the procedure entailed as well as the nearest clinic to her location. It was a few streets away from her flat and she was relieved about the ease of it all.

So here she was, days after the initial phone call sat in the bustling waiting room of the ‘Match’ clinic.

Earlier that day she had met up with Finn who had to practically drag her there. She was unconvinced by the service, a true sceptic and was experiencing doubts about signing up. She regretted her decision; she had been intoxicated when she booked the consultation. He pleaded with her and confessed he did not want to see her alone any longer so she kept her appointment. She was still reserved though.

A kind looking woman, short with small eyes and auburn hair called her name and she was ushered into one of the back rooms.

“You look nervous, child,” the woman observed, her voice was soft, nurturing.

Gazing downwards, she eyed the old woman’s nametag; it read ‘Moe.’

Rey then looked into those wise eyes, the ones that looked as if they had seen a thousand years and countless souls in that time.

“I am worried, I suppose. What if they cannot find my mate? What if they do? It is surreal and overwhelming,” she admitted, the woman had an aura about her, it felt natural, something as easy as breathing to confess her worries to her.

The woman’s eyes softened and her full lips parted into a warm smile as patted her arm in reassurance. It was comforting, almost motherly.

“The belonging you seek is in front of you. The success rate of finding mates is the highest in the world, if he is out there, we will find him for you. Maybe he is already waiting for you, dear.”

Rey fidgeted and she tapped her feet against the examination table.

She imagined herself grey and still waiting for her match, a confirmation of her loneliness and life of romantic solitude. On the other hand, perhaps the woman was right.

“I am ready.”

“I trust you followed the instructions of not taking your birth control and suppressants so we can retrieve a reliable and potent sample?” The woman added and Rey answered her with a quick, decisive nod.

Rey rolled up her sleeves and offered her arm to the kind woman who worked efficiently and gently prodded her and tied a tourniquet around Rey’s forearm above the crease of her elbow and located a vein. Rey watched in fascination as the needle slid into her skin and the blood flowed freely.
This was it. There was no going back.

Once she finished with the blood work, Rey parted her lips and Moe swabbed the inside of her mouth.

The final part offered some discomfort. Rey removed her top leaving her in her bra and jeans. The woman stood at her side and eyed her superior trapezius. It was where her mating gland was located. She swabbed the skin there and then braced Rey for what was to come.

The most important part of the examination was the sampling of Rey’s pheromones; it was the leading identifying factor that would reveal her mate whose own pheromones were a match, a counterpart to her own.

“This will sting,” Moe warned her as she produced a larger needle, it needed to penetrate the muscle.

She located the gland with practiced expertise and slid it in.

Rey hissed, gripping the examination table but talked herself through the pain. It was odd to experience an intrusion in such a sensitive area, her knuckles turned white and she bloodied her lip with her teeth as a sample of the liquid pheromones was extracted.

Once it was complete and Rey dressed, groaning a little over the ache in her neck, Amilyn sat down at her computer.

“We should have your samples sent to the lab by the end of the day and then they will be input to the system and ran against potential matches,” Moe informed her, her voice was calm, hopeful.

Rey nodded.

“Thank you.”

xxx

Two days later, Rey was under a car, testing the inner workings of the vehicle when her phone pinged.

Expecting it to be a text from Finn, her best friend, she rolled out, wiping her hands free of oil and grease.

She lifted her phone and swiped across, unlocking the device.

Frowning, she saw no message from Finn and saw an email instead, she opened it and her hands trembled when she saw it was from ‘Match.’

Heart racing, she scrolled down; a series of bold words greeted her.

*Congratulations Miss Andor, we have matched your sample to an alpha in our database. We have located your mate!*
We meet our alpha, Ben.

Both a firefighter and published poet and living in New York City, the only thing he longs for is his elusive omega/mate.

I am blown away by the response.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Ben-New York, United States of America

It was dawn.
A dusting of violet and hues of cerulean blue crossed the morning sky while a light, languid breeze wafted around Ben as he walked home.

It was the height of summer and he was glad for his shift pattern at the fire station, he finished early in the morning, long before the city of dreams woke and inspired a soul. It meant he beat the worst of the humidity that spiked around noon.

The journey home was short, the fire station was located two blocks from his home, a most convenient arrangement and Ben’s long legs carried him quickly across the city.

It was a journey he could manoeuvre blind and he often did just that, his nose was often buried in his moleskin notebook and he always had a pencil tucked behind his ear or in his hand, as he scribbled his musings and thoughtful lines of poetry that struck him. He was an observer of life and inspiration found its way to him regularly so preparation was key.

He happily greeted the door attendant of his building, Jeffrey, despite his tiredness and leaned heavily on the wall of the elevator as he ascended the floors until he reached his penthouse apartment.

Ben unlocked the door to his apartment and shuffled inside, his body ached and he was exhausted after being on call at the fire station for over twenty-four hours.

Luckily, he had the next two days off and he planned to use the time well. He would catch up on sleep and write until his heart was content. While he was not old, after thirty-four years of life he was beginning to feel the years creep up on him, especially with such a physically demanding profession. When he was in his early twenties, he could easily work a twenty-four shift and even volunteer to cover anyone in need, his capability to bounce back and function on very little sleep was unheard of.

He kept fit though; his job demanded it and Ben loved moulding his body into something he could be proud of and something that would appeal to his mate. As a kid, he was scrawny with long limbs that seemed out of proportion with his body. His father, Han installed a home gym when he was thirteen and his younger self had been all too eager to make use of the weights.

Now, he was tall, large even by alpha standards and filled out, he was broad, his middle coiled deep with hard muscle.

Callie, his beloved cat and closest companion was there to welcome him as she always did. She stretched, arching her back before she weaved between his legs and nuzzled her face against his jeans. Her movements were graceful and precise, befitting of the sleek, raven-haired feline. Ben kneeled, ran his hand along the length of her back and stroked her.

“How is my girl?” He asked the cat, her chartreuse eyes flashed up to meet his as he scooped her up, hugging her close to his chest.

Callie purred and kneaded his arms. After planting a kiss on her head, he set her down and she traipsed off to her favourite spot on the windowsill that overlooked the city.

Ben brushed his hair out of his eyes and then bent over, retrieving the mail from the doormat. He locked the door behind him. He sifted through it, barely registering the contents and only stilled when a familiar looking brochure landed on top of the pile.

It was from ‘Match,’ and the sight unnerved him. It taunted him. They claimed that they were the leading mating service in the world but they seemed to have failed him, it was a harsh reminder of
his solitude.

He crumpled the pamphlet and dropped it to the floor.

Like the majority of the population, Ben had signed up to the service when he was eighteen. He had heard of the success rates, they practically preached its importance and value for society in health class back in high school.

So bright eyed and optimistic; he sat through the consultation, offered his samples and left with a spring in his step, more than ready to meet his mate.

That was sixteen years ago.

Over the years, Ben’s hope had faded into almost nothing. However, there was a light inside of him that his hopelessness could not smother or extinguish. During his darkest nights, he clung to that spark and told himself that the best things came to those who waited and wait he would. He would wait for his mate until his dying day if need be.

Sometimes he assumed he fell into the one percent that the service was unable to locate matches for and it sat wrong with him.

He hated the idea of spending his life alone. As the years passed without word, it seemed as if he was destined to live without someone by his side, without someone to carry his heart.

He had tried once or twice to date unmated omegas but it never felt right to him, it was as if he was forcing himself to fit with them when they were unmatching puzzle pieces. Often, he felt as if he was betraying his real mate, his true counterpart. That was if she even existed, his heart told him she did, that she was out there and just as desperate for love as he was.

He would frequently spend time imagining what she looked like, how she would taste or feel beneath him. It was especially hard when unmated omegas triggered his rut and he had to hide away in his apartment and ride it out alone.

Therefore, he abandoned the dating scene and focused on his career instead.

Not only was Ben a firefighter, but he was an avid fan of literature and he wrote his own poetry and short stories.

Writing was an outlet for him, he channeled the longing and need he felt for his mate, he would spread his want, fears and hope onto the pages.

His book of poetry was published under a pseudonym, Kylo Ren, and it had topped the New York Times Best Sellers list.

Some part of him hoped that his mate would come across his words and know they were about her. Perhaps she had taken comfort in them during her loneliest times. The thought warmed him.

Groaning, he dropped his duffel bag and began to strip off his clothes, he was in dire need of a hot shower and he hoped it would ease his tense, overworked muscles.

His apartment was spacious, decorated lavishly in shades of crimson and black, he was a trust fund baby, the sole heir to the combined Amidala, Skywalker, Organa and Solo fortunes but he did not dip into it.

The only time he had used the trust fund was when he bought his home. He afforded himself the
penthouse apartment and that was it. He was content with his wage and the money he had made from his book. Materialistic, Ben Solo was not.

It was a stark contrast to the luxury his parents enjoyed and basked in but he was appeased, wanting for nothing but his elusive mate.

Stepping into the shower, he sighed and settled under the spray of scorching water. The water pressure was a welcome contrast to the showers at the station. The beads caressed his tired muscles and trailed along the groove and curves of his back.

He rolled his neck, twisting it side to side as he wetted his hair.

The brochure from ‘Match’ had triggered his craving for his coveted mate. So he envisioned her as he often had, he had dreamed of her ever since he was a child but she remained faceless, no matter how hard he chased her image. She both graced and haunted his dreams, a seemingly unattainable treasure.

She would be much smaller than him and that excited him, he wanted to engulf her with his body and lose himself in the soul underneath. He would devour her whole.

His cock grew hard as he replayed one of his most thought of fantasies, of his greedy little omega on her knees and begging him to gift her with his alpha cock, to christen her mouth with his spend.

Grunting, he wrapped his rough, calloused fingers around the base of his cock, he fisted it but he was left desiring for a smaller set of hands to perform the act. He ached for a woman’s touch, his woman.

He commenced slowly and moved himself under the powerful spray of the showerhead so it rained over his cock head. He placed his palm on the tiles and braced himself there, spreading his fingers wide.

He brushed his thumb over the tip and circled it before spreading the pre cum down the length of his impressive manhood. The combination of the spray and the increasing speed of his hand had sent him close to the edge; it had been too long since he had touched himself.

Swearing under his breath, he slapped the tile and pumped himself harder, he pulsed in his slick palm and shook as he teased himself, rolling his wrist as he found his rhythm. He jerked his hips, thrusting upwards and clenched his teeth together as his body blazed. He lusted for a hot, wet and eager pussy to bury himself into, an omega would take his length and girth without trouble and he would pummel her senseless for taking him so well.

He chased his release, desperate as he used his other hand to pinch his nipple, hard. He revelled over the sensation, the type that teetered between pleasure and pain. He yearned to teach his omega the closeness of the two; he would worship her and tear her apart.

With the image of his faceless omega on her knees taking his entire cock with practiced ease in her mouth and down her throat, he pumped himself a few more times. He squeezed and jerked himself almost painfully hard until he came. He groaned as he painted the tiles with his spend while the rest of it disappeared into the plughole beneath his feet.

“Fuck.”

It was bliss, if only for a moment.

The crippling loneliness and desire for his other half dissipated as his body was overcome with the
rush of oxytocin, his body and mind relaxed into a pleasant state of calm.

Blinking, he rested his forehead on the tiles for a second before scrubbing his skin free of soot and sweat. He worked efficiently, a well-rehearsed routine and cleansed the entirety of his body.

When he finished, he wrapped a towel loosely around his waist and sauntered over to the bathroom counter, his phone was lit up with a notification.

Unused to contact so early in the day, he frowned and opened the device. It was an email. Spam most likely, but he opened it anyway, his heart stopped when he noticed it was from ‘Match.’

It could not be.

Steeling himself against the counter with his freehand, he inhaled slowly, breathing through his nose. He dared himself to curb the hope that bloomed inside of his spirit. After all, there was a possibility that it was the news he had dreaded for years. Perhaps it was a confirmation that he was in the one percent that ‘Match’ confessed they could not detect a mate for.

He blinked; certain he had misread the title and gaped at it. Shaking, he opened the email and he was confronted with the words he had been waiting sixteen years to read. His whole life had been centred around this moment, his longing and want had finally come to an end.

**Congratulations Mr Solo, we have matched your sample to an omega in our database. We have located your mate!**

The phone slipped through his hands and shattered on the tiles below.

He was no longer alone in the world.

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Chapter End Notes

What are you thinking?
Chapter Summary

Rey struggles to deal with the implications that her matching brings.

Chapter Notes

The huge response to yesterday's chapter spurred me on to write and get this out for you all.

Special thank you to the wonderful and talented, RileyBabe on tumblr for making this chapter's moodboard for me, it is stunning <3

See the end of the chapter for more notes
Rey-London, England

For a moment, Rey stared hard at her phone. A part of her expected the email to disappear, it must have been a mistake or a cruel joke, but in her heart, she knew it was not.
Feeling faint, she walked over to the radio that filled the garage with the obnoxious notes of the overplayed pop song of the week and turned the dial, leaving the space devoid of all noise but her racing heart.

She sat down heavily on the office chair, clenching her phone in her fist and bit back her tears. Bile rose in her throat, her stomach morphed into a sinking black pit of despair. She released the grip on her phone and set it down gently on the desk in front of her.

Leaning back, she dropped her face into her hands and screamed aloud, the silence of the empty garage was shattered by her primal screams as the weight of her decision all those years ago seeped into her conscience.

The email had confirmed her mother’s words and her deepest fears, her mate had signed up for the service and she, in her pursuit for a natural kind of love and belief in fate, had left him alone in the world. She was responsible for her own loneliness; it was self-imposed, selfish and so easily avoidable.

In her grief, the sickening realisation almost too much to bear, she kicked at her desk and fought the urge to topple it over. Her screams waned into sobs as she decided against the action, destruction was unhealthy and she was no bringer of chaos.

She stayed like that for a while, the thoughts of her alpha alone and desperate for her as he waited played in her mind. Why had she not signed up like everyone else? Why did she have to play the hopeless romantic who believed that the universe would cross their paths when a service was there and ready to unite them?

Rummaging through a drawer, she came across something that had forever calmed her. The paperback copy was treasured, well read and a constant extension of Rey’s arm. It was a companion, a friend that had seen her through the trials of life since its release six years before. Evidence of its value to her was the crinkling of its pages, the hand written notes in the margins, the dog-eared bookmarked pages and the well-worn spine. With her heart in her mouth, she turned the pages until she found her favourite line from a poem within the collection; it was one that resonated deeply with her. It was simple, short but hauntingly beautiful.

’In the dark I search for you, the wait for you keeps my blazing heart true.’

She repeated the words aloud like a prayer and thanked the mysterious author who had gifted the world with his words yet kept himself hidden under a pseudonym with no author picture gracing its inner pages.

She traced the cover; her fingers looping around his pretend name, ‘Kylo Ren’ and then tucked it carefully back into the drawer.

Breathing hard, she plucked her phone from the desk, her fingers shook and it took her a few attempts to punch in her passcode. She persevered though, as if the phone was her lifeline and the only thing that kept her from shattering. Allowing herself some hope, she opened the email and scrolled until she reached the file attached.

It was his profile.

It was her mate’s profile.

Holding her breath, she chewed on the inside of her cheek, squeezed her freehand into a tight fist, and found the courage to click on it. She quickly tapped the screen, her eyes zeroed in on his name.
A shiver danced up her spine as she read the name. She tried it on her tongue; needing to christen his place there like a prayer, she would recite it and carve a place for it deep within her heart.

“Hello, Ben Solo,” she whispered quietly, the corners of her mouth lifted into a small, impish grin.

Something flourished inside her. A blossoming warmth replaced the pit of despair that had consumed her being only moments before. It first cradled her heart and then blessed her insides with its reassuring presence.

Eager for more, she scoured the profile, it was sparse as most were and lacked a photo. She had also chosen not to include a photo as she was sure that she would not find her match. It did not matter though; biologically she would be physically attracted to him. That much she was certain, it was ingrained in her genetics and their matching pheromones increased that pull.

Under occupation, he had listed 'firefighter' and immediately Rey’s mouth grew dry, her brows arched in surprise. She liked men in uniform and knowing that her alpha was one of those men heated her more. She wondered if he could dull the flames between her legs or whether he would douse them and leave her combusting, writhing and burning underneath his touch.

Clearing her throat, she continued her reading, it listed his date of birth and Rey realised that he was ten years older than she was. The age difference did not bother her, it was the date listed below it that did. It was the date he had joined ‘Match’ and although Rey knew it was a possibility that he would sign up as soon as he had turned eighteen, seeing it confirmed was a sad sight.

Ben had waited for a mate for sixteen years.

She had prolonged that wait by six years.

The thrill of seeing his name and job description was dampened by those realisations. Would he hate her for not joining the service as soon as she was eighteen? Would he want to pursue her when he realised she had kept him waiting?

His contact information was next in the profile, an American telephone number was listed and her spirits dropped even more. Not only had she prolonged his wait by six years but also he was so far from her. He lived in New York, she learned that when she read on further.

She spiralled, fate was cruel and it chose to separate them by an ocean. If it were not for ‘Match,’ she would have likely never have met him. His phone number burned her irises, taunted her.

She was a coward, how could she present herself to him when they were so far away from one another and that she played a part in their separation?

Huffing, she pocketed her phone, locked up her garage and stomped home.

By nine in the evening, she was curled up on the couch, nursing a glass of wine with Finn at her side. She was an insecure wreck and admittedly intoxicated, quite like the night she had signed up for ‘Match.’

Rey did not drink often but she had needed the comfort and weightlessness it brought her. The guilt was still there, her worries and fears still present but they were dulled.

“He will hate me,” Rey confessed, tearing her eyes away from a boring sitcom that droned in the
Finn sighed and squeezed her hand; he had been one of the few that supported her decision not to join the service despite his own feelings about it.

“I do not think he could ever hate you, Rey. Explain your reasoning to him; lay your heart out to him.”

Rey glared ahead, drained the contents of her wine glass and swallowed hard. Standing, she moved to refill her glass. She padded over to the kitchen and poured herself another.

“I do not know if I even understand my own reasoning!” She grumbled, plopping back on to the sofa.

Finn offered her a reassuring smile.

“Then maybe he will, you need to contact him, you owe him that much,” he said gently.

Rey deflated, knowing he was right.

“I still do not know if I truly believe in the service anyway. How can they claim their mates stay together for life based on their biology alone? What if that is all we are? Physical attraction is different from love and I cannot believe that they can offer that. I want him to want me for me and not just because I am an omega!” She groaned, she threw her hands into the air and breathed harshly out of her nose.

“Peanut, it is so much more than that. When I was matched with Poe, I had the same thoughts. The physical attraction is there from the beginning; our mates were literally born to be with us. However, there is so much more. I love him for him, not just because he smells good. He is the other half to your soul, not just your body. You owe Ben the chance to know you and you owe it to yourself.”

Rey sat back and considered his words. They stung deep. They rang true to her and she could not fight his logic. After a while, he kissed her goodbye and left her to her thoughts. She continued to drink, growing more inebriated and frustrated with herself, with ‘Match’ and with the universe as the night crawled by.

Why could she not have met him in her local coffee shop or ran into him on one of her morning runs?

Eventually she stumbled to bed, navigating through the darkness and slipped in between her sheets. The humidity was stifling and she stripped herself of her clothes and rolled around the mattress.

Her eyes were heavy and her mouth tasted of tart grapes.

A few minutes passed as she gazed at the ceiling, knowing that someone else should be occupying the empty spot next to her.

She had never felt so alone.

The shrill ring of her phone interrupted her musings; she groaned, rolled onto her stomach and pulled herself across the bed, her limbs were heavy and uncoordinated due to her intoxication.

She grabbed her phone and stared at the screen.
Perhaps it was a telemarketer or some scam, a wrong number even. She was tempted to ignore it but she thought back to Ben’s profile and then her own. She had listed her number just like he had.

Her heart stopped.

Remembering Finn’s words, she sat up, sobering with every ring.

She bit her lip hard and swiped across the screen, bringing the device to her ear.

At first, there was silence, her mind and words failed her.

“Rey,” came the low voice of a male.

She shuddered and squeezed her eyes shut. She instinctively knew who was on the other end; his voice alone had lit a fire in her, it drew her to him with its allure.

“Ben,” she whispered.

Chapter End Notes

*holds breath*
Ben races to replace his phone and calls Rey, the phone call takes an unexpected turn.

You must have been worried,” he thought aloud.

They have found his mate.

They have found his omega.

It was a dream, his world no longer spun in a starless void, gravity no longer anchored him to the world, she did.

The soul he had yearned after for years had found their way to him and he could not contain his joy, it was as if he was breathing for the first time and surrounded by nothing but light and
goodness.

Frantic, he groped the bathroom counter and pulled himself to his feet, his reflection a mirror of his buzzing excitement and bewilderment.

Tentatively, he palmed his head, careful to examine his crown. He winced when his fingers brushed against a tender spot, an expected bruising. He was lucky that his spill had been without any real injury.

He was far from dishevelled, appearing outwardly okay. The man who stood before him was the same man who had stared him down his entire life except there was something different. There was a spark behind those obsidian eyes that had ignited.

How they blazed.

He smiled at himself, not quite believing this was reality. He waited for the illusion to shatter, for him to wake from this fantasy. If this was something his mind had concocted, he would happily live in the delusion and never wake again.

When it was apparent that he had really woken up, Ben’s sights shifted, his mind and body aligned and worked towards one single thought.

He had to contact her, reach out to the woman he would call mate, his divine little omega.

He glared at his useless and disposed phone, groaning as he raced out of the bathroom and into the master bedroom. He nearly tripped over Callie.

Yanking his closet doors open, he pulled out the first items that his hands made contact with. He dropped his towel and pulled on a pair of boxer shorts before sliding on some jean shorts and a black vest top. He finished the outfit with his trusty plaid shirt and some sneakers.

Glancing at his bedside table, he realised he had been out for a few hours. Any other day, he would have went to the hospital just to be safe but he was wired, too intent on his mission.

Pocketing what remained off his broken phone, he grabbed his keys and bid Callie goodbye. She sat on his pillow, her long tail swung from side to side. She was not amused at his departure he surmised.

He made sure to pocket his beloved moleskin notebook and slid his trusty number two behind his ear.

As soon as Ben exited the elevator, he ran through the lobby of his building, greeting Jeffrey again but in more of a rushed, inclined way.

The door attendant waved him out with a broad grin, regardless.

He ran all the way to the apple store, earning a few stares. Inhaling deeply, he pushed the crushed remnants of his phone across the desk and looked up at the surprised apple genius.

“I need a new phone,” he said.

An hour later, Ben walked home, the summer heat a welcoming friend on his skin. The chirping of European starlings in the full glory of their summer plumage and the thick fragrance of blooming sunflowers and gloriosa daisies guided his way home. It was a telling contrast to the usual sights,
smells and noise of the concrete jungle. He was no longer a lonely shadow; the sun cloaked him with its warmth and light, banishing all darkness.

He whistled along with the birds, a sweet concert from deep within their proud chests and their joyous hearts.

It was a sky full of song.

A new bounce found its way into his meaningful steps and he pulled his trusty number two pencil from behind his ear.

He licked his lip and scribbled.

‘Like a bird I am free, your presence, your very existence has encompassed me’

Nodding to himself, he kissed the cover, sealing his words there and curled the notebook, well-worn and weighty with sentiment and tucked it under his arm.

Tapping his front pocket, he prodded the denim to make sure his new phone, his only connection to her was still there.

It was a transporter of voices; he longed only to hear hers.

He gripped his new phone in his hand, fearful that it would fall to the scorching slab of concrete pavement below him but his hands did not fail him, his hands were steady and true.

Unusually, Ben was not nervous about contacting her. It was something he had hoped and imagined for years, a well-rehearsed verse in his mind.

He was calm like the sea before a storm. Something was brewing in his heart but he was still, ready for what was to come. He had no doubt she would drown him but he would willingly sink to the depths of her lulling embrace.

For he was no longer alone in the city of dreams, a piece of his heart lay nestled somewhere else in the world and united they would be.

The elevator ride was when his heart fluttered, the anticipation trickled under his skin. Like a breeze, he floated into his apartment, Callie greeting him as she usually did.

He gave her his attention and rubbed behind her ears, just how she liked it.

“It is time to call her, my girl. Do you think she will have me?” He asked and the cat looked on before perching herself on the sofa.

He could have sworn she inclined her head, a silent answer to his question.

Shaking his head, he undressed and changed into his loose sleep shorts and opted not to wear a shirt, it was too hot for that.

He booted up his phone and clicked on the email that had torn his consciousness from him.

Wasting no time, he clicked on her profile, pouting when he realised she had opted not to include a photo. He could not blame her; he had done the same years before and only updated his profile if there was a change in his contact details.

He would wait to be blessed with her image, her intrinsic and outer beauty.
He knew all about waiting.

Driven with the hunger for more, he scrutinised the device and scrolled, stopping upon her name.

‘Rey Andor’

Ben grinned, loving the symbolism. She was a ray of light, a child of the sun. He wondered if she shone under its rays, if her skin took on a golden glow as she traversed through life. He hoped she would shine with him.

“Rey,” the name rolled off his tongue with a satisfying hum.

It was a name he hoped to cherish and call until his dying day. It was a name he hoped to groan into the shoulder of his wanting and needy omega as she took him and all he had to offer with ease and openness in her heart.

The name was something he would whisper every night before sleep overcame him in the hope that he would dream of her.

Scrolling further, he realised she was ten years younger than himself. It was not particularly bothersome, in fact, a part of him, the alpha side, rejoiced as it meant he could learn the ways of her body and guide her in any way she needed. She was young, pliable and most likely in need of tutorage. He would freely guide her and step up into the role of teacher.

Any excitement about that faded when he read the date she joined ‘Match.’ It was only two days ago.

She was twenty-four and she had only joined two days before.

She was twenty-four; she had only joined two days before which meant she denied joining the service at eighteen, prolonging his wait by six years.

Six, brutally lonely and agonising years, wasted.

He gasped, reclining backwards in his chair and stared ahead, numbness gripped him. He slammed his fist down on his thigh and mourned the time lost. A lone tear trailed down the length of his angular, defined face. It rolled until it reached his chin.

Admittedly, he was crushed, the notion of such a loss tugged at his heart with a sharp, mighty pull.

While he had waited like a dying candle in the night, she had been the one to smother his hope, almost extinguish it entirely.

A profound sadness washed over him.

He sighed and rubbed his face hard. With his elbows perched on his knees, he leaned forward and dropped his face into his clammy hands. He rocked for a moment, contemplating what could have possessed Rey for her to consider such a drastic option.

While his first thought was doubt himself and doubt his capability as her mate or her want for him, he quickly dismissed it. There was no arguing against the biological connection between them, they were a matching pair.

So why?

He thought of her alone just as he had been.
Rey must have suffered; the crippling hooks of loneliness spared no soul.

What were her reasonings? Could he calm and nurture his mate and assure her that any doubts she had of him were unjust and untrue?

He would fight for her, blaze a trail across the earth if he had to.

He wondered what had caused his young mate to avoid the service for so long. She obviously wanted to meet him, her mate. She would not have signed up otherwise.

Scratching his chin, he let his rational side calm him.

She possessed a reason and despite how it hurt him, he had to respect that, believe that she thought she was somehow right in her own mind.

He retrieved his phone once more and read like a man possessed, she was a mechanic, owned her own garage in fact and it thrilled him. Her own little hands would be rough and calloused, similar to his own but her touch would be heaven, the difference divine as he held her hand or she took his cock in that undoubtedly firm grip of hers and scorched her mark there.

Rey lived in London.

Ben opened his laptop and searched up the differences between their two cities. He was excited about that, he could be with her in seven hours if need be and she was only five hours ahead in terms of time. He was most curious about her accent, of how his name would sound coming out of those rosy lips he had dreamed about for years.

As an avid fan of literature and poetry and an author himself, England was a dream for Ben. It was rich in history and culture and he wanted her to share everything with him. He envisioned the two of them sightseeing, stealing a kiss under Big Ben and then he would show her just how big he was.

They would spend a night at the theatre; he would wine and dine her just as his mother had taught him and then worship her between the sheets.

Unable to deny himself any longer, he copied her phone number into his phone and saved it under Rey; he completed it with the sun emoji.

He stood tall, walked to the window of his apartment overseeing the skyline of the city, and gathered his wits. His heart raced as he pressed the call button and waited.

It rang for a while and he feared she would not answer, he knew from checking the time that it was around eleven in the evening there.

He drummed his fingers against the window and inhaled sharply when the call connected.

For a moment, a silence lolled between them. The anticipation crackled like wild summer heat. It was unpredictable but most coveted. All of his prior confidence ebbed away into that silence, the expectation and the end of his wait consumed him.

“Rey,” Ben breathed out, desperate for confirmation. He needed to hear her voice.

“Ben,” she answered and Ben dropped to his knees.

His name on her lips had been enough to bring an almighty alpha to his knees.
The air had left the room and the blood rushed to his ears.

Her voice was celestial, clear and soft. It shot straight to his cock and he withheld a groan, fearing she had triggered his rut with only a single word.

He was touch starved.

“It is you,” he managed to say.

He had rehearsed what he would say to his elusive mate a million times before but his words had scrambled from his mind and so he followed his heart.

He heard her breath hitch, a sniffle maybe. Was she crying? How he wished he could comfort her, shield her from whatever hurt her.

“I am so sorry for keeping you waiting,” she cried out.

It haunted him like ice seeping into his veins; it was a sound he never wished to hear again.

Despite his own pain centring on her prolonging their time apart, he pushed it aside; his alpha instincts coiled deep within him and they told him to protect his omega, to shield her from harm, even if that harm and bringer of anguish was herself.

“It is okay, sweetheart. It is just us now,” he crooned, lowering his voice to a soft whisper.

He knew the effect his low timber would have on her.

She wept and he waited patiently as he had always done.

“I do not know if my reasonings for not signing up even make sense to me anymore,” she confessed.

He listened and heard more shuffling and he wondered just what she was doing.

“You can tell me anything, I value your honesty,” he confessed, leaning forward as he peered up at the sun, its rays danced around his living space.

“Do you still want me?” She asked, her voice was little more than a whisper.

Ben was taken aback, the idea that he would not want the woman he had waited his whole life for was nonsensical, ridiculous beyond belief and he wanted to scold her for thinking such a thing. She was fragile so he controlled himself.

“Oh course I do!” He proclaimed, finally standing from his kneeling position.

She did not reply so instead he focused on her breathing; it was soft music to his ears.

“You are not alone,” he tried, pinching the bridge of his nose, he was concerned for her, he wanted nothing more than to close the space between them and comfort her.

She had to know how much he wanted her, of how long he had waited for her, only her.

“Neither are you,” came her reply.

He could hear the tell tale signs of a Skype call on her side.
The line went dead, his face crumpled in confusion until his laptop blared; the familiar sound of an incoming Skype call filled the room.

Chapter End Notes

The cliffhanger is real.

I am afraid there will not be an update until Friday or Saturday as I have to work on my main fic, Wolves, which I plan to update on Thursday, it is a longer, detailed fic and monopolises my time.

But three updates in three days was not bad, yes?

Please understand! I will see you all soon.
Rey London, England

She was falling hard for Ben already.

Where she had expected coldness and judgement for her decision that prolonged his wait, he offered limitless understanding and nurturance instead.

“You are not alone,” he had said which such a fervour and a sense of devoutness that she fully believed in the beautiful spirit that undoubtedly resided inside the man.

He was special, an ethereal soul with a patience odd of and typically unseen in a hot blooded alpha. She was unworthy of such grace and fully repentant of her past sin.

“No, you are too,” she whispered back in earnest.

Her doubt remained though, a true skeptic of the service and its ways but there was no suspicion of Ben’s intentions. They were pure. He wanted to love and he wanted to be loved. It was a simple want.

She wanted to step into that role and into that light despite how it could burn her. More than anything, she yearned to shield her heart, unsure if she could cope with heartbreak. She would move forward with caution and hope for what was to come. Although she possessed insecurities and would move forward with care, she would open her heart and mind to the possibility of him and embrace the feelings that came with such an act.

Throughout their conversation, she had gathered her courage and collected her laptop. Her movements were wobbled, her coordination shot but she managed, the device came to life and she opened Skype.

Ben’s ‘Match’ profile had included his username and his voice had calmed her like no other had before. Her drunken stupor no longer embalmed her and the need to see him in all of his glory was all consuming.

She hung up on him after she mustered the strength to call him on Skype. She was a mess, having wept only seconds before, her eyes bloodshot and rimmed red, a reminder of her waning intoxication. Her waist length hair was tousled, its loose waves unkempt due to the humidity. Before she gathered her laptop, she had managed to slip on her thin vest top after she had shed it before she collapsed in bed.

Her body was an orchestra of sound. Her heart was the bass, it thumped erratically and the blood that rushed in her ears was quite like frantic violins. Her breathing was the wind chimes, slow
gasps of bated breaths as the call-connected sign chimed and the image of Ben appeared on screen.

Seeing him sat before her was like seeing for the first time, a newborn no longer shrouded in darkness and lost in sound.

Words could not do him justice.

He was an avatar of raw masculinity.

An apotheosis and embodiment of what a man and alpha should strive to resemble, a striking combination of genetics and his own workings to reach peak physical condition.

Ben was a magnificent sight and such a mouth watering mirage considering his state of undress.

Rey withheld a gasp as she came upon the realisation that he sat before her topless and unabashed.

His broad shoulders, bare and squared back were coiled deep with ribbons of thick, deep muscle. They took up most of the screen. Instead of venturing lower, her gaze ascended once more to the face of her mate, her alpha and future lover.

Whilst he was an unconventional and curious sort of beauty, there was no denying his handsomeness. A perfect mass of curled, raven tendrils framed his sharp, angular face, a startling contrast to his pale skin, quite the opposite of her own. His nose was strong, regal and precisely reminiscent of something you would find in a museum or painted in some piece of avant-garde art.

She explored every inch of him that he offered, counting and memorising the scattering of beauty marks; she imagined them as constellations, little traces of stars. A bundle of them sat above his heart, an assortment comparable with her zodiac sign, Cancer’s own constellation. Curious, she hoped to one day trace them with her fingertips and tongue in hopes of cementing her place there.

His eyes entranced her. They were dark, much darker than her own were, a kind of charcoal black that contrasted beautifully with the pale glow of his skin. They held her in place and she was a willing prisoner.

She stopped breathing as he scrutinised her, consciously aware of how her mouth gaped and her eyes popped at the mere view of him.

Her skin prickled under his gaze, she palmed the back of her neck and felt the heat there. It was not long before she brushed her fingertips against the skin where her mating gland was located. It felt sensational, as if it was animated and responsive to the voice of the alpha thousands of miles away.

The pull to him was magnetic and overwhelming.

He called for her without the use of words.

Their bodies and souls sang to one another as if they had lived countless lifetimes together already and who was she to question such a stunning notion.

“You are beautiful,” they pair said in unison, a symphony of breathless proclamations consumed in awe.

Rey sniffled, eyes still shiny and glassy from drinking and crying. She laughed softly, a quiet giggle bubbling from within her.

They were in harmony with one another, in total sync.
“I am not sure I fit that description in my current predicament,” she said, gesturing to herself.

She wiped the remnants of her tears away with the back of her hand and gazed at the screen once again. This time she allowed herself to admire him further, his chest was a broad expanse of hard flesh, his abs defined and prominent. She wanted to kiss them and feel his throaty chuckle as it vibrated through his frame and beneath her lips.

“You are perfect,” he assured her and albeit said in the light of her own insecurities, she believed the truth in his words.

“I cannot believe someone like you exists, that I have a mate,” she admitted, it was hard for her.

She usually kept her emotions in check, held closely to her chest and only rarely did she reveal her cards. To admit such a thing to a stranger was monumental for her, a sign that she was ready for whatever was to come.

It seemed too good to be true and often in life that meant it was. Something would happen; something would rob her of the image she conjured of him. If she could allow herself to hope, it could end in her despair. The pessimist inside of her warned her of the countless possibilities that could end with her heart being broken by the handsome man in front of her. The woman inside, desperate for love, urged her to take the chance.

Ben smirked and rolled his shoulders, apparently unaware of her inner dilemma.

“I thought I was in the one percent but the wait for you was worth it.”

Rey looked down at her lap in shame, fidgeting. Perhaps that was a fate much worse than her own self-imposed loneliness. This man thought he was unloveable, destined to walk alone despite him taking the chance to lay his heart on the line.

The rejection and hopelessness he must have felt while waiting for her was unimaginable to her.

He was everything she was not; he was brave and willing to take risks where she was guarded and wary. You could even call her dramatic for the ideals she carried, of how she wanted fate to bring them together or for her to experience love and heartache before finding the right person. She wanted those experiences to shape her into a stronger and better person who was worthy and capable of coping in a relationship.

“I did not trust in the service,” she confessed, a cowardice washed over her and she was fearful to receive the gaze of her alpha.

She swallowed hard, perturbed and worrisome of how he would take such news.

“Look at me,” he ordered.

Despite his use of commanding words, his tone was soft, so gentle and unlike what she had expected or deserved.

Sheepishly, she looked back at the screen and right into the eye of the camera before trailing her sights downwards to his face.

“Tell me, everything,” he pleaded, leaning forward towards the screen, almost as if he thought it would close the thousands of miles between them.

Therefore, she did.
“I do not want to be wanted because biology dictates it. I do not want you to want me primarily because I am an omega. I want you to love-“

“-love you for you,” Ben finished for her, cupping his hand under his jaw. She eyed him carefully as he studied her, his brow knitted in concentration.

She nodded, affirming his observation. She felt so incredibly bare before him, he was perceptive and he seemed to read her like a book he had read every day of his life.

“I do not want our biology, our physical needs or the allure of what we offer to influence what we feel for each other,” she went on, biting her lip as she tried to explain her reasoning.

Ben was silent for a moment, his features unreadable.

He may have been able to read her but she was a novice, a beginner in his tale. She would rectify that.

“You want us to stay separate. Is that what you want?” His voice carried an undoubtedly bereaved and dismal tone as if the words grieved him and seeped to his core.

He appeared crushed by his words, of what he had deemed Rey wanted. He was visibly deflated, those broad shoulders she admired so much curled inwards as if he was closing in on himself. He seemed resigned to the idea of another wait, that after all his patience she was going to make him wait for the one thing he coveted after.

Rey ran her hand through her hair, nervous but thankful he had deduced her words, she did not want to break his heart but she needed to put her own hesitation to rest. She wanted to know him, really know him and his physical presence could hinder that, the throes of passion were distracting, the biological needs lacked depth and understanding. She did think of him though, he was a marvel, a sight to behold and already she imagined giving herself to him, she would hold onto those broad shoulders and let him have his way with her. He would be the first and only man she would bare herself to, she was untouched.

“Just for the time being, not forever. I think the distance can benefit us. We can learn about one another and be free of the biological pull,” she tried, she hoped that some of this was getting through to him.

Ben nodded in response.

“I will not lie and say it will be easy for me to do this, to stay away from you. I have waited so long for you,” he offered, she saw his tight fists come into view.

Rey nodded, she knew what she was asking of him and it was no easy feat.

“I know, I appreciate you are willing to try. I need this…alpha,” she tried, hoping to plead her case to his primal, instinctual side.

She watched Ben startle, his eyes took on a new shine and he titled his head to the side.

“I want to fulfil all your needs. I do not want you wanting for anything, my little omega,” his voice was husky, earnest.

Him calling her his omega awoke something within Rey. It was odd, a foreign feeling coiled within her. It was as if for the first time in her life, she belonged somewhere, she fit so harmoniously with someone who was made just for her.
After all, they were literally born for one another, an evolutionary act of countering the pheromones they were both born with.

Two kindred spirits, two halves of a single soul.

A rosy blush heated her dimpled cheeks and lit up her flushed, tawny skin.

“I was right about you, you are quite like the sun,” Ben whispered.

She gawked at him, admiring how his words wisped through her speakers.

“I will burn for you,” he finished.

It was all so poetic, something she appreciated and so familiar too. His flow and choice of words was masterful, thoughtful.

Emboldened, she grinned, revealing her pearly whites as a different kind of burning pooled in her stomach and below.

She had never realised how attraction could affect her in such a way. With a slew of beautiful words and a pretty pair of eyes, she was damned. A sexual awakening stirred within her, her alpha commanded it of her.

“I think you can handle it, my fireman,” she quipped, she crossed her legs, the friction a divine friend.

Ben chuckled but his eyes blazed, taking on new life.

“Perhaps we can burn together,” he mused.

Rey liked the sound of that.

“One day we shall.”

Ben stirred and leaned back, a brilliant smile graced his features.

“When can I come to you, do you have a specific time frame?”

Rey shook her head, no.

Sure of her want, she stared at the camera once again.

“Come to me when you love me. When you are sure your feelings for me are true,” she whispered.

It was all so romantic she realised, the distance between them would surely only add to her longing.

“I will. I want to know everything about you,” he murmured, his vibrant eyes lit up in response to her smile.

He was willing to wait for her and it meant everything, he secured a part of her heart right there.

Yawning, she cupped her mouth. She was suddenly overcome with a wave of tiredness, the events of the day and alcohol in her system had crept up on her.

Rey lay back in bed, setting her laptop on her bedside table. She settled on her side, gathered her thin sheet, appropriate for summer, and allowed it to pool over her thin frame.
She yawned again, eyes drooping and heavy.

“Tired, little one?”

She nodded, sighing into the pillows.

Unable to keep her eyes open any longer, she listened to Ben as he hummed a pretty tune; his presence already curbed the loneliness she had felt for years. One day he would fill the empty space beside her.

On the brink of sleep, she heard him as he settled into his own bed.

The lullaby he had hummed stilled and he was silent for a moment.

“If it means anything, it will be all too easy to fall for you, your soul, Rey, I am falling already.”

The words lulled her and she fell asleep with a smile on her lips and a new sense of fullness in her heart.

Rey awoke the next day well rested and free of a hangover. It was a surprise. She groaned as she rolled in her tangled sheets, sunlight streamed into her room and warmed her exposed skin.

Eventually, she opened her eyes and found her laptop blank; her battery must have died overnight.

She wondered if Ben had watched her, if he had gazed over her as she slept as protector and a voyeur of sorts. Did he pretend they were lying next to one another like any other couple?

It was comforting, the idea of no longer sleeping alone. Although he was not physically there, he existed and his presence was all encompassing.

She stretched and reached for her phone, a message greeted her.

Rubbing the sleep from her eyes, she sat up, unlocking the phone.

There on her phone was a message, one from an American number, one she needed to save.

She saved the number, listing him as Ben and toyed for a moment before adding the fire emoji after his name.

A wide grin and new sense of hope filled her as she peered down at the words.

**Ben**: *Good morning, sunshine. As you wake, I will be dreaming, my last thought before sleep was you...only you.*

Chapter End Notes

Thank you for all the support!

This week has been tough but I felt I needed to get this out for you. I am sorry if it didn't live up to expectations.

I think we are all dying to know of Ben's reaction to her which will be in the next
chapter! I think I can be convinced to write some more tomorrow ;)

Chapter Summary

Ben's reaction to Rey and her reasonings

Chapter Notes

Thank you so much to Rebecca (LoveofEscapism) for suggesting the hair bit, such a lovely and tender idea.

This is for all the ladies who messaged me or reached out after the last chapter, you all know who you are!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

**Ben-New York, United States of America**

Accepting the Skype call had been one of the most defining moments of Ben’s life, for that he was certain. All of his prior courage and confidence in connecting with his mate had been swept away, his assurance lost to the riptide of uncertainty.

Despite having rehearsed the scenario in his head thousands of times over the past sixteen years, nothing could have prepared him for the first sight of his elusive mate, the other half of his mind, body and soul.

The moment she appeared on his screen was the second his world tilted on its axis, his heart bloomed with a fresh new growth of fullness and he knew that whatever transpired between the two, she was the only one who would enrapture him and carve a spot there.

Seeing Rey had been like flying to the sun and in doing so, he was falling in a heated descent back to Earth, blinded by her aura, her light.

The fall was divine.

The woman who sat in front of him was both perfect and imperfect, a telling and most delicious contrast. She was beautiful and stunning even in her evident grief. Everything about her drew her to him; the way she revealed her vulnerability to him was most endearing.

She was obviously distressed; she had wept to him only moments before and her bloodshot eyes appeared displaced amongst the glow of her golden, tawny skin. He had been right, the sun kissed her, cloaked her in its goodness and rays, her name much more symbolic than he ever could have imagined. Her dainty little nose was a flushed pink, quite like the soft but sharp slopes of her high cheekbones.

Her eyes were otherworldly, a shiny and brilliant hazel, they were the fields of green and fresh soil after summer rain, an enticing combination.
Freckles adjourned her face in the most delightful sequences, a chestnut brown against bronze skin. To his felicity, her hair was loose, hanging in waves that fell well past the swell of her perky breasts. From his vantage point, he could see the precise instant that the small buds peaked below the thin fabric of her camisole. His mouth grew dry when he felt her heated gaze upon him, she scrutinised him as she had her. He swallowed hard.

The realisation that she liked what she saw, of how responsive she was to the mere sight of him had Ben’s pride swelling out in troves. His confidence had returned with an almighty resurrection. The urge to puff out his chest and display more of himself, to woo her with his height and the growing hardness between his thighs was primal, much like something their ancestors must have done long before coherent speech. He pleased her, the body he had sculpted since his early teens and maintained into manhood had his omega wanting, satisfied that he could act as her protector and lover.

The diversity between the two could not have been more disparate.

Ben knew he was large, much larger than most alphas in both height and width; he was rung deep with muscle and fine, long limbs. A towering man he was, a sometimes intimidating feature but the look in Rey’s blown, wet eyes told him she was not intimidated, she was burning, impressed by his physique and grandeur.

His little omega wanted him, the attraction and lust between the two was palpable and all consuming but not in any way surprising. They were a matching pair, destined and only in tune with one another.

How she pleased him.

From what he could see, she was petite, a tiny, delicate flower that he yearned to water. He wanted her to flourish and grow beneath him; he yearned to be her shade in times of trouble and save her from wilting.

So tiny she was, that he had no doubt that he would devour her, skin against skin, he would engulf her with his flesh and taint her with his scent, his essence. What a wonderful defilement it would be. He would swallow her whole and he had no doubt from the spitfire behind those wild, yet guarded eyes that she would deplete him until he was nothing without her presence.

A flicker of movement on his screen drew him from his thoughts, his most coveted desires. His bold little omega had palmed her neck, brushing her fingertips over her mating gland, the most poignant of all the scenting glands.

The action brought him to full hardness. She was hot, ready for him and he wished he could smash a hole through the screen and transport through space and time and find himself in her room, in her bed. The need to mark her there was unlike anything he had ever experienced before. It was much more than longing, it was a necessity, a primal and most visceral urge. Rey would bare his mark; he would prepare her accordingly and then sink his teeth into the sensitive spot above the gland, irrevocably combining the two for the rest of their lives and the lives they may live after that.

She would mark him and it was the most delectable thing he could imagine, a new and special kind of torture. A consummation most wonderful. He would wear her mark with pride, an alpha claimed and maimed by a divine little omega.

He palmed his cock for a moment and adjusted himself in his loose sleeping shorts, while he did not want to make her uncomfortable in any way, his arousal was almost painful. Her pretty little lips quivered and for a moment, his eyes darkened and his heart raced as he wondered if she could
take him in his entirety there. The vision and concept of her soft passage and caress of her tongue had him reeling.

Although she was the omega, he was much needier, touch starved and in desperate need of release and no release would be greater than him taking her for the first time.

It was something he could dream of; it would warm his bed and haunt his dreams.

“You are beautiful,” he proclaimed in unison with her.

The synchronicity between the two surprised him and he found himself grinning as she sniffled before giggling.

It was music to his ears, like the tinkling of bells but most obviously a deep and warm gesture, right from the core of her.

“I am not sure I fit that description in my current predicament,” she said, gesturing to herself.

Ben’s eyes roamed over her once more and despite her glossy eyes, fresh with old tears and flushed face, she was the most exquisite woman he had ever seen. He wondered if she saw herself clearly, if she appreciated her own beauty. If she did not, he would shower her with affection until her confidence in herself grew.

As she wiped the last of her tears away, he noticed her appraising him once again, this time much lower than his face. How he wished he could tap into her mind and know the secrets that lay there but there was no mistaking that she was attracted to him. If the pull he felt towards her was anything like the tug she felt towards him and his physical attributes then they would surely combust. His cock jutted in his shorts as her gaze roved lower and he was thankful that she could not see his predicament but he cursed it too.

For the instinctual side of him wanted her to know what he could offer her sexually. Her approval as his omega was everything to him.

“You are perfect,” he tried to assure her and he meant those words.

He knew it would take more than endearments from him for her to see her self-worth and beauty.

“I cannot believe someone like you exists, that I have a mate,” Rey admitted, quietly.

Through the screen, he could see her swallow hard as if admitting such a thing was difficult for her. He was glad to act as her confidant, a trusted party.

Hoping to bring some light into the conversation, he smirked, rolling his shoulders. Her eyes flashed with something then and he was glad the summer heat had bared him so, forcing him to strip of almost all clothing.

He would confess something like she had.

“I thought I was in the one percent but the wait for you was worth it.”

Like her before, it was an arduous thought to admit but he felt safe with her, someone he could bare not just his flesh to but also his soul too. Along with his longing, came the painful truth that over the years he had suffered, sometimes he imagined himself as an unlovable monster, someone unworthy of love or affection from a mate.
He coped well; his job was demanding and his friends supportive. The two omegas he had dated were shameful mistakes, each cheating on him when they realised his heart was not in it. They were women he hoped Rey could forgive him for seeing or at least understand the extent of his loneliness that had led to the desperate actions of distraction.

His mate looked down at her lap and began to fidget, her face contorted in grief. It pained him to think of what troubled her; he wished he could calm her.

“I did not trust in the service,” she confessed, purposefully avoided looking at the screen again.

She gulped and visibly began to shake.

The words stunned him but the very idea that she had been so troubled or fearful of his response cut him deep. He wanted her to keep nothing from him; he would listen to whatever she said. He wanted her to be able to tell him things without the fear of judgment or punishment. It was a sorry scene, she trembled before his eyes with worry in her mind and he hoped he would never give her reason to believe he would belittle her for anything.

“Look at me,” he ordered, he attempted to lower his voice and refrain from revealing his confusion or loathing over her fear of him.

Rey immediately complied; she stared right into her camera and through his soul for a split second. It thrilled him, stilling his breathing. Then her sight trailed downwards towards where he imagined his face was on her screen.

Desperate for information and to know more about her, he spoke.

“Tell me, everything,” he pleaded, leaning forward towards the screen. He wished he could have been sitting there beside her, to take her hand in his so he could comfort her or urge her on.

“I do not want to be wanted because biology dictates it. I do not want you to want me primarily because I am an omega. I want you to love-”

“love you for you,” Ben finished for her, cupping his hand under his jaw.

Already, he felt as if he had known her every second of his life.

He studied her as she did him, his brow knitted in deep concentration. It pained him to think that she thought that this was purely biological. How could one give themselves to another without love in their hearts, without affection for the other?

Ben had done that and learned from those mistakes, he grew into a better man because of his past or at least he hoped he had. In his early twenties, he had experienced the faux sense of adoration that came with dating someone who was not in tune or made for you. It was all so shallow, meaningless.

Since then, after the wrongness he felt in his heart and the betrayal he felt against choosing another over his mate, he had remained alone despite the crippling loneliness, his want for touch and his want to be needed and depended on.

With Rey, the connection, the physical attraction had been immediate and already she possessed such a tantalising influence over him. More than anything, he wanted to give her his heart and learn about the girl behind the earthy eyes who called to him in such a moving way. Learning everything he could about her and falling in love with her would be his finest achievement and a most wonderful endeavour.
He would want her for her and not her status as an omega. That was just an added gift, a splendid incentive.

He could not deny the biological pull though and it could not be ignored. As their time together progressed, he had no doubt she would feel an awakening, a sexual crescendo and the desire to mate and claim him would consume her.

She nodded, affirming his observation.

“I do not want our biology, our physical needs or the allure of what we offer to influence what we feel for each other,” she went on, she bit her lip, a clear sign of her worry.

If her words had not been so grave, he would have keened at the sight of her pearly white teeth against the dusky pink flesh. He worked so tirelessly to understand her reasoning and he did, he really did understand and he managed to put himself in her situation.

She was everything he was not. She was guarded, wary and obviously fearful of love. She was worried and unsure what it entailed or meant to give herself to another.

Whereas, all he wanted to do was give himself to her no matter the consequences.

Rey’s doubt and her panic about it all dampened it and forced him to reflect.

Ben was silent for a moment as her words sunk into his conscience. He came to a realisation that he was unsure he could stomach. His heart thudded and stopped for a second, his wait was over but a new wait would test him.

“You want us to stay separate. Is that what you want?” Saying the words aloud pained him, they made them real.

He had no doubt that his voice carried the grief he felt, the sense of mourning that flooded his senses. Perhaps this was worse than waiting and not knowing his mate existed. Rey was real and he could not reach her, he could not physically be with her and it went against the need he carried, the way his body screamed for him to go to her.

Curling his shoulders inward, he worked to control his physical reactions. In front of him, she ran her hand through her hair, another nervous habit he noted and tucked away. She was so expressive, so endearingly easy for him to read. It was as if all things her were already burned into his mind, a catalogue of musings as if they had known each other in another lifetime and perhaps they had.

“Just for the time being, not forever. I think the distance can benefit us. We can learn about one another and be free of the biological pull,” she explained further.

Ben nodded numbly in response.

Using all the strength and reason he had in him, he told himself of the benefits of engaging her like this. If his omega was wary, he would strive to prove his feelings for her, if she needed this comfort, he would comfort her in any way she needed. He told himself this was an opportunity to learn the workings of her, something he would rely on greatly when they met in person.

“I will not lie and say it will be easy for me to do this, to stay away from you. I have waited so long for you,” he offered, he clenched his fists as a way to simmer his turmoil and gradual acceptance.

The wait was worth it, he was not losing her and in the end he would gain her love. That was the most treasured prize he could imagine.
The woman who he was falling for nodded, he assumed she understood how trying this was, she knew of his wait.

“I know, I appreciate you are willing to try. I need this…alpha,” she said, her voice lowered, her words clear and apparent.

Ben startled, a shot of heat flushed through his body and he perked, shuddering over her use of his alpha status. His cock stirred. Curious, he titled his head to the side and eyed her. She called to him, her eyes alive whilst her chest heaved.

She was not as innocent as he had first presumed, he was right about her spitfire; surely she knew the effect of her calling him alpha and what it would do to him. He would enjoy acquainting himself with this side of her. He wanted to coax the minx within her outwards.

“I want to fulfil all your needs. I do not want you wanting for anything, my little omega,” his voice was husky, earnest.

Giddy, he realised he had turned the tables on her. His use of the term omega was calculating as her words had been seconds before.

A rosy blush heated her dimpled cheeks and lit up her flushed, tawny skin. Her nipples poked harder against the thin fabric that seemed so flimsy he could tear it apart with one quick and precise stroke to reveal the mounds beneath. He wanted to taste her and ravish her, kissing the spot above her heart and laying his claim there.

“I was right about you, you are quite like the sun,” Ben whispered, enamoured by all she was and all she could be.

She gawked at him, her mouth gaping open a fraction. Her lips were like rose petals and he yearned to pick them and nourish them with his own.

“I will burn for you,” he finished.

He meant every word. His little mate was guarded but he was willing to dive into the unknown of the abyss, the fire between the two. He would fall backwards blind and let his heart guide him for it had rarely failed him before.

Rey seemed to enjoy his words as she grinned, revealing her pearly whites

“I think you can handle it, my fireman,” Rey quipped back at him, she crossed her legs.

It was his time to gawk, was she in need of friction? Was she aroused by his sweet nothings? He chuckled, he hoped so and he looked upon her as if she was new life, something he would cradle if need be.

“Perhaps we can burn together,” he mused.

“One day we shall.”

Ben stirred and leaned back in his chair, a brilliant smile graced his features.

Rey wanted this, she wanted him and hope would guide him in his hour of need, for he knew of the struggle ahead to refrain from crossing an ocean too soon. He had to allow her time to adjust to this.

“When can I come to you, do you have a specific time frame?”
Rey shook her head, no.

She stared at the camera once again, right into the lens and again, this bold move, an omega staring down an alpha excited him, it tethered him to her.

“Come to me when you love me. When you are sure your feelings for me are true,” she whispered.

His soul sighed in relief and his heart beat with a new fervour. She was not going to restrict him, in fact, she relinquished their time they spent apart into his own hands and he would not let her down. When he laid eyes on her for the first time in person, he would love every part of her; know her deepest fears and most joyous moments.

That meant more than he ever could have expressed.

“I will. I want to know everything about you,” he murmured, his vibrant eyes lit up in response to her smile.

Yawning, she cupped her mouth. Rey lay back in her bed, setting her laptop on her bedside table. She settled on her side, gathered her thin sheet, appropriate for summer, and allowed it to pool over her thin frame. She yawned again, eyes drooping and heavy.

He did not take his eyes off her for a moment.

“Tired, little one?”

She nodded, sighing into the pillows and his mind soared, one day she would nestle her face into his chest and sigh above his heart. He would fill the empty space beside her and she would do the same for him, his bed was no longer a reminder of his solitude.

He watched her, a voyeur in awe, as she was unable to keep her eyes open any longer. Unsure of what to do in such a situation, he began humming a lullaby from his childhood; it had always helped him sleep. Gathering his laptop, he moved to his own bed and placed it on his pillow as he settled between the sheets.

This way, it was as if there was no distance between the two.

They were but a couple sharing a bed, the thousands of miles between them forgotten.

“If it means anything, it will be all too easy to fall for you, your soul, Rey, I am falling already.”

She hummed, settling deeper into her pillow and he fell a little bit more.

Unable to look away, he spent the next few hours gazing at her, convincing himself that she lay in the spot next to him. She was his muse, every movement, every flicker of her eyes, every little breath and rise and fall of her chest inspired him. But he could not move, he was cemented to the mattress below him. For he feared if he glanced away for even a second, he would lose her and he would wake, all of this but a cruel dream.

He would not allow anyone or anything to snatch her away from him.

At one point, she stirred and a wisp of her lush, chestnut hair fell loose and sprawled over her face. He moved his hand to the screen and trailed his fingertip along the length of it. He wished he could tuck it back behind her ear, to feel the softness of it against his skin.

He sat like that for a while, his finger resting against the image of her face.
The night progressed and finally she disappeared from his view, her image turned into darkness and he surmised her battery had died. It crippled him in a way; he wanted nothing more than for her to return to him, even if she was asleep and unaware of the comfort her sleeping form brought him.

Sighing, he finally retrieved his moleskin notebook and flipped it open to a new, blank page. It was a new beginning, the start of his life in a sense.

As if a man crazed, possessed by the spirit of his muse, he scribbled for hours, the words poured out of him as he pictured Rey and the new fullness in his heart that she incited.

It was not long before he found himself tiring, his eyes sore and his mind desperate for sleep; begrudgingly he tucked the notebook under his pillow after pressing a soft kiss to the cover. Callie appeared, jumping on the bed and then took her place on the pillow next to his own. She kneaded the fabric before settling.

Ben looked at his companion.

“I am falling for her already,” he confessed, Callie blinked once and then soft purrs filled the room.

Before he allowed himself to sleep, he thought to text Rey.

‘Good morning, sunshine. As you wake, I will be dreaming, my last thought before sleep was you…only you.’

If he were lucky, he would dream of her.

Ben awoke the next day well rested and in high spirits. Callie lay lazily sprawled out across his middle; he patted her head and stretched, reaching for his phone.

There was a message waiting for him.

Rey: My first thought as I woke was you…only you.

Chapter End Notes

This was admittedly a little rushed but I know how much you all wanted to read our hopeless romantic and poetic Ben's thoughts to seeing Rey.
Rey visits her mother and finds a gift awaiting her when she returns home

Chapter Notes
See the end of the chapter for notes

Rey-London, England

‘My first thought as I woke was you...only you.’

She was unsure if her response was quite as lovely as the message he had sent her but she wanted him to know that while she guarded herself, he had already claimed a spot in her mind and heart.

The man was charming.

His command over the English language was endearing and compelling and Rey, not used to such affection, was enamoured. The tone of his voice, the low, husky timber was most enticing; it was the perfect accompaniment to the beauty of his chosen words. It was familiar too but from where, she could not pinpoint.

She wanted to hear his voice again.

She needed to see him again.

It frightened her to no end, the dependency she felt in him already, the longing that settled deep in
her bones. It was the sort that grasped her heart in an iron vice and threatened to break her. She was walking along a cliff edge and she was too close to careening over the side into the welcoming depths of Ben’s love below.

Huffing, she stood and set about her usual weekend routine. Owning her own garage, one that was bustling with service and an influx of cars, allowed her to spare herself time at the weekend for herself. The importance of balancing her career as a car mechanic and keeping herself grounded with free time was something she took seriously. The stresses of life could hurt the strongest of minds so never did she work a weekend. It was a gift to herself and she knew how lucky she was to afford such an allowance.

That did not mean she sat idle though, a keen runner and an avid swimmer, she was always up at dawn to welcome the new day and to work her body. The rush of endorphins was always appreciated. The tranquil state of mind she found herself in as her feet beat the pavement or her arms sliced through the water was ethereal.

She shuffled to her wardrobe and inspected its contents, glad that she had managed to launder her work out gear. While her workspace was impeccably neat, far cleaner than a garage should be, her flat was forever cluttered. Bent at the waist, she rooted around for a moment, extracting items and sniffing them to assure herself she had indeed washed them and finally chose an oversized, off the shoulder sweater, it was a lovely baby blue. The summer heat was stifling, the humidity overbearing and horribly clingy but she wanted to sweat and push her body to the limits and she needed some kind of release after viewing Ben last night. Foregoing her usual leggings and sports bra, she instead pulled on some tight, little spandex shorts that covered very little and finished the look with her go to trainers, scuffed and off white.

Ben still ruled her thoughts even after she locked up her flat and ran kitted up, her hair scraped back into a bun atop of her head and a bottle of water in her hand. Recalling how his eyes flamed her, how his broadness teased her, she pummelled the street, her steps heavy and her mind elsewhere. The attraction was instantaneous and the omega inside of her wondered if she pleased her alpha. Was he as appreciative of her appearance as she had been of his? There was no doubt that if they had been sitting across from each other, she would have invited him to taste and sample where no man had been before. She would have clutched those expansive shoulders she adored so much and held on as he introduced her to the pleasures of the flesh.

Her line of thinking was hypocritical of course and she knew that. For years, she had stewed about the biological implications and rules of attraction, yearning for more of a deeply emotional and personal connection, but one look at Ben had altered that perspective, he threw her. She questioned everything she knew.

Shaking her head, she exhaled out of her nose as the sun beat down on her; she had reached the footpath along the River Thames. Despite the earliness of the hour, people were out in troves, Londoners did not rest, as the city did not sleep. She passed by market stalls as they set up for the day, the smell of coffee beans and pastries filled her nostrils, it was familiar but as she rounded the Westminster bridge the scent changed, the saltiness from the water below and fumes from the traffic that lined the bridge welcomed her. Despite the pungent odours, she smiled. It felt like home, the changing currents of her senses. There was no standstill, no static motions and she preferred it that way.

She made quick work of the bridge, her long, slender legs served her well, and years of fanatical and regular exercise had done wonders for her physique and stamina. She flew with a languid breeze at her back, a small reprieve; the squeak of her trainers rivalled the humming of motors and the squawks of seagulls overhead.
Just like she had hoped for, she was spent, her forehead and hair soaked with sweat but still she carried on, her heart racing as her mind finally cleared and nothing remained but the running high, her mind did not register the burn in her muscles or the loudness of her exhales. Only did she slow when she turned and made a full circle back to her flat.

A few streets away from home, she slowed to a walk and warmed down. Draining her water bottle, she was pleased to find out that she had beat her personal time. Improvement was glorious to her and she grinned the rest of the way, until she found herself in the familiar street that housed her flat.

“You smell good today, omega,” a man called out, whistling at her from a construction site.

Rolling her eyes, she stilled and eyed him for a moment. She recognised him instantly; it was Snap Wexley, a burly Scottish alpha, one who had pursued her whenever he set eyes on her. Despite his size and bulky frame, Rey knew she could handle herself and she could handle him. A fiercely protective father and ever-knowledgeable mother raised her and she knew just how to defend herself. Her choice of profession also meant that men were a frequent in her life and she had minced words with more than one testy alpha.

She crossed her arms over her chest and praised herself for forgoing her usual sports bra and leggings ensemble that would have left her quite exposed to the leering man.

A gaggle of similarly minded men snickered behind him, each donning yellow hard hats that Rey would have had no problem with snatching and battering them with.

“You smell most foul to me,” Rey bit back, sniffing the air for added insult and then recoiled.

Snap’s grin soured, he glared.

“One day you will be begging for me and what I can do for you when you experience a heat, girly,” he retorted, palming the crotch of his jeans and thrusting forward.

A chorus of booming laughs filled the street and Rey rolled her eyes, disgusted by his confidence and lewdness.

She turned, walking once more in the direction of her flat.

“I am sure my alpha would disagree with you,” she goaded and then flipped him the bird, holding it in place until she reached her building. That stunned his vultures and him as only silence followed her home.

The idea of Snap Wexley touching her had her reeling, it was a disgusting thought and how he thought she would entertain such a notion was beyond her.

As soon as she reached her flat, she stripped herself of her clothes and went about gathering more garments that littered her bedroom floor so she could feel like a productive adult by putting on another wash. She had decided to visit her mother in the pub she owned, it was two tiered, the first floor a quaint coffee shop and the top, a vintage London pub that had been in the family for generations.

Jyn Erso-Andor was a well-known name in the area, as an alpha she rivalled men and did not pussyfoot around drunks; she had thrown men twice her size out of the pub.

Rey brushed her teeth and then showered quickly, purposely fastening the process as to not be
carried away with herself. She throbbed between her legs and the mating gland, the most prominent of the scenting glands that lay in the junction of her neck ached. Now that she knew her mate existed, a new hunger awoke in her and she was sure only Ben could curb her voracious sexual appetite.

Cleaning herself below the naval was a beautiful form of agony, her slender fingers brushed through her folds and she thought of what Ben might have done had he been with her when Snap propositioned her. Would her sweet firefighter have avoided confrontation and ushered her along? Was the fire she saw behind his eyes passion alone or was there anger there, a possessiveness notorious of alphas. Would he have defended her honour and showed the men who her true mate was, who could see her through any heat far better than they ever could?

She was unsure.

But the primal part of her, the instinctual being would have craved the latter, to witness her mighty alpha reduce another competitor of her affections to his knees and use physical force if need be.

Shaking such thoughts from her head, she set about cleansing herself.

She made quick work of scrubbing her body clean, all desire neglected and then she towelled off, she would allow the sun to dry her chestnut waves, her weekend laziness surfaced in full force.

For the second time that morning, she braved the depths of her wardrobe. The floral scents of jasmine and freesia encompassed the small space, yes; most articles were most definitely clean and fresh.

She worried her bottom lip between her teeth before she settled upon something quite freeing, black dungarees and a long sleeved top, coloured white. Both culminated in a nice contrast and the garments were lightweight, appropriate for the weather.

She slid on her usual cotton panties and a mismatching bra before shrugging on her chosen outfit. It was a simple look, almost childlike, reminiscent of her summers as a kid when her mother had to drag her beloved denim dungarees from her as she slept so she could wash them. After stepping into some plain black trainers and donning her favourite pair of ray-ban sunglasses, she was off, her purse full of her necessities.

As she ascended the floors in the elevator walled half in glass and half-black marble, she peered at her reflection and found herself liking how she looked. Most of the time she sported a dirty pair of overalls so it was always odd to see herself in a different light. Feeling emboldened, she plucked her phone from her bag and opened the camera. Selfies were not her strong point, most of the time she pulled the most ridiculous faces in an effort to amuse her friends, she had no idea how to pull off a seductive one.

Tilting her head to the side, she smiled and bent her right leg and leaned heavily on the left. She snapped a full body shot and appraised it, astounded with how well it turned out.

Grinning, she pulled up Ben’s messages and attached the picture there.

*Rey: Dungaree weather, makes a change from the overalls x*

Pleased with her message, it was casual and not too needy, she sent it and then transferred her phone back to her bag once she left her building.

Luckily, her route to the pub meant she did not pass the rowdy group of alphas again. The pub was close to her flat so she arrived sharpish and entered through the front entrance of the coffee shop.
Baze and Chirrut staffed the coffee shop, both men like uncles to her as they were like brothers to her father and mother; she had known them all of her life.

“Luna,” Chirrut smiled warmly, despite his failing sight, he never failed to notice her presence.

Jyn and Cassian had argued throughout the pregnancy about her name. While Jyn insisted on ‘Rey,’ Cassian had fought valiantly for Luna. A compromise was reached when Jyn was in labour, after sixteen gruelling hours of contractions and pain; Cassian relented, believing his wife had earned the right to name their daughter.

Therefore, it was proclaimed that their only child would be named ‘Rey Luna Andor,’ as Jyn compromised about not hyphening the last name as she won the war over the first name.

It was a meaningful name, special. In a way, she was both the sun and the moon to everyone that knew her.

With her father and his Mexican heritage, she carried the sun on her skin, sporting a year round glow but her features were all her mother’s, graceful like the moon.

However, Baze and Chirrut had taken her father’s side and preferred the name Luna so whenever Jyn was not in close proximity, they used it, Rey did not mind.

She hugged both men but it was Chirrut and his pale, milky blue eyes that saw all.

“There is something different about you,” he observed knowingly.

Rey only nodded, her mother would kill her if she told him about her mate before her.

“Is she upstairs?”

Baze snorted, she knew she did not have to ask.

The pub was Jyn’s second child.

“Alright,” she rolled her eyes and strolled to the stairs, climbing them in steps of two and three until she walked into the familiar space.

Lemon disinfectant and the musky scent of freshly brewed beer enveloped her and she relaxed, despite the weight of the news she had for her mother. For years, Jyn had been the spearhead and leading figure in convincing Rey to join ‘Match.’ After all, her parents met through the service but unlike Rey, Jyn Erso had flown straight to Mexico to greet her mate.

“There’s my stardust,” Jyn beamed, rounding the mahogany bar with open arms.

Another person, another differing name for Rey.

Suddenly overcome over the events of the day before, Rey rushed into her mother’s arms and clung to her as if she was a small child again.

“Oh Rey, what is it?” Jyn whispered, smoothing Rey’s hair as she rocked her.

How could Rey confess that after all these years, she was right? Was she ready for her mother’s judgement?

“I signed up to ‘Match’ three days ago and they found my mate yesterday,” she hurried out, her mother’s hold on her tensed and silence permeated between them.
“You are no longer alone, stardust, is that not what you wanted? We should be celebrating,” Jyn said softly.

Rey was not expecting this; there was no disdain or taunting from her mother. She was not a young child scolded for her wrongdoing; there was no beratement for her decision despite her mother’s desperate pleas over the years.

“You were right, he was waiting for me. He had been waiting for years, sixteen years,” she confessed, clutching her mother’s top tightly with closed fists.

“Come on now, you are so much like your father, you have his heart. You believed in something and you followed it without being swayed. Your mate, he will understand that when he comes to know you. You were doing what you thought was right and anyone can admire that tenacity,” Jyn soothed, pulling back from her, her vibrant, green eyes penetrated Rey’s soul.

“He said he will wait for me, I told him to come to me when he loves me for me and he agreed. He is too good to me,” Rey admitted, she followed her mother to a seat at the bar.

The stool was sturdy, the cushioned top a royal blue and sitting upon it was like relying on a friend, she had spent so many years in the family pub, it soothed her.

It was before noon but still Jyn worked to prepare Rey’s favourite drink, while she was not a day drinker; she knew one would not hurt and before she spilled the details about Ben, she knew liquid courage might encourage her to talk.

A vodka and cranberry with a generous dousing of vodka was soon slid across the bar, Jyn nursed her customary Pimm’s, neat of course and leaned over the bar. If her father had been there, he would have taken the spot next to her mother with a chilled Corona in hand but he was in Mexico caring for her grandmother. She knew her mother missed him terribly, he had been gone half a year and they had never known such a separation since their mating.

“I like the sound of this man already, tell me what you know about-”

“Ben,” Rey supplied, smiling into her drink.

“Ben, a good name for my future son-in-law,” Jyn grinned, her eyes twinkled.

Rey choked, spluttering half of her drink onto the polished mahogany while Jyn laughed, mopping up the spillage.

Rey arrived home around mid-afternoon, she had enjoyed her time at the pub and she beat her mother in cards after telling her of what she knew about Ben so far to which Jyn approved. Then she had helped Baze and Chirrut with the lunchtime rush in the coffeeshop.

The early start and busy goings of the day had Rey yearning for an afternoon nap. She strolled towards the couch and flopped down, sprawling herself across the cushions. Drained, she did not bother to remove her shoes; she yawned and closed her eyes.

Just as she found herself entering the place between consciousness and unconsciousness, a knock startled her. Groaning, she pulled herself from the comfort of the plush, makeshift bed and dragged her feet towards the door.

She fiddled with the chain and opened it, confronted by the sight of sunflowers.
“Delivery for Miss Andor,” the courier announced nicely and offered her a clipboard with a pen chained to it.

Confused, she signed her name and accepted the bouquet that was held together in a clear, crystal vase. She counted a dozen, each with a fresh and healthy blossom.

After admiring them, she leafed through the petals until she found a card.

‘Sunflowers for my sunshine-B’

Ben.

They were from Ben.

She had never been gifted flowers before. Suddenly feeling more awake than ever, she nosed the petals, they were like silk. Inhaling, she enjoyed the sweet fragrance as she strolled back into the living room and to the window. They needed sun to thrive; she cleared a spot and set them down, unable to tear her gaze away from them.

As a keen gardener when she was a young girl, she thought of the underlying meaning. Sunflowers she knew symbolised adoration, loyalty and longevity. Did Ben know of how stunning his choice was? Had he inadvertently made his adoration and loyalty to her known? Was he aware that he had confessed he believed in the longevity of their relationship?

She hoped so.

Already she was formulating her own ways of presenting something to him. Both of their ‘Match’ profiles had listed their respective addresses so it was only a matter of finding something just as meaningful to gift.

Wanting to thank him, to gush over such a thoughtful present, she rushed to her phone. He had not replied to her earlier photo and message and she pondered whether he slept in on Saturdays or if he worked. She shrugged; surely, he was awake if he ordered the flowers.

Deciding not to dwell on it, she located his contact name; his name adjourned by the fire emoji and called him.

Her heart thudded in tune to the rings, she was about to hang up after a lengthy wait until finally, the call connected.

“Hello?” A woman answered.

Chapter End Notes

I know you prefer Ben's endearing, poetic chapters but by going back and forth between the two, you know everything they feel and experience.
Cinnamon

Chapter Summary

Ben thinks over his situation
We are introduced to people in his life
He misses a call

Chapter Notes

This is for the ladies in The Writing Den...I have planted the seeds of the calendar...

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Ben-New York, United States of America

My first thought as I woke was you...only you.

Ben stared at the message longer than he was willing to admit.

Reciting the words to himself became his mantra, a comforting reassurance to whatever doubts he had about himself. They affirmed that Rey thought of him in the same light, that the affection and blossoming feelings were not entirely one sided.

Rey had mirrored his words but there was an underlying honesty, a vulnerability in them that pleased him greatly. She was willing to open her heart, to trust in the service and a system she had never believed in and it was all for him.

She was going to try for him and that was everything, he would prove himself and his feelings to her and he was going to do that, he was not going to fail or lose himself over their separation. Instead, he was going to use it and thrive and solemn think of the ache that resided in his chest that told him to go to her, fall to his knees and present himself to her.

Ben could read people well; it was one of his greatest qualities. Though their conversation had been brief, it had been deeply insightful and already, he viewed himself as one of Rey’s greatest readers, an avid and voracious one at that, with the most insatiable of appetites.

Her confidence shone through despite her tears, the guilt of leaving him waiting had crippled her and he wanted nothing more than to draw her to him and nurture his omega, Rey, it was what he was born to do. For the rest of his days he wanted to shield her from harm and reassure her that in his arms, held taut to him, she was locked in a loving and the purest of embraces. His offer of unconditional love was hers if she would have him.

Yes, there was confidence, the way she had palmed her mating gland, the most poignant of the scenting glads, a most bold and daring move and the affect was poignant, mind blowing. The mere sight had set off a frenzy deep within him.
Ben had never experienced lust or the primal urge to claim another quite as he had then. There was no preparing him for the full force and the power of his alpha instincts, his biology consumed him but there was much more at work. With every second in her presence, his heart bloomed with a new fullness and he was sure he would never feel alone again.

If she had been there, an angel amongst his sheets, an ethereal gold against a hellish, obsidian black, he would have splayed her before him, worshipped all that she offered and made her unquestionably his.

For she would not only bare his mark or take his cock deep within her celestial heat, she would take a piece of his heart wherever she wandered, and he hoped she would take and care for them all.

The lust and the pull had made him view Rey’s reservations and understand them completely. While he was sure that one day, sooner rather than later, he would love her for all she was, he had been admittedly clouded by the tug between the two, the physical attraction between a pair of people who shared the same biological sequence of pheromones.

Despite his longing and his own want, he also shared her sentiment. He wanted her to love him for more than their biological compatibility.

Rey had gifted him a dream, a light to guide him through his times of darkness.

She had left it in his hands to determine the length of their separation.

Granted, it came with the stipulation that he loved her before he crossed the ocean separating them. He did not foresee that as a problem, he was falling, spiralling and basking in all things Rey.

Though he was ready to cross that ocean today, Rey wanted and expected more of him and he would not fail her in his first task as her mate, alpha and future lover.

Her honesty called to him, those magical eyes drowned him with promises of what could be. It was her strength and her willingness to pursue what she perceived what she thought to be right that a marvel awed him.

She was a goddess amongst mortals in a way, the sun who shunned her own light and chance of happiness in hopes that the universe would guide her to him. It did not and so now, she was burned, wary of her own choices and the decision that separated the sun and moon for an eternity.

Ben lay back, stretching as Callie kneaded his chest. The feline was naturally possessive and over the years, he did not discourage her closeness and attachment to him. While she could not converse, she was his constant throughout the years and one of a few that eased whatever ailed him.

As he thought about the day and his morning routine, he realised he wanted to know how Rey spent her mornings. Rolling to his side, Callie pounced from the bed.

If he closed his eyes, he could pretend for a moment that Rey lay beside him, taking her rightful place in his bed. He imagined stealing a kiss or two to wake her up but more than anything, he yearned to just hold her. To feel her warmth and her heart race against his own was all he wanted. That would be his heaven and his hell was waiting for the day that his sweet pretending was a thing of a past. He would give all he had just to steal her for a moment; he would take a second or two if that were all she offered. Those dear few seconds, he would forever cherish until he could see her again.

Not wanting to linger in despair, he thought back to her morning routine. There was so much he
wanted to know, what side of the bed did she settle on best, was she a coffee or tea drinker? Was she a morning person or was she disturbed by the idea of leaving the comfort of her bed before noon?

For her, he would gladly take the spot next to her preferred space in bed, wake her with her preferred drink and either greet the morning with her or kiss her and tuck her in before he left for work.

A hopeful smile graced his features as he stood and padded towards the bathroom. Rey gave him the opportunity to enquire about those things and supposedly anything he was curious about, so today he would start out and ask her those musings.

Perhaps he would share with her how he preferred waking with the sun, though he would much rather wake with her.

The things he wished to know were small things, snippets of trivial information but he would treasure them and cherish them as he would her.

Yawning, he relieved his bladder and brushed his teeth. Despite the next two days being his days off, he decided upon hanging around the station anyway.

Many of the firefighters did that, most of their time was spent on the job so his company were close, a family of sorts. Every time they walked into a blazing building, it was so with their brothers and sisters at their back. More than once, he had risked his life for them and he would continue to do so but now, it was not as easy. His courage was the same but it was different.

There was someone waiting for him.

Rey, his mate, actually existed and the idea of leaving her alone in the world threatened to throw him. Imagining her alone until her dying day, resenting him or missing him was enough for him to question all he thought he knew about himself.

Living was no longer a responsibility to himself; he had to live for her as well.

Despite his sixteen years as a firefighter, his own mortality had never crossed his mind. Maybe he went further than most in the job because he had less to lose whilst most of his colleagues all had someone waiting at home for them. Now he was one of them in a sense. Would his steps wary in the blackness of smoke engulfed rooms or would he think of her as he battled flames?

The very idea of losing her or him leaving her prematurely was too much. They had only just found each other and fate, he surmised, would be a dark fiend if they separated the two by tragedy so soon.

Shaking the dark thoughts from his head, he dressed quickly; donning his casual clothes, his favourite plaid shirt, coloured burgundy red and well worn fell in place.

Callie, seemingly unimpressed by his frequent comings and goings on his supposed days off, observed him from the bed and Ben sheepishly avoided meeting her gaze.

“I will be here all day tomorrow, girl, trust me on that,” he assured the scorned feline by scratching behind her left ear.

Ben witnessed her resist the affection at first, she was a stubborn little thing but before long, she was purring in earnest and settling back into bed. Certain that all was forgiven or at least forgotten for the moment, he gathered his necessities, packing them all into the deep pockets of his pants.
before sliding the number two pencil behind his ear, completing his look.

An idea hit him then.

Rey said he had been her first thought upon wakening and he wanted to cement that. Give her a visual representation of his presence. It would also stand as a reminder that he was thinking of her and that someone was there for her whenever she found herself lonely.

He thought for a moment before pulling up the email with her ‘Match’ profile and jotted down her address on the outside page of his moleskin notebook. Then he set about researching florists in her general area before choosing and calling one.

They were most helpful, the owner, Hanna, listened to the story of his predicament, long distance mates who had finally connected but remained apart. He wanted to leave Rey a token of himself.

Ben had been raised around his uncle Luke, he was an alternative type of man, a hippy, Leia would fondly spout out. He was an avid gardener and sourced most of his food himself, despite being the child of one of the richest couples in America, like Ben, Luke had shunned wealth and lived a frugal life. He lived in a small cabin in the woods; he mainly wrote agricultural articles as a freelance writer or sold his produce or natural concoctions he made his homegrown materials. Ben still used his uncle’s witch hazel, oatmeal and honey face mask after suffering a bout of acne as a teen. Luke had offered it to him then and his skin had never reverted to the horrid state again.

Every month, his uncle would visit with a package of it and samples of new things he was experimenting with which Ben gladly tested.

Due to this, Ben knew more than enough about plants and flowers and the meaning behind them. All had their own symbolic meaning, their own little slice of wonder behind the outer beauty.

Ben was drawn to sunflowers for a number of reasons. Rey, she was like a ray of light, his sun, she cloaked him in her warmth and it reflected nicely of her.

Of course, sunflowers possessed their symbolic meaning. They represented adoration, loyalty and longevity. All of which struck true with Ben, it suited their situation perfectly. He adored her, for not only her beauty but also her heart and how she fought for what she thought to be right. He was loyal to her, only to her. Another would never touch his heart. Then there was longevity, Rey might not have trusted in ‘Match’s’ one hundred percent long term success rate in couples staying together but Ben did. He was in it for the long run and he believed they could last.

The florist waved the fee upon hearing his choice despite Ben’s protests. He promised to visit her shop upon his arrival in London to which she gladly expected, more than glad to play a part in helping the young couple.

He finished the entire gift with a card; he hoped the message was not too sappy.

‘Sunflowers for my sunshine.’

After hanging up, he was buzzing with excitement, he could not wait to hear from her, he hoped he had not overstepped the line by sending her something so soon but at least it was just flowers and not him wrapped up in a bow.

By the time he left his building, he was feeling lighter, like a new man. Every step he took, he imagined Rey by his side, his constant in the ever-changing city of dreams. He wanted to walk around the city from morning to night with her and fall exhausted into his bed to end the day.
Despite the station being only two blocks away, he took his time, reflecting. There was a humming in the restless summer air and Ben felt like it symbolised him. Something inside of him had awakened and he could not wait to explore it with Rey.

Like the birds that flew above him, he was free, his solitude shed into the sky above.

Nothing could tear him down; his fall from the sun was welcomed.

Stopping in front of his favourite bakery, he greeted his uncle Chewie. While they were not bonded by blood, they were bound by fire and he was his father’s closest friend. Han and Chewie had worked together for years before Chewie retired and opened his bakery. It was a running joke; he had left the fire station and moved just across the street.

Chewie was a towering man, far taller than Ben, which was a rarity. Far hairier than some animals, he was intimidating but he was a quiet man, gentle. His hair travelled down his back, all the way to his hips but in the shop, it was tied back and held under a net.

“Benny,” Chewie grinned, he enveloped Ben into a hug, the bone crushing kind that only men could give and receive. The man was heavily tattooed and even bore Ben’s name on his arm.

Gladly accepting, Ben squeezed heartily before pulling back, already eyeing the treats on display. The bakery supplied most of his meals while he was at work; it sat across the street and enticed all the firefighters with its stunning scents.

Sugar ran in his veins.

Like a child, Ben kneeled and pressed his face and hands to the glass, fogging it.

Chewie rolled his eyes at the display, his gravelly chuckle boomed throughout the shop as he boxed up the usual orders.

Ben watched as the cinnamon roll he had been eyeing up was scooped up and transferred to the box and he wondered whom he would have to fight for it, Gwen most likely.

He prepared himself for battle and slid a note over to which Chewie pushed back. Confused, Ben gazed up at the man.

“There is something different about you, you look happier, the weight of your loneliness no longer weighs down your shoulders, young Solo,” Chewie said knowingly.

While Ben considered himself a people watcher, an intuitive viewer and reader, Chewie was otherworldly and he saw all. He could learn much from his uncle.

Still, he was stunned, blind sighted by his observation.

Deciding to opt with honesty, Ben shrugged, picking up the box.

“If I tell you before mom and dad, I think mother would chew us both out.”

Chewie smiled, his moustache rising with the movement. He held up his hands, palms forward in a clear sign of surrender.

They both knew of the consequences of being on the wrong end of Leia.

“Say no more, I would not want to be on the receiving end of the princess’s wrath,” Chewie gulped.
Ben might have laughed, a seven-foot giant was fearful of his mother, she barely stood five foot but what Leia lacked in height, she surpassed with spirit and tenacity.

A kind and generous soul, she was beauty incarnate but if you crossed her, you would be trembling for years after it. She was a formidable politician, one who had campaigned for the rights of omegas despite being an alpha. It was because of her that the ‘Mating Act’ was passed in house. One of the resulting laws from that was that registered mates did not need a visa to travel between their home countries. It would aid Ben in the times to come.

Chewie had learned his lesson after letting Han get drunk the day before their wedding. She might have smiled in the wedding photos but Leia Skywalker Solo had seethed. She had made Han spend their wedding night alone.

“I best get these to the chief,” Ben said, motioning to the treats as he left, waving goodbye.

He crossed the road and walked into the station.

It was home.

There was a bustle of activity, when most of the company rested between call outs, a handful sat at the table in the lunchroom.

There was Gwen Phasma, Ben’s closest and dearest friend. Like him, she was an alpha and so growing up with her had been wonderful. She understood everything he went through, sympathised when unmated omegas triggered both of their ruts and stood by him throughout everything.

It was only natural they chose the same career.

Beside her sat Armie Hux, her mate. Most surprising was that Hux was no omega, he was a beta. Over the years, there had been a spike in alpha and beta relationships despite the two being long thought incompatible. The biology did not lie though. When they had first been mated, Ben had been envious but seeing his best friend happy and in love, had soon overrode any ill will towards their union.

Next to Armie was Bazine Netal, Ben’s ex and resident omega in the fire station. While their time together had been brief, three weeks, and over a decade prior, Ben had always felt that she had not moved forward. It was a difficult situation that always left him uncomfortable. She was a reminder of his failure of not waiting for his mate.

While he did not return Bazine’s continued affection or desires, still, she pursued him. Luckily, Gwen was always there to keep her at bay if things escalated. More than once, Bazine had ‘forgotten’ to take her suppressants and arrived at work in the midst of her heat. It triggered all alpha’s ruts and his included and everyone was suspicious of her forgetfulness. Instead of claiming her, each time Ben ran and holed himself in his apartment for days.

“See Armie, that is how you win a girl’s heart. Bring me food and my love for you will be forever true,” she said, jokingly taunting him.

Ben grinned and dropped the pink box and Gwen opened it, wasting no time. Her eyes roamed over the treats before singling in on his cinnamon bun.

He darted forwards, snatching it up before she could.

“That’s mine!”
Armie laughed and leaned back in his chair, his cheeks flushed a brilliant coral.

“What were you saying about love?” he asked.

Gwen narrowed her eyes at him, leaning forward on her elbows, her icy blue eyes blazed.

“Well, my love, you can go across the street and get me a cinnamon bun.”

Ben stood, enjoying the antics.

He felt Bazine’s eyes on him and met her gaze. Bazine was not unattractive, her olive skin glowed in the summer months, contrasting with the lightness of her chartreuse eyes, they were narrowed, her lips curled up into a smile. She was tall like him, her hair fashioned into a high pony. He looked away.

She was not Rey. He yearned to put his hands on golden skin and run his hands through rich chestnut waves.

Bazine was not made for him.

He belonged to Rey and Rey alone.

Armie eyed her for a moment; Gwen’s eyes took on an arctic coldness.

“Fine,” Armie huffed.

Sighing, hands deep in his pockets, he left the room.

Ben chewed his bun thoughtfully, thinking of Rey once more.

“It was awful nice of you treating us Ben,” Bazine piped up, her tongue flicked out and jabbed the cream off one of the donuts.

Gwen’s thin brow rose a fraction, eyeing them both. Ben appreciated her presence.

In response, he shrugged and finished off the cinnamon bun.

“I hear you are taking July’s spot next year,” Gwen said, sighing into her drink.

Ben groaned. He had forgotten about the yearly calendar the station put together. They prepared early, choosing to photograph well before the New Year.

Last year he was made Mr December and his uniform was mostly kept in check with only a Santa hat perched on his helmet and his jacket opened, revealing a slither of what lay beneath.

“I wonder if they will make you wear a speedo or maybe just your helmet?” Bazine teased, tilting her head to the side as she gave him a once over.

It was not an innocent gesture but she was sly. She was baring her mating gland. Ben was repulsed, he clenched his fists at his side at her continued pursuits despite his insistence he did not want her.

Gwen scoffed, spluttering her coffee on the table, she soaked Bazine with her spray who squealed and set off towards the bathroom.

The two friends shared an impish set of grins
“Thanks for that. Is the chief in?”

“As if you had to ask, the princess is in there too,” Gwen responded, surveying the box once more.

His mother was here too. Affectionately she was known as ‘the princess’ due to her mother’s royal heritage in Europe. Ben was glad that she was there too; it saved him the trouble of telling the news of his mate to his parents separately.

Ben left Gwen to her sugary explorations and moved to the back of the station to the small office that sat nestled there.

Minding his manners, he knocked and waited for an invitation in.

His father answered almost immediately and he stepped in.

“Benjamin!” His mother cooed, rising from her perch on his father’s desk and closed the distance between the two.

Despite the height difference, she reached up and Ben leaned downwards, she cupped his face and kissed his cheeks like any overly affectionate mother.

“Mom,” Ben greeted, face slightly pink from the assault.

“I bet you’re happy I cannot do that anymore,” Han laughed.

It was a sore point but his father made the most of his situation, finding comfort in making light of his circumstance whenever he deemed appropriate.

Like his mother, his father was overly affectionate and had shown that in his earlier years.

However, he could no longer do so in the same way as Leia and spring himself on him.

Ben eyed his father’s wheelchair that they lovingly called ‘the falcon.’ It had been with them ever since that fateful day in two thousand and one. The day that changed America forever.

Ben had been seventeen, he had already chosen to follow his father and become a firefighter. He was a year shy from joining up but already he had began some basic training at the fire station under his father on weekends.

He had been ill that day, off school and so he slept in. He awoke to his mother’s screams and the blare of the television proclaiming that the world trade centre had been attacked, planes had been hijacked, the towers had fallen and fatalities were projected to be in their thousands.

A naïve teen, Ben wanted to rush to the sight, knowing his father was on call. Leia had to physically hold him down; despite the size difference between them, she managed, only subduing him fully when Chewie raced over, having seen the news and aided her. Ben was manic and frantic, screaming for his father.

Hours later, they received the news they had been dreading, that Han had been one of the first responders. They knew that most of their tales had ended in a fatality.

Han had been evacuating a group of people outside when the first tower fell. He was injured, caught amongst falling debris and rubble, his legs never to work again.

It had been a saving grace.
Their family had been lucky not to lose a loved one and it had only further instilled Ben’s longing to join up.

“What’s on your mind, kid?” Han asked, leaning back, his eyes twinkled as he swept back his shaggy, grey hair from his face.

Ben rubbed his hands together before looking first at his mother and then his father.

“The service found my mate.”

There was no point in prolonging it.

“Ben!” Leia was up on her feet once again and enveloped her son into a hug; it rivalled the bone crushing one Chewie offered.

Ben clung to her, by saying it, he had made it real. His years of loneliness were over; he swallowed hard, curbing his tears.

His father did not share the same sentiment, his hazel eyes brimmed with tears, a few falling and racing down his stubbled face.

Ben released his mother and stood, rounding upon his father and kneeled to his level.

Han clapped him on the shoulder and crushed him to his chest.

“Kid, that is some of the best news I have ever heard.”

His parents knew of his loneliness, his fear of being in the one percent. They saw his hope diminish through the years and voiced their concerns.

Ben knew Leia wanted grandchildren while she could still enjoy them and he felt as her only son, he had failed her in some sense.

His father was different though; he just wanted Ben to share his life with someone and had told him so.

“Tell us everything!”

Ben rubbed at his eyes and sat once more.

“Her name is Rey-”

“Rey Solo, it will be a lovely name,” Leia gushed clapping her hands.

A thrill of heat shot through Ben at the mention of her name alongside his own. It was something he hoped she would accept.

Han grumbled at his wife’s enthusiasm.

“She is a car mechanic in London, she owns her own garage-” Ben continued on.

“Oh so she is hands on, smart too!”

“Will you let the kid speak?” Han huffed out, pointing at his wife.

A knock interrupted the conversation and Han invited them in.
Gwen popped her head around the door.

“Solo, we could use an extra set of hands to hose down Top Gun.”

Top Gun was the name of their most used fire truck. Despite his parent’s lingering questions, he stood.

“Sure.”

“Ben, empty your pockets, we don’t want anything getting wet,” Leia reminded him.

He gathered his wallet, keys, phone and notebook and put them on the desk, knowing his parents would not breach his privacy, they were not like that.

Overbearing at times but never disrespectful.

Ben was gone for all of ten minutes, hosing and cleaning with a few others before he returned to his the office.

Leia sat with his phone in hand.

“Someone just called you, but they hung up,” she explained, squinting at the screen.

The woman never wore her glasses. Ben frowned and took the phone from her, bringing up his call list.

It had been Rey.

Tapping on her number, he called her and waited, his smiling parents looked on.

The call connected.

“Hello Rey, sorry I missed your call, I am at work and my mother took it upon herself to answer my phone,” he said, side eyeing the woman in question.

Chapter End Notes

Come on now...we all knew Ben would not hurt her in any way.

We learned more about him in this chapter but the next chapter is all REY AND BEN!
Green

Chapter Summary

Rey thinks about the women who answered the call.

Ben calls her back and introduces her to his parents.

Chapter Notes

This stunning cover art was made by MrsVioletWrites aka Mina.

She is incredibly talented, an inspiring writer and creator. If you like what you see, pop over to her tumblr and check out her commissions post or treat yourself to reading her stories.

Thank you, hun <3

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Rey-London, England

“Hello.”

The voice was unmistakably female, quite unlike the low timber of Ben’s husky tongue.

Rey panicked, hanging up the phone.

She launched the device under her couch pillow and sat up, bracing herself as she dug her fingers into the cushions below her. Her heart was thunder in her chest, each beat a crack in the organ until it reached a sonic boom, it raced on.
Never one to make rash assumptions, she tried to comprehend what had just happened but the idea of Ben with someone else, another woman, stunned her and threw her into a line of thought not healthy involving a man she had met only the day before.

But he was not just some man.

He was her mate.

No, she could not bracket him like that; she felt it in her heart, right deep in the bones of her that he would not cause her any unnecessary harm.

Omegas were naturally territorial beings, they were profoundly attached to their alphas and the threat of another omega would often lead to fights or obsessive behaviours in the imperilled omega. It invoked an unsettling unrest within her. She dug her fingernails into the cushion as a way of establishing anchorage there as she swayed and rocked as both her body and mind flooded with a wild rush of potent adrenaline.

Already, her fingers itched. The need to nest, to clean her space and to then present herself to Ben was overwhelming despite the distance between the two. The desire to prove her self worth to him was unlike anything she had ever experienced, it was visceral and staggering.

Clutching her eyes tightly closed, she exhaled heavily and willed her raging heart to cool.

For a brief moment, she was ready to take the plunge and cross the ocean and make herself known to the people in his life, to ward off any rival omegas with a fiery glare or a wicked show of hands if need be.

It was all so new and foreign to her, never before had she cared for another on this level. The freshness of their awareness of one another played on her and so she stressed whether or not he was true to only her.

She quickly dismissed that line of thinking as he gave her no reason to doubt him and it was unfair to assume such an idea.

Rey vehemently fought against the darker thoughts of how someone else claimed the space by his side, in his bed or worse still, his heart.

Despite her overwhelming instincts, she was not a jealous person; the green-eyed monster rarely reared its ugly head and possessed her.

Of course there were women in his life, just as there were men in her life and they were nothing more than purely platonic.

For a moment, her world spun in a storm of self-doubt and worry until a bright flash of yellow, like focalised lightning, cleared her vision and calmed what brewed within.

Eyeing the sunflowers to her left, she rose, her heart lodged thickly in her throat as she traipsed towards the window. The silky petals were plush against her fingertips; they were something she could cling to as she surfaced back into something resembling rationality.

The meaning of the flowers grounded her fully. Loyalty, longevity and adoration. She repeated the words like a gospel prayer until she was converted, a true believer of the man who had gifted them.

Knowing he would not have sent a powerful message like that if he were not fully committed to her, she shook her head at her initial distrust or wariness of him.
Ben was good, a man with a heart so full that she wondered if he could spare just some of what he had to offer and that would be enough, he would love her fully and unconditionally.

Casting her eyes once more outside of her window, she smiled. The sun’s light bathed her apartment and warmed her of any lingering coldness as it climbed the sky in its glorious upwards descent. The soft, yellow gold hue warded off any green or red that had previously overtaken her.

The shrill ring of her phone jolted her, she gasped, startled and then tentatively walked towards her phone, the sounds muffled by the pillow it was hidden underneath.

With shaking hands, she unearthed it and gazed down at the screen.

It was Ben.

Her skin pebbled with a flurry of goosebumps and the blood rushed to her ears, it pulsed and for a second, she was contemplative of whether she should answer the call.

Was it him at the end of the line?

Was the woman returning her call to enquire exactly who she was?

Chewing on the inside of her cheek, she summoned her courage and answered the call, pressing the phone to her ear.

“Hello Rey, sorry I missed your call, I am at work and my mother took it upon herself to answer my phone,” he said, sounding somewhat breathless.

It was Ben.

The relief was dazzling, her body sagged as she released the breath she had not realised she was holding, it was a shaky kind of sigh.

The relaxing effect his voice instilled was a wonder, one she would never fully understand except that alphas were notorious in their calming of their mates.

His voice was the greatest of melodies; it was a charm that would forever entrance her.

Sitting, she listened to her heart as it slowed, resuming its normal pace.

“Rey, are you okay?” Ben asked, the worry was clear in his tone as his voice raised an octave.

Sighing once more, she chuckled.

“Yes. Sorry, I was having a moment, it is stupid,” she admitted, feeling sheepish of her overreaction.

There was shuffling and the closing of a door before he spoke again.

“Well?”

It was a soft plea, not an order that he would force her to relent against.

Rey bent at the middle and rested her hand on her chin.

Both her mother and father had taught her the value of honesty above all but following such a path was sometimes difficult.
“I was worried when a woman answered your phone. I panicked and hung up; my instincts got the best of me for a moment there. I swear that I am not usually a jealous person.”

There was silence until there was not.

“You have nothing to be sorry for, Rey. It is quite understandable. I decided to drop by the station to tell my parents about us and I was called away for a moment. My mother was rather excited when she heard about you so I feel that is why she was so quick to answer my phone,” he explained thoughtfully.

It was terrible of her to assume the worst but her basic instincts were valid and a part of her. While she had no doubt that Ben was an honest man, the inkling of his fidelity was her omega genes crying out for validation, that she was the only woman for him. Hearing Ben explain what had happened was enough to ease all, she trusted him.

“I was calling to thank you for the flowers, Ben, I have never received anything like them, I don’t know if you know the meaning—”

“I do. I chose them because you are my sun, Rey. I adore everything you are and that true heart of yours. I am loyal to you; I will be on my knees before you until my dying day. Then there is the topic of longevity, I believe in us, Rey, I believe we can live a loving life together. I will want you, always,” he declared.

Rey’s eyes pricked with tears, she bit back a sob. Never before had she felt so adored.

“Don’t cry, sunshine, those pretty eyes of yours deserve to shine.”

She smiled then and wiped the tears that had fallen.

“I have never felt so wanted,” she confessed, her words barely rose above a whisper.

“You’re all I want,” he confessed, his voice as low as her own.

Rey fell back, conquered and silenced by him.

His readiness to love was unrivalled and all powerful. He moved her.

“You can have me,” she breathed back.

She heard a door opening, effectively intruding on their conversation.

“Ben, why don’t you use face space so we can see her?”

Rey laughed, she covered her mouth to hide the full extent of her reaction.

Ben groaned.

“Mom, it is called FaceTime and I am sure Rey is too busy,”

His mother tutted loudly, so much so that Rey could hear it clearly.

“Actually, I can FaceTime if you would like to,” Rey piped up, cheeks flushed a rosy pink.

“Are you sure? I don’t want you to feel pressured; my mother can be a handful.”

“Benjamin Solo, I am right here!”
Rey shook her head, already loving the enthusiasm and fiery spirit of the woman responsible for bringing her mate into the world.

“I am,” she replied, all the while running her hand through her tresses, the humidity of the day had puffed up her wavy hair.

She hoped she did not look too frightful; there was no time to change.

The FaceTime screen came up and she saw herself, her eyes shiny but wide, she was a woman insprited.

After accepting the call, Ben’s own image appeared on her screen.

With a tilt of his head, he grinned widely and she fell a little more, the man was breathtaking. In the light of day, she could see him clearly; his eyes were molten coffee and crinkled in the corners upon seeing her.

Peeking over his shoulder was his mother, he towered above her but it was obvious she was eager to see Rey so she spied and grabbed her chance.

Rey recognised her immediately, Leia Skywalker Solo, the woman who revolutionised laws pertaining to mates. It was under her guidance that ‘The Mating Act’ was brought into law in America and other countries adopted many of its declarations.

“Oh honey, aren’t you gorgeous. Han, she is a looker, Ben, let Rey meet your father,” the woman ordered, she was the authoritative figure in the family then.

Leia was much like her own mother.

Ben rolled his eyes but the pair moved into another room regardless.

“As my mother failed to introduce herself, I will do so. She is-”

“-Leia Skywalker Solo. Ben, your mother is a legend.”

Ben chuckled and adjusted his phone, he sat next to a man, Leia had perched herself on his lap.

“These are my parents, you know of my mother obviously and this is my father, Han,” he said, gesturing to the pair.

They were a beautiful couple; age had been kind to the both of them. While Ben appeared to have taken mostly after his father, their sharp features and grins almost identical, it was Leia who had gifted him his eyes. A passion lay behind hers that rivalled her son’s.

Rey relaxed and brought her feet under her, unsure of how to approach the task of meeting his parents.

Lifting her hand, she waved.

“I’m Rey; it is pleasure to meet the two of you.”

Leia waved back, Han nodded kindly, tightening his grip on the spitfire on his lap.

“Any other names, sweetie? Do you plan on hyphenating when you and Ben are married?”

Another groan from Ben, he looked away from the camera for a moment, obviously uncomfortable
about how blunt his mother was.

Han shot her a look and blanched, shaking his head but it was clear to all that he adored her. Rey liked to think her forwardness was a running joke between the two.

Rey blushed but maintained her smile, it was refreshing to listen to someone who was forward in both their thinking and conversation, it was a witty sort of honesty that she admittedly admired.

“My name is Rey Luna Andor. I haven’t given it much thought but I always liked the idea of taking my husband’s name.”

Rey observed Ben as his own face reddened, a slither of a smile played on his lips. She wondered whether her one day bearing his name lit him up as it did her. His eyes flickered to the camera one more.

One day she would wear his mark upon her skin and carry his name. It was a thrilling idea.

“Lovely name for a beautiful woman like yourself, are you originally from England?” Han enquired.

It was obvious whom Ben had inherited his charm from.

“My mother is English but my father is from Mexico, he is there just now caring for my grandmother.”

It had been a while since she had seen her father in person but she knew it was nothing compared to the longing her mother felt. Now that she knew Ben existed, she could relate to her mother to some extent.

Her mother would jump on the first plane out of Heathrow if she could, it contrasted with Rey’s self-imposed isolation from Ben and she wondered if she had made a terrible mistake.

“Are you coming here or is Ben going to you? I cannot wait to meet you,” Leia gushed and Rey stilled, her smile faltered.

Ben turned to his mother; he kept his voice low and whispered something.

“Can we talk about this later?”

Leia peered at the screen and then at her son before nodding, adjusting herself on Han’s lap once more.

As if sensing Rey’s sadness, Ben steered the conversation. The four spoke for a while, it was easy and flowed well.

Throughout it all, she kept her eyes firmly on Ben. It was a beautiful thing to see him in a natural environment, it was telling. The way his eyes shone when he spoke or gazed at his parents or the easy laughs that he brought about.

While Ben confessed that to him, she was his sun; the comparison seemed befitting of him. There was so much light in him and he shone so brightly.

Smiling, she rested her head in her palm and closed her eyes briefly. The day had been long and she was all too aware of the tiredness that entombed her.

“Rey.”
She opened her eyes and found her phone flat on the couch beside her. Scooping it up, she saw Ben alone, strolling along the street, weaving past troves of people, they parted for him, his size a most valuable tool.

“There’s my sunshine.”

“Did I really fall asleep on you and your parents?” She groaned, palming her face.

Ben smirked and eyed the camera for a moment.

“You cannot help your tiredness. Plus, my parents love you already. My mom said she will be in touch, I hope you don’t mind that I gave her your phone number.”

Rey shook her head, no.

“Of course not, as a girl she was my hero. She has done so much for omegas and mates.”

Ben nodded in agreement, he had probably heard praise about his mother his entire life but he seemed proud of her achievements.

“I have a question for you,” he said, he entered a store and Rey saw him pull out a cart.

Rey brushed the tiredness from her eyes but she was aware she would need to sleep some more to fully quench it.

“Yes?”

“What are you doing later?”

Rey shrugged, her weekends were almost entirely free of any obligations. More often than not, she would lounge on the couch and catch up on sleep.

“I was wondering if you wanted to share a meal together? I know that sounds stupid, that we will be chatting through a computer screen but—”

It was odd to see him flustered but it was endearing. A man like him had been reduced to sort of nervousness that Rey never thought possible from him.

He would walk into raging fires with no fear but asking his mate to have dinner with him, albeit over Skype, seemed like a far more daunting task.

It was amusing.

“Ben, I think it is a lovely idea. Just tell me a time and we can do it.”

The smile that lit up his face was blinding.

“I will send you a recipe, something simple, are you allergic to anything?”

“No, I’ll eat anything.”

Ben quirked a brow at her, his eyes bulged a fraction.

“Oh and Ben?”

“Yes?”
“Feel free to lose your shirt later.”

She was a terrible hypocrite, there was no denying it but it was hard to fight against expressing the attraction to him that came so naturally.

Ben was fire and she was burning for him.

While she wanted Ben to want her for more than her biology, the physical attraction was palpable, she was invigorated and in want of further exploration. Ben was the cause of such stimulation, she knew that. Seeing Ben had awoken her sexually, it was primal, heady and could not be ignored.

Her own heated declaration was bold, weighty and loaded. In her sleepy state, she felt inebriated, all inhibitions were lost but she could not find it within herself to be ashamed of it.

Ben deserved to be wanted, to know and feel that she wanted him more than anything she had ever wanted before.

She held her breath and waited for his response, she peeked at him through her lashes, suddenly feeling quite shy.

“It’s a date,” he winked as his eyes blazed hotter than her own.

Chapter End Notes

Oh Rey.

Date chapter next from the view of Ben HOFTIE Solo (Mixture of hot and softie because he is too sweet)

And he will react to her selfie in it... :D

Thank you for your patience x
Ben thinks of Rey

The two sit down for their Skype date and things heat up between them.

This is for the ladies of The Writing Den, you keep me going <3

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Ben-New York, United States of America

Rey wanted him.

Ben could not recall an occurrence in his life that he had felt so deeply touched by another’s desire. Someone wanting him was a foreign concept, a pure lifeline that brightened and encouraged all he was.

It was only that much sweeter as it was his mate’s affection, something he needed like the air he breathed.

Rey wanted him.

It was all he could think about as he selected groceries, mindful of what he was going to prepare and in turn, instruct Rey to make for their dinner date. There was a simple and blissful domesticity to it all, as if he had made her dinner countless times before. For a moment, he pretended he was running errands and that Rey awaited him at home, sprawled out upon his sheets after a night of lascivious attentions.

There she would wait, ready to entice him some more and then he would take care of her with a delicacy unknown by most. He would cradle her as if her heart was made of glass but with a body carved of soft steel that he could bend and attend without abandon.

Rey wanted him.

It consumed him as he walked home and sent her a recipe and a replicate list of items she would need to purchase to which she promptly confirmed was manageable.

The time difference between them meant there was time for him to relax and breathe new life into his thoughts, all revolved around Rey. The role of the sun was befitting of her and like it, he was drawn in by her pull, orbiting with the promise of warmth and light. More than anything, he yearned for his fill of it.

Padding through the apartment, content with his progress of meal preparation, he changed into a
pair of grey sweat pants and neglected a shirt. Seeing Rey enamoured by his physique swelled both his pride and cock. Behind the innocent façade in her bright and youthful face was a woman who wanted more and he hoped he was the one responsible for such a stunning blossoming of sexual awakening.

With her admittance and bold suggestion of him losing his shirt, there was the unspoken hypocrisy of her sentiment of physical attraction not influencing their relationship but Ben hardly cared. If he affected her as she did him, there was no blaming her for her reactions and he would not confront or belittle her. Instead, he would nurture her and quietly support her explorations and guide her in any way she required.

It was carnal seduction but both were willing and in tune with their bodies’ most basic of needs. They were far from powerless but it seemed as if both were hardly fighting against them.

When she would let him, he would defile her and blaze trails of himself upon and within her and never release her from his pure and loving hold.

Absently, he lazily palmed his hardening length over his pants; he adjusted himself and stretched out across his bed. It was high noon and the sun rose in a glorious upwards descent, cloaking all within his bedroom in a muted yellow. Basking in the light, he eyed his phone once more.

Callie shadowed him, eclipsing the rays as she nudged his face in greeting before claiming her spot by his side. With his free hand, he nuzzled the spot behind her ears until she relaxed and purred.

Retrieving his phone, he glanced at the blank screen and it dawned on him how he wished Rey had been there, waiting and looking upon him with those soulful eyes of hers. They were an odd mixture of rich coffee and earthy green and even he doubted he could write of their splendour, no words would do them justice or bring them to life on the pages that lay below him.

It was then he noticed a message notification. Curious, he opened the messaging application and witnessed that he had received it hours before. How had he missed this? Rey was the sender and it irked him that he was only seeing it now.

Frowning but spurred on with a thrilling anticipation, he clicked on the message and found the treasure waiting for him there.

It was Rey.

Smiling, he gazed at the photo of her; she shone with a wide grin and natural poise as she posed in a mirrored elevator. The plentiful display of her bare, tawny legs reduced him backwards twenty years and left a hormonal teenage boy in their wake.

For a female, Rey was taller than average but still so little in comparison to his hulking frame and that only aroused his fantasy. The contrast was stirring and it excited him, she would bracket his hips in fleshy gold and drape her dainty arms around his neck. He imagined she would cling to him with a bruising hold, as if her life depended on it as he pleased her and introduced her to the wonders of where he could take her with his body so close to hers.

Flying, he would bring about her sweet ecstasy and fulfil their combined rapture until they were sated and then he would do it again, unashamedly addicted to all things her.

Groaning, he flipped over onto his stomach.

There was much more to the photo, she was barefaced and he appreciated her natural beauty, her
hair lay draped over one shoulder, baring her neck to him with a tiny tilt of her head.

If it was an invitation, he was unsure, but one day he knew he would suckle a sweet blossom into the skin there and mar the spot with his teeth, branding a piece of himself to her forever. Despite the glorious show of her legs, her upper half was entirely covered but still, the outline of her breasts and the promise of what was underneath was enough for the blood to rush into his cock, he was painfully hard now and languidly thrusted against the mattress, in dire need of friction.

Unsatisfied, he rotated over once more onto his back, no self-pleasure would compare or curb his desires, not while he knew that his mate would show him heaven and acquaint him to the true height of passion.

Again, he scrutinised the photo. Promptly, he set the image as his phone’s wallpaper and it would act as a sweet balm to ease him into the days he would wake alone and without her. At least there was some part of her with him, the girl grinning behind her shades who appeared ready to conquer the day ahead of her with an enthusiasm he could not wait to witness in person.

The image of her was burned into his mind, he had stared at it longer than he would ever admit and he saw her smile even when he closed his eyes but it was a welcome mirage.

Deciding to reciprocate her offering, he stood and jogged to the bathroom, mindful of his previous spill in there. Bracing himself on the marble counter, he looked at his reflection, unsure of how to proceed.

At thirty-four years of age, he had never given much thought to the phase of constantly snapping photos of yourself. It all seemed redundant and a giant waste of time but there was no judgment from him.

Like her, he opted for a mirror selfie, he held his phone casually just under his bare pectoral muscles. The sweatpants he wore hung ridiculously low on his hips revealing the carved v muscles of his hips and the trail of hair that led downwards. He chose not to sort them; he wanted Rey to see him, all of him.

After raking his hands through his hair, he smiled and snapped the photo. Appraising it, he was surprised of how decent he appeared, his muscles were taut, his smile easy and eyes dark and hooded. He wondered if she would appreciate it just as much as he had hers.

After sending it, he traipsed through to the living room and decided upon writing, Rey was a most inspiring muse and one day he hoped that once he completed his second novel of compiled poems, that she would be at his side, knowledgeable that his words were for her and always had been only ever about her.

A few hours later, Ben received his reply, before he sent it, he was aware that Rey was asleep, dozing so she could spend the night with him without tiredness hanging over her.

Gazing once more over a line he worked into his latest poem, he read it aloud.

"For the sun, I fall further every day."

Somewhat satisfied, he opened her message.

‘You’re beautiful,’ it read.

Believing her, his confidence touched the sky, his fingertips brushed clouds.
She called then, her image appearing once more and he admired it all over again, despite his earlier memorisation of it. After a few more rings, he answered, eager to hear whatever spilled from her rosebud lips.

“Are you sure you are real?” She asked, offering no room for a greeting.

Leaning forward, Ben closed his moleskin notebook but not before sealing it with a kiss and placed it on the coffee table in front of him.

“If anything, it is you who is some kind of dream, Rey. I would never wake again if you were something my mind concocted,” he admitted quietly, he dragged the end of his number two pencil across his lips and swallowed hard.

Some part of him, a little slither of darkness, still believed that she was going to disappear. He would wake alone once again; and find that all of this had been the cruellest of sweet dreams, a haunting of his unconscious mind.

“I’m real, Ben. I will always be here,” she returned and his heart clenched, he allowed hope to fill him.

Eyeing the spot next to him, he wanted to see her there and the two no longer separated but he squashed it, reminding himself that his mate needed adjustment time. He was an alpha and with that, came a strength that knew no bounds or end. It was that power, that ability to cope with anything thrown his way, that he knew he could achieve anything.

After all, Rey had entrusted him with their length of separation. All she required was that he loved her for who she was and not what he wanted her to be, his biological mate, a divine little omega for the taking.

“Always,” he repeated, standing as he walked towards his window and peered out at the world below him. People watching had always calmed him, distracted him from whatever ailed him.

“What are you doing now?” Rey asked, he heard shuffling on her end and he wondered the same of her.

Looking briefly upwards at the blazing sun overhead, he was grateful that the two at least shared the same fiery giant, together they could gaze upon it despite the space between them. Then in the evening, Rey would welcome the moon, leave an imprint of her eyes upon it so when Ben peered up at it long after she left it and slept, he would see her, and imagine what she thought of when she stood alone, gazing at its beauty.

“I’m looking out of my window, the city is bustling with people, it is like a sea of bodies down there,” idly, he traced his finger along the glass and imagined himself as a god, peering down at his creations.

A god he was not, for if he were, he would part the ocean and begin his journey to Rey.

“Even in London, I always felt out of place or disconnected. Walking the streets surrounded by people, I always feel alone,” Rey confessed and the admission tugged at Ben’s heart with an almighty pull that threatened to splinter it.

Ben knew the feeling well. Despite the constant presence of his loving family and friends, there were moments when he would sit back, static in the hoards and contemplate his own lack of contentment or burgeoning loneliness.
Leaning against the wall, he eyed the concrete jungle and pondered his reply but all had been said before, nothing as poignant as what he had told her the night before.

“You’re not alone,” he murmured, scanning the crowds below, each was with purpose, quite like him, only he knew persuading Rey the validity of his feelings was a complicated task but something he could conquer.

“Neither are you,” was her reply, he closed his eyes, converted as a true believer in her and what she proclaimed. Perhaps she was god.

Both were silent for a while, savouring the sweet nothing and the promise of what lay ahead. Only their meeting in person would completely ebb the loneliness or longing that settled in the bones of them.

Ben moved away from the window and towards the kitchen, pulling out a pan as he blossomed with happiness as he thought about seeing her that night and sharing a favourite meal of his with her.

“Now, tell me how to make this famous spaghetti and meatballs of yours so we can commence with our date,” Rey goaded, lighting the mood of the conversation.

Ben chuckled, his cheeks flushing; he was rusty to the dating scene since he had only been on two dates.

“You need a teacher,” it was amusing to him, the reversal of traditional roles between man and woman but he loved the idea of possessing some authority over her, it pleased his instincts and the alpha within.

“Good thing you are my teacher,” she quipped and he knew that despite being unable to see her, a pout and defiant jut of her chin were gracing her delicate features.

Rey was feisty and that spoke to him, he admired it, knowing that she was not entirely submissive like most omegas, there was a fire within her and it called to him.

The two conversed through loudspeaker as they began their preparations; Ben learned that Rey was a complete and utter novice in the kitchen who only just managed to feed herself and he wondered briefly, just how she had coped without him all these years.

More than once, she had screamed, stilling his heart for a panicked moment. Then she vented her frustrations, a colourful bunch of profanities rang loud over the line when she filled the pan with too much liquid and boiling water spat at her forearms or how she huffed when she could not roll the meatballs without them crumbling apart.

Ben was patient, giddy almost as he guided her but more than anything, he wished he could have saved her the trouble by making it himself and treating her like any gentleman would.

Forty-five minutes later, they were ready to plate up and Ben was more than eager to see her.

Grabbing his laptop, he set it on the sleek dining table and booted it up, bringing up Skype as he placed some candles on the table. Lighting them, he shut his curtains and instilled a romantic sense of ambience throughout his apartment.

Rey answered, already seated at her table with her food laid out in front of her. Like him, she had chosen to dim the lights and instead fill the space with candles and it warmed him to see how much effort she had put into all of this. His appreciation of her knew no end.
This was a date, it mattered not that they did not share the same space.

Like him, she had opted for casual attire. Her rich chestnut hair, sun kissed with streaks of light caramel in sections was long and pooled in soft waves over her shoulders. Like the night before, she was wearing another one of those thin, pretty camisoles of hers, the kind that he could tear apart with his fingers with very little effort at all. It was a muted, dusty pink and he almost choked when he realised that yet again, she wore no bra.

She would be the death of him, a golden reaper donned in rosy pink.

“Hello, sunshine,” he smiled before dragging his gaze away from her chest so he could retrieve his own plate. It killed him to look away.

As he moved, he was sure to glance back at her and there was no denying that she was gawking at him, eyeing his bare torso and back as he returned, placing his wine glass down first before taking his seat.

Her pink tongue swiped over her parted lips as she stared; apparently, the food in front of her was forgotten, at least for the moment.

Instead of feeling self-conscious over her intense scrutinising of his body, he was inspired and glowed, wishing he could show her more. Gladly, he would still as she devoured whatever she pleased from him, his body, his mind and soul were all for the taking as they were fast becoming hers.

All that he was, all he had to offer, it was hers if she would have him.

“This is my grandmother’s recipe; I hope you will enjoy it,” he said once he was aware that perhaps her food would cool if she continued her bold surveying of him.

Rey’s eyes glazed for a moment before she cleared her throat, apparently only then remembering that a meal sat before her. Ben observed a brilliant blush colour her cheeks, the tips of ears burned scarlet.

“I’m sure I will, although I cannot deny that I might have butchered it a bit,” she smiled, stabbing her fork into a meatball.

Tentatively at first, she chewed and then nodded to herself and then put the whole thing in her mouth. Twirling her fork, she gathered up some spaghetti and sucked it up into her mouth with a wet pop.

His blood was molten lava then, his heart pumping a wild tune as he gawked, never did he imagine that watching someone eat could be so erotic. Ben could not look away; his mouth grew dry as his cock swelled at the sight of her pretty, pink lips sucking something between them.

He gripped the table; his knuckles bleached white against obsidian black.

Rey seemed completely oblivious to his struggles and continued to purse her lips and inhale the pasta, her tongue jutting out just a fraction as she did so.

Blinking, he forced himself to look away, his eyes cast downward towards his own food. Finally, he picked up his own fork and began to eat even though he wished for something else to lavish his tongue with.

“Your parents are lovely,” Rey hummed, beaming her pearly whites as she picked up her drink and
sipped.

It stained her lips a cherry red and Ben was sure he fell even more.

Chewing thoughtfully, he nodded, barely tasting what he consumed for his mind was elsewhere and zoned entirely on Rey.

The morning could not have gone better, his parents had taken to Rey with ease; his mother had all but demanded her number so she could speak to her without the need of Ben’s presence. Leia had always yearned after a daughter but there were complications during his birth and it was not recommended that she put her body through another pregnancy.

Now, she had her pseudo daughter, one who knew too well of what Leia had achieved for people across the world and it was lovely to think about. Then there was his father whose own happiness came from seeing his son no longer burdened by his loneliness.

“I would love to be introduced to your parents,” Ben countered, taking a sip of his own drink, he opted for a red like Rey, the bitter tang coated his tongue and he relished the taste.

“My father is in Mexico as you know but I can introduce you to my mother whenever you are free, she is eager to know more about you. I warn you, she is upfront and blunt but feel free not to answer any questions that you are not comfortable with. She is quite the spitfire,” Rey confessed, rolling her eyes as she shook her head, no doubt thinking of the woman who had shaped her.

Ben was not surprised to learn of this. Rey’s own tenacity and strong will had obviously been inherited and he knew all about powerful women, his mother a steely spearhead herself.

“I can’t wait.”

The conversation continued that way for a while; they both asked questions, each understanding the other with more time that passed. Even after their plates were cleared and more wine drained, they spoke constantly.

Ben asked her about her morning routine and was thrilled to find like him, she was an early riser. She preferred the left side of the bed, which suited him; he always woke on the right. Then like the true Brit she was, it was tea that tickled her fancy, strong, with only a splash of milk and no sugar. Further musings revealed that she enjoyed starting her day with a run; exercise was something that grounded her and cleared her mind, which was quite similar to his own view of physical fitness.

Of course, that led him to think of Rey in tight little shorts as she bounced along the pavement. Allowing himself to fantasise, he did not realise that he had stopped talking.

It was only when Rey leaned forward and eyed the camera like a brazen woman enticing her man, that he found himself back in the room.

She had never looked so beautiful; her cheeks were flushed with a mixture of the summer heat and the wine she had consumed. Wide eyes trapped him, shiny from where they had laughed through anecdotes together but they were darkened in a way he could only have dreamed about.

Rey was aroused.

“Thank you for losing your shirt,” she whispered, tilting her head to the side and like the photo she sent, she bared that delicious slither of skin where her mating gland was. Then ever so slowly, she brushed her fingertips over it, her eyes closing briefly as the candles lit the scene in an amber shadow.
Ben froze for a moment, his breath hitching in his chest as for the first time in his life, he felt like prey, an alpha hunted and enraptured by an omega.

“I have nothing to hide from you. I want you to want me, all of me,” he confessed and leaned back in his chair, transfixed by her blown pupils that signalled her want and lust.

“I want you, Ben. More than I ever thought possible,” the words came out like a breathy whine; her heaving chest took on a glossy sheen as her body heated with the lustful consumption.

The words went straight to his cock and his heart second; the need to claim her was ripe in his mind, it was maddening and he was sure she would take him, even after only a day of knowing of eachother’s existence.

Rey gazed downward and then back to him; his own stare fell upon her perky breasts, her nipples pebbled under the thin garment. There was no denying his unabashed gawking of her but that was what he wanted, he ached for her to feel his longing and utter admiration of her offerings.

Rey’s hands obscured his view for a brief second as she skimmed her palms along the length of her torso before they settled; one hand palmed her mating gland and the other cupped one of her breasts, her thumb brushing against the hardened bud.

Peering back at him through her thick lashes, she bit her lip and they settled into a stare off, a quiet challenge.

Ben leaned forward, one hand trailing below his waistband; the other caressed his mating gland. It had been years since he had touched it and now it was wildfire, burning for attention.

Groaning, he closed his eyes, the sweet trickling of arousal swarmed his frame and he jutted his hips, wishing that it were Rey’s hand hovering tantalisingly close to his cock.

Unable to deny his want any longer, he roamed her body once more and noted the increase of speed in her workings. More than anything, he wished it were his hands upon her, coaxing her pleasure from her.

Then, he issued an order; she would not deny him of this.

“Let me see you, omega.”

Chapter End Notes

So...time to heat things up for these two? :) 

Thank you to each and everyone of you who supports this, trust me when I say comments/thoughts spur a writer on.

I know we want these two together but some things need to happen first, trust me when I say the wait is worth it and plenty of fun can be had with long distance. Them meeting in person will be signalling the impending end of this story.

If you need something to bide you over between updates, I have another fic, Wolves, which is an ABO too.
**Goddess**

Chapter Notes

This is for all the ladies of the Writing Den :D

See the end of the chapter for more notes

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**Ben-New York, United States of America**

“Let me see you, omega.”

Ben had never wanted something so much before in his life. For years, he had dreamed of her, always faceless and forever slipping out of his desperate grasp. There, his fingertips skimmed gold and then he would wake alone with a rosy scent on his tongue and a faceless woman both haunting and ruling his mind.

Now, she sat before him, a goddess of the sun, flushed pink and eyes wide, wide with want for him. Her earthy eyes, like wet soil and freshly cut grass, were blown; her dark pupils swallowed all, including him.

Her mouth gaped a fraction, revealing a peek of what was inside, her tongue was dyed a deep berry red from the wine, her cheeks were flushed a glorious shade of coral.

She was glowing.

Under his gaze, he watched her carefully, gauging her reaction and for a second, he doubted his confidence in her response.

Was it too soon for her? Had he asked too much of her?

Still, her chest heaved, shiny with perspiration, gleaming for him to see and then it stilled, her teeth found purchase in her bottom lip and then she gazed directly at the camera, her brow rose a fraction as she breathed through her nose.

Ben palmed his neck, unable to deny himself as he lazily fingered the skin encasing his mating gland; it was a delight he had long denied himself of. The reason for such neglect was simple, every contact with the gland before Rey was only symbolic of his loneliness, a reminder of his elusive and missing mate. Each swipe sent a rush of pleasure throughout him; it only required the most delicate of stimulation.

“Okay, alpha,” was her reply and the relief was sweet, it filled him and once more, he felt certain that she wanted him as much as he craved her.

Through hooded eyes, she looked at him once more and he was done for.

“Are you sure you want this? I need to hear you say it,” Ben asked, despite how much he wanted to see all she had to offer, he would do with a clear conscience, one where he was sure that she understood him.

Nodding quickly, she smiled, her once bold stance and challenging eyes dropped to her lap.
“I do, Ben, I want you to see me. I just haven’t done anything like this before, I am inexperienced, I mean, I am a virgin,” she confessed, her cheeks blossomed a richer red than before and Ben could not breathe, convinced he had misheard her.

How it was possible that he had been presented such a gift? Rey was untouched; his for the taking and that was enough to catapult him toward the edges of his pleasure. No man had taken delight in what was rightfully his and the primal side of him rejoiced, knowing he would be the first and last to claim her.

Ben choked, he steadied himself on the table in front of him with one hand while the other still lay below his waistband, ready to take hold of himself and bring about a sweet release.

“I’ll take care of you, Rey, I’ll show you the world and the heights I can deliver you to with my hands, my mouth and my cock when I see you in person, but until then, I will guide you this way,” he promised and already he thought of himself close to reaching nirvana.

Visually, she reacted beautifully to his declaration, her eyes took on a new shine and her chest heaved harder than before, she swiped her bottom lip, wetting it with her tainted tongue with a languid and most teasing swipe.

He wanted to secure a hold on her chin and tilt it upwards to meet him. He would kiss her mouth, he would do so softly, gentle at first and then show her how much he burned for her and leaving a bruising trail in his wake, one that they would both feel the next day. Musings about her taste and grape tasting kisses would keep him awake at night, a ghost of her forever staining his lips.

“Tell me what to do,” she whispered, both of her hands dropped to her sides and she squared her shoulders, awaiting instruction.

It thrilled him, it was what every hot-blooded alpha desired, a willing little omega submissive to only him, despite the distance, he witnessed her relinquishing her sexual control over into his willing hands, the ultimate exchange of trust between the two. The woman who sat in front of him, albeit it over three thousand miles away, was ready for him, at least in that respect and he was spoiled for choice of how he was going to make her body sing.

There was so much he wanted to explore, her body was a blank canvas in need of decoration and defilement but the possibilities were endless. For he wished it were his own fingertips that would stain her forever more and coax forward the beauty that lay within her. Until the day came when she would lay splayed out on his sheets, he would worship her in a different sense and guide her own exploration. He would show her how to conquer her own flesh and bring about a thrilling crescendo that would end with his name leaving her lips time and time again.

“I want you to take us into the bedroom, position your laptop so I can see your bed,” he said, ready for her undoing.

Standing to move, he noticed the array of candles still lit in the foreground, at least a dozen flames flickered, lighting the space. Unable to ignore them, he acted upon his instincts to protect, despite the ocean between them.

“Rey, please blow out the candles,” he pleaded softly; she was somewhat intoxicated and he did not want her to become another statistic.

She studied him for a moment, a small smile tugging at the corner of her lips. Then she moved, darkening the room with every breath and deathblow to the flames. Each time, she held his gaze as if to assure him that she was fulfilling his request.
For that split second, her face was awash with liquid gold, an amber hue and the flames reflected in her wide eyes, a befitting sight of the woman who enraptured him and promised to share a passion with him that was unknown to all other men.

After the last flame perished, a great relief washed over Ben, she was safe from the horrors that came with the giving but destructive element. The room was shrouded in darkness, save for the hazy glow that the laptop offered.

She was quick to follow his instruction, though her movements were much slower than before, she soon settled in her bedroom, dimly lit by a small light in the corner.

From where she positioned him, he could see all, her bed was large, far larger than she only would need and he eyed the spot to the right, the one she claimed was empty, for she preferred the left. One day he would take his place there.

She waited for him, sat on the bed, she crossed her legs at the ankles, they were bare, her toenails painted a lemon yellow.

“Lower the straps to your camisole,” he prompted, determined to see more of her.

Right away, she set about to fulfil his wish, her slender fingers plucked at the dainty straps, too fast for his liking. He had to make this last, prolong the heavenly experience as much as he could.

“Slowly,” he whispered, he leaned forward like a man in a trance and Rey played the role of the unknowing hypnotist with a flourishing confidence. He inched towards the screen to ensure he saw all; he did not want to miss a thing, he cherished all he saw, cataloguing every movement and breath away in his mind.

Rey’s movements stilled momentarily until she heeded his advice, her fingers wrapped around the straps and peeled them downwards, slow enough for Ben to appreciate the task.

Like the rest of her, the expanse of her sun kissed shoulder was peppered with chestnut freckles, each one a piece of the sun and in need of attention. He would lavish them all with his tongue until he mapped her in her entirety, the exploration conquered by his fingertips and lips. He could not wait to discover her.

He held his breath as the second strap fell, the anticipation thick and pooling in his stomach, it coiled deep within him.

“Are you okay to continue?” He asked, mindful of her inexperience.

He hoped she was, unable to see more of her would be torture but there was nothing more important to him than her own wellbeing.

She nodded again, her body was bathed in the ethereal glow of the laptop, it was white and hazy and there was the fire in her eyes that remained flickering strongly, one unsure even he could tame.

“I want you to remove your camisole; can you do that for me, sunshine?” Ben asked, already knowing the answer.

Knowing he was responsible for the awakening of this submissive side of her, he keened and gawked as she pinched her fingers under the hem of the fabric before rolling it, slowly, without the need of his instruction, and bore herself to him. The flimsy fabric fell to the floor beside her and she waited, her eyes unwavering in their pursuit of him, she locked him in place.
He was speechless and overwhelmed with what confronted him. No plethora of dreams or imaginings could have done her justice; all images he depicted were wrong and lacking.

Rey was long and petite but so tiny in comparison to himself. The blood rushed to his cock one more as he consumed her image. From the small frame of her shoulders, to the perky breasts that sat high on her chest, ripe and glistening with perspiration, he was stunned. Roaming lower, he admired the pinch of her waist, the gentle flare of her round hips, most accommodating of his hands and he was done for. Once more, his eyes zeroed in on her chest, she was freckled there too, each fleshy globe was peaked by a hard, rosy bud. Her long, wavy hair brushed the underside of her breasts, curling beneath the curves of them.

“You’re beautiful.”

It was a gross understatement but his words failed him, a poet was quietened, all his words stolen from him. A woman, his stunning mate, reduced him to nothing.

Salivating, he finally took his cock in his hand; his calloused fingers brushed the velvety length.

“Are you touching yourself?” Rey asked, surprising him, were his movements not as inconspicuous as he thought.

There was no denial from him, honesty was something he valued above all so he nodded and Rey smiled at him, a coy little gesture.

“Keep going,” her head tilted to the side as she eyed him, a bold omega assertive over her alpha, she was compelling and made him question all he thought he knew or preferred.

Yes, he liked her telling him what to do, there was nothing he would not do for her and a part of him knew that Rey was aware of that.

The power they had over one another knew no end; it was unlimited and knew no bounds.

Ben did not need much persuasion but knowing Rey was aware of his movements and actively encouraged him to touch himself was encouraging, he gripped himself harder, dragging his curled fist upwards towards the weeping head.

“How do you want me?” She asked, laying back on her elbows, her shapely calf crowned her thigh and he saw a peek of her white underwear. Her panties were bunched around her hips and covering what he ached to see the most.

He was not sure how he had been granted such a gift but he was not going to deny himself any longer.

“I want you out of those little panties and on your back, bare on the bed.”

He knew what he asked of her was a weighty request and he held his breath, awaiting her confirmation, ever so slowly, he tested her boundaries and limits.

“Okay.”

His heart stopped as she stood, her firm breasts bounced as she did so, eliciting another groan from him. He squeezed himself, slowly thrusting into his palm but it was not enough, it would never be enough.

Emboldened, she stood before him and like before, she hooked her fingers in the waistband on her...
panties and then slowly drew them down her legs, white flushed against gold and she was free and nude before him.

Ben was lost for a moment, dizzied by the sight. She was a marvel, like him, she was all long limbs but curves graced her figure and it cut a glorious sight. Below her taut navel, there was a trimmed thatch of hair decorating her mound but all else was bare, smooth, pink and wet, glistening for him.

He nearly came right there; she spun and walked towards the bed, revealing a firm ass, round and larger than he ever thought possible of her small frame.

He imagined standing behind her parting her cheeks to reach the wetness beneath as he encased her waist with his hands, holding her flush against him.

For a moment, he stopped all workings, unwillingly to embarrass himself with the speed of his climax. Instead, he focused solely on her and her own pleasure as she relaxed on the bed and waited for him.

She lay on her back, legs together and arms by her sides, she peered at him, her little breaths filled the silence between the two.

“Now, be a good girl and touch those perfect breasts of yours, omega,” he all but growled out, all too aware of how needy she was, he could see it in every breath taken or every errant movement of her fingers.

There was an ache consuming her.

Her body raised upwards, it was aflame and her hips rolled up off the mattress, offering him a delicious view of her want.

Moaning, she slowly groped herself, her fingertip and thumb brushed against the hardened nipple, rolling it against her nail.

“Pinch it, Rey,” he ordered.

He knew of the line between pleasure and pain and that one day he would entice her with both.

“Fuck,” she keened; her back arched upwards, a most welcoming of invitations and he wanted to be there, palming her hips and ushering her back to the mattress below.

“Put your hand between your legs, Rey, tell me how wet you are,” he said, somewhat desperately.

The most eager of observers, he watched her nimble fingers graze downwards, swooping along the curve of her ribs and brushing against her naval. Then they moved lower, she finally parted her knees and he held his breath as her fingers skimmed lower until they reached her heated, wet core.

Ben swallowed hard, gaping at her pussy. It was obvious how much she wanted this, of how she wanted him.

With her eyes on the camera, on him, she parted her folds, dipped a finger inside of herself, and slowly started to fuck herself with it. Like a flower in the wind, she rocked upon it, her hips swaying and aiding her movements.

Ben could hear how wet she was, the lewd, obscene noises were evidence of her arousal and it was something he wanted to hear time and time again but in person and him the sole cause of such pleasure.
“I’m so wet, Ben, the most I have ever been in my life,” she whined, closing her eyes as she busied herself, her freehand palmed her breast and like before, she pinched her nipple, squeezing it until her toes curled.

He believed her, her response to him was real and he knew of the effect he had upon her, for she instilled the same heated longing in him. With the sounds of her arousal in his ears and her hooded eyes singling him out, he gripped his cock and stroked from his head to his shaft, already so sensitive. Tracing a thick vein just below the skin, he quickened his work, pumping himself with a new fervour.

“Is it for me, Rey? Do you wish it was my fingers fucking you?” He gritted out, he clenched his teeth together as he saw her fast becoming undone. Rey squirmed, pinching her nipple once more, it was something Ben admired and would never tire of seeing. Her breasts would fit perfectly in his own hands and then he would capture the sensitive bud in his mouth and show her the wonder of a gifted mouth.

“Yes, mine aren’t enough, too small,” she panted, looking once more at the screen. She parted her legs, accommodating his view and he bit his lip, tugging his hair with his free hand.

Seeing her so needy was his undoing, he knew he could work her better than she ever could herself, fill her better than she ever could have dreamed of.

“Add another finger,” he instructed, he leaned back into his seat and spread his own legs as he thrust into his palm.

Rey followed his advice and she slipped another digit inwards, a gasp fell from her lips and he wished he were there to catch it, to snatch it right from her lips as he made her whole.

“Am I doing well, Ben?” She asked, she took her eyes off the screen for a moment, the desperation evident in the crease of her brow.

Praise was something most coveted from an omega, he knew this and he would shower her with it. “Yes, Rey, look at you fucking yourself for me. Show me how you would come around my fingers, sunshine.”

This only spurred her on, she added another finger and Ben watched, an avid voyeur as her body accommodated more, it slid in without resistance and his pride in her flourished. Her body would take him with ease, he had no doubt and so he imagined it was her wet heat encasing his cock.

He was close, shamefully so, but seeing Rey nude and open to him was enough to send him careening over the edge.

As if she heard him, she moaned louder, fisting the sheets around her.

“I’m close, Ben, I’m going to-”

“-Say my name, Rey, come for me,” he begged, his cock pulsed in his hand.

Her thumb moved upwards, brushing her clit and she was gone.

“Ben!” She screamed, repeating his name as her body convulsed, flying the high of her climax. She mewled, panting hard as her eyes rolled into the back of her head, her nostrils flared as she did so.
Ben choked and bit his fist as he came, his fingers were wet with his release but he could not find it within himself to take his eyes off Rey. Like himself, she was breathing hard, her body spent. Through hooded lids, she looked at him and then smiled, rolling over until she was standing.

Lifting her laptop, he could see her face clearer, the smile that played upon her lips was unmoving, wide and genuine. She glowed brighter than before.

Settling down, she placed him on her pillow, the one on the right and lay down, dragging a sheet haphazardly across her naked body.

Ben followed suit, quickly rushing to the sink to wash his hands before he picked up his laptop, Callie acted as his ever present shadow as he rolled into bed and placed Rey on his left pillow. Callie stared at him, obviously not pleased that her place was taken so instead she nuzzled his side and lay there.

For a moment, they stared at each other.

“Thank you,” Ben whispered, he was fulfilled in a way he never thought possible.

Seeing Rey reach that high and him being the cause of it was more than he could comprehend.

“No, thank you. I never thought it could be that intense,” Rey giggled, smiling into her pillow.

He was not the only giddy one.

They spoke some more, long into the night. It was late when Rey stopped talking, her breathing levelled and slowed as she slept and Ben, like before, observed her with a keen interest.

It was all too easy to pretend that she was lying next to him, that he had been the one to make her fly and he was the one to catch her afterwards, praising her as she regained her senses.

“Ben,” she whispered.

Ben had been noting something in his notebook, his muse had inspired him and he knew his second novel was on the horizon. Intent on listening to her breathing as he wrote, he looked up, surprised she had awakened. But she was still asleep, her lips curled up into a gentle smile and his name upon her lips.

He watched her curiously, smiling as she whispered his name once more.

His heart had never felt so full.

She was dreaming of him.

“I hope I dream of you, Rey,” he whispered, kissing his finger before he trailed it on the screen, circling her image in a would be heart.

Chapter End Notes

DOUBLE BEN CHAPTER—Were you surprised? Back to Rey in the next and when we next see Ben, he will be doing his job and fighting a fire...
Finding the balance between romantic/fluff/poetic lines and writing smut was a bit of a challenge but I think I got there.

As always, let me know what you thought, I love hearing from YOU.
Rey has an encounter with Snap Wexley and seeks comfort with her mother.

Ben and Rey are interrupted.

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Rey-London, England

Rey was flying, she felt like a brand new woman who was in charge of her sexuality. It was an awakening of the most delicious kind and she welcomed it with a new type of urgency, she wanted to experience it all despite how she guarded herself.

It was Monday and still she walked with a grace in her step and a lightness in her features. Both were products of how she spent her time with Ben over the weekend, something that still made her blush, days later.

Baring herself to Ben had been one of the most gratifying experiences of her life. Under his heated gaze, she came alive and there was no room for self-doubt, not while he looked upon her with nothing but pure adoration and deep longing.

There was a hunger in his eyes, it thrilled her as she knew when they met, he would devour all she was but she was more than willing, a sacrificial lamb for a mighty lion.

The intensity of it all was something she would never tire of, he guided her with ease and then with his voice filling her senses, she came undone and touched the sky.

With him, there was no insecurity, only acceptance and the longing to feel his hands upon her, the need to feel the warmth of his skin against her own was overwhelming and consuming.

She wanted him.

It was more than want, it was an ache within her, a piece of her empty and unfulfilled and only he could fill it.

That was only further cemented by her dreams. After the passionate date, she had fallen asleep, still nude and under Ben’s watchful eye. It was quick becoming something she found a deep comfort in.

The dreams that had accompanied that night were wildly amorous. In them, Ben laid claim to her, his scorching palms held her in place as she opened up to him, inviting him into her embrace. It was filled with the groans she had heard over Skype, his breathy moans sounded it all and they came together as one, time and time again.

When she awoke, she was perhaps even more flustered than the night before and so she allowed herself a cold shower before she went about her day, a woman now in tune with her sexual needs, with a voracious appetite that fancied all things Ben.
Work was a distraction.

The pavement burned below her feet, it was high noon and she was on her lunch break, traversing through the cobbled streets and thin, weaving alleys of East London in the direction of her mother’s pub. Most of her lunch breaks were spent there in the presence of her loved ones, only, these days, the place was absent of one, the quiet but beautiful man, her father.

Rey missed him terribly, but she knew the ache that she felt as his only child was nothing compared to what her mother endured. Jyn was a strong woman, one built from the salt of the earth; as of recently, she hid behind her brash humour more and too wide smiles, ones that were too wide to be genuine.

Now that Rey was in a similar position, she related to her in a way she had not before. All weekend, she had thought of ignoring her previous sentiments and running into Ben’s open arms, he would accept her with nothing but love with no judgement for her change of thinking.

It was a hard thing to accept, that perhaps her notions of love were wrong and based on dreams. Ben’s heart was true, when he looked upon her with those cedar eyes, so rich in colour, there was no doubt that he saw more than just her status as an omega. When he brought her to new heights with his voice, she was sure of his intent, already, he worshipped her and all she offered.

He saw only her.

It was intense, hotter than and perhaps just as dangerous as those flames he battled whenever he walked into fiery buildings. Perhaps he was symbolic of that, his heart the furnace that exuded the heated passion within.

Feeling morose, she checked her phone for any new messages, dodging commuters and rowdy football fans as they headed towards their locals in preparation for the day of football ahead. Donning her navy overalls, she was coated in grease and oil, her hands blackened but no one spared her a second glance.

That was until she rounded a corner, a street away from ‘The Rogue’ and collided with none other than Snap Wexley, who despite being Scottish, chose to wear an England top, it stretched over his bulging stomach, one accumulated from too many years of guzzling beer and snacking on pub food.

Before she fell to the cobbles, he steadied her; his meaty hands took purchase of her shoulders, clenching them too hard. He dug in so harshly, that she felt the crescent shaped indentions left upon her skin, despite the coverage of her overalls. Rey was quick to shift her weight backwards, recoiling from his touch as his fingers crept awfully close to her mating gland, his nail skimmed the edge of it.

“Are you not going to thank me, omega?” Snap muttered, stepping towards her once more.

Rey surveyed the scene, the alley was nearly empty save for the two of them, and she backed away from him until her back brushed against the red bricks of the establishment she found herself beside.

“Thank you for nearly knocking me over and then righting your mistake,” Rey rolled her eyes, the response far sharper than intended.

Despite her ability to fend off men twice her size, thanks to the observation of her mother throwing men out of the pub and a father insistent of teaching her self-defence alongside a trove of would be
uncles, she knew how an alpha could overpower someone if their temper was tested. She had seen it before, their physical strength was often unmatched and powered by their intense emotions and for once, she wished that someone were there to ward off the advances of Snap other than herself.

Would Ben rise up and protect her as an alpha should? Although she barely needed the protection, she appreciated the thought. There was very little speculation that Ben was a kind soul, thoughtful and aware of the world around him but she yearned to see him defend her and unleash some of that passion of his to defend his omega.

The thought flamed her, he was a powerhouse, built tall and wide and with such a physically demanding career, his body was well oiled and coiled deep with muscle.

“I don’t like your tone,” he narrowed his eyes and continued his pursuit of her until his hot breath fanned her face, it reeked of cigarette smoke and stale beer, Rey resisted the urge to vomit.

“I would advise you step back,” Rey warned, already fingering her work keys in her back pocket, she slid one between her fingers and squeezed hard, ready to strike.

His proximity made her uncomfortable, it was wrong. She was not his, her alpha was an ocean away and unknowing of the harassment she faced when confronted with Snap.

“What, is your so called alpha going to stop me? Or did you make him up as an excuse to keep me away?”

Rey was enraged and sick of his assumptions and constant beratement of her. Lowering her voice, she stood tall, chin upwards and lifted towards the sky.

“He is very real, I would hate to think of how even more grotesque you would look after he was finished with you, now back off,” she warned, revealing her hand, the silver of the keys caught the sun, blinding him momentarily.

Sighing, he retreated and she heaved in a breath, glad that the confrontation would not turn physical.

“You’ll change your mind, you smell different, I wonder how long it will be until you experience a heat and come begging for my knot?” He quipped, smiling, revealing his nicotine stained teeth.

Although stunned by his implication, Rey maintained a façade of coolness and barged past him, shouldering him, hard.

“Don’t hold your breath,” she hissed, willing her legs to carry her faster and further from him.

To her relief, he did not follow and soon the familiar orange door of ‘The Rogue’ greeted her. She shuffled in, wiping her slick brow with the back of her hand, she bypassed the coffee shop and sprinted up the stairs to the pub section of the establishment, she was in need of a stiff drink, despite the hour.

His words haunted her, she had never experienced a heat, her heavy dosage of suppressants saw to that and for that, she had always been thankful. She had heard of the ache, the need associated with it and the loss of control in some sense. She would not fall victim to her biology. Already, she was scheming of ways to up her medication, despite her being on the largest legal dose.

Sitting heavily on the bar stool, she propped her chin up with her hand, leaning forward.

“Are you alright, Stardust?” Her mother asked, her eyes were full of concern.
Rey Luna Andor smiled at the term of endearment; she was a woman of many names, even Ben had taken to calling her ‘sunshine,’ which admittedly coaxed something within her.

Shrugging, Rey peered at the selection of drinks in front of her despite always ordering the same thing.

Jyn frowned, leaning downwards and inhaled before tutting, and then turned to prepare a drink, a double no less.

“Do I have to kill, Snap Wexley?”

Rey chuckled; her mother was nothing if not overly protective of her only child. There was a seriousness in those hazel eyes, for there was nothing more terrifying than a protective mother who happened to be an alpha. Jyn knew of Snap’s tries to sway Rey and to win her affection but he had never overstepped as much as he had that day. He had touched her and she loathed it, he had soiled her with his unwanted fingers as they brushed along the edge of her mating gland.

He had touched her before Ben had, at least in the physical sense. Ben had caressed her heart in a way no one had before, his soul was undoubtedly half hers.

“No, but if he ever comes in here, feel free to throw him out,” Rey said calmly, her mother slid her drink across the sleek wood, all shiny and polished. She cradled it, her fingers curling around the coolness of the glass.

She inhaled the sharp fragrance of it, the sharp notes of the cranberry and the heavy scent of vodka. Still reeling from the idea that she could possibly go into heat, she drained her glass, smacking her lips as she relished the burn. She was scared and unsure how to broach the topic with Ben. Travelling in heat was banned and although she loved how things were progressing, she was still hesitant to step off that cliff, to venture into the deep end and give herself to Ben fully. There was still so much she wanted to know about him. Perhaps Snap had said it to spook her and he had succeeded.

Jyn eyed her warily, her lips curled into a sneer. Rey knew she was worried.

“He touched you,” she muttered, polishing off a drink of her own.

Perhaps mother and daughter were more alike than she thought, Cassian was an omega, someone Rey had went to for guidance. Where he was calm and collected, Jyn was all alpha, hot headed and with a passion that rivalled most.

“Just my shoulders, we bumped into each other and he tried to brush my mating gland, it was uncomfortable,” Rey admitted bitterly, eyes trained on the wood, it smelled of lemon cleaner, a familiar and reassuring scent.

For a moment, all was silent, only the muted chatter from the coffee shop below and whirr of the overhead fan sounded the room. Rey peeked a glance upwards. Jyn’s fists were white, her knuckles contrasting with the dark mahogany bar.

She was swallowing hard, gritting her teeth as she breathed through her nose; her eyes were shifty and narrowed.

“If I see him-”

“-Mum, it is okay,” Rey interrupted.
“No, Rey, it isn’t. He has no right to touch you, you shouldn’t have to deal with this harassment because you are an omega,” Jyn proclaimed, pouring herself another drink.

The first drink was settling in, her cheeks were red hot and so Rey denied another drink, mindful that she had a few more hours of work left. The buzz was there though; a nice lightness took hold of her limbs.

There was a truth in her mother’s words, one that could not be ignored. Omegas were often pursued despite their protests, it is why Rey admired Leia so much, although she was an alpha, she had campaigned for the rights of omegas. Before her burst on the political scene, alphas were often left alone in their pursuit of unmated omegas. After Leia, they could be prosecuted for unjust harassment although Rey was unsure if Snap fell into that category; his taunts were often just vocal.

“Have you told Ben about him?” Jyn asked through pursed lips.

Rey shook her head.

No, she did not want to worry him when he was a world away and essentially useless to offer any form of protection. It was unfair to burden him; she was one of those who often suffered in silence, preferring to ride the storm alone despite a wealth of support at her fingertips.

“You need to, Rey. He deserves to know,” Jyn urged, grasping her daughter’s hand, the hold was firm but also soft.

“I know,” Rey mumbled, holding her mother’s hand tight. Alphas were renowned for their ways to comfort and so she absorbed it all, finding herself relaxing with every breath taken.

They sat like this for a while, the silence was welcomed.

It was only later when Rey’s phone rang, did they separate. Lifting her phone out of her pocket, she smiled when she realised it was Ben calling her, requesting video.

“You are glowing, Stardust, I will leave you to it, although I would like his number, I want to get to know my future son in law,” Jyn winked, lifting a cloth before she disappeared into the back room.

Aware of her dirtied appearance, a sign of a rigorous morning of hard work, she attempted to fluff her hair from her face and lessen the oil smears that coated her chin and cheeks. Such effort only smeared them further and so she resigned herself to showing off the marks of her profession.

She was a proud grease monkey.

Tapping accept, the sight of Ben in uniform immediately met her. Although she could only see his shirt, it was navy and displayed a printed image of a fire badge with the precinct number of his fire station below.

Red suspenders contrasted with the navy blue of his tight tee, his biceps bulged and strained in it and her mouth grew dry, he was beautiful.

“Good morning from New York, Sunshine,” Ben winked, he sat back and it was apparent he was at work; he was in his father’s office.

She managed to muster her voice, the events of the day had weighed on her and the sight of him was almost too much.
She needed him more than she ever thought she would.

“Hey there, I love the uniform,” she tried to sound cheery, her mind filled with images of him in his gear. It was enough to get her hot and bothered and she was reminded once more of how he had guided her to climax.

“I can say the same about you, you are a dirty girl,” he quipped, smiling and gesturing towards her face, smeared in traces of black.

Rey’s cheeks flushed at the implication of his words; of course, he was referring to her being dirty for work but her mind wandered elsewhere. She wanted to be a dirty girl for him; she wanted him to soil her in ways and allow him to defile her with his wicked lips and magical hands.

“I am,” she agreed, biting her lip.

Ben sucked in a breath, obviously quite flustered by the notion. She felt brazen, spurred on by the fact that he had seen her bare and wet all for him, she wanted to see more of him.

Then she was confronted by her mother’s words, she had to tell him about Snap.

Looking at him once more, she settled into her seat.

“Ben-”

A booming ring silenced her; Ben immediately stood and looked at his phone.

“Sunshine, sorry, I have to cut this short. I need to go,” he said, all the while moving out of the room he had been in.

“A fire,” she mused aloud, although she had known what his job entailed, it had not quite sunk in really, the danger he faced. That most times when he answered a desperate call, his own life was put at risk.

She could not lose him, not when they had just found one another.

“Yes.”

“Be safe, please, for me,” she all but whispered the plea.

Ben gazed at her once more before the call disconnected.

“For you, always.”

Later at work, she found herself slacking; her hold on her Kylo Ren paperback was the only thing that offered any kind of reassurance as she anxiously awaited contact from Ben.

Chapter End Notes

So...you will be glad to hear that I plan for the next two chapters to be another DOUBLE BEN.

I need to research logistics of fire fighting but I will try to get the first chapter up on Tuesday.
Tuesday is my birthday.

If not, it will be up as soon as I can :D and please remember it is fiction and I will probably get things wrong.

As always, I want to hear from you!, it spurs me on <3
Fire

Chapter Notes

AVENGED SEVENFOLD-ROMAN SKY

As the embers rose through the Roman sky

Tell me were you calm when they took your life?

Just before you go, tell us how the heavens flow

Weightless evermore, as you walk beyond that door

Shine forever true

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Ben-New York, United States of America

The initial alarm died down soon after Ben ended the call with Rey. It was quickly replaced with the talk and workings of his colleagues as they prepared for the call, his father’s voice boomed above all.

The ringing of the bell had never stirred hot fear into him before, to Ben; it was a familiar constant of his life, a sound he had heard countless times over his sixteen years of service.

Never had he felt the crushing weight of uncertainty for what awaited him but Rey’s reaction had thrown him and instilled a sense of worry that was mostly foreign to him. With his name on her lips, he knew she was about to divulge something to him but she was silenced and no matter how much he wanted to hear what she was about to reveal, he could not continue the conversation. Duty called despite Rey being the one to call to his heart and soul. Everything he was or ever would be, responded to her in a way unseen by the rest of the human race.

It was then that he saw her distress, such a palpable response that he could have sworn he had felt it. It trickled into his mindset, those too wide eyes had taken on a shine with the promise of tears and her rosy lips quivered as she came to the realisation of what he was about to face. Rey was strong though and she had quickly caught herself in an attempt to shield him from her distress but he had seen the crack in her façade, even if it had only lasted a second.

His career was a saving grace to him; it was something he thrived in, a place where he belonged and where he called his colleagues his brother and sisters. They were all bound by fire and blood, all were steel that refused to bend, they fought against fire and very few were left untouched and unburned but together they went on.

But Rey, he was unsure if he could continue and evoke such dismay in her. If it were the other way round, he would be riddled with worry and sick to his stomach. His little Rey, her life in the balance due to a profession. It was maddening.

At thirty-four, he knew he was not as young as he had once been; he was not the fire shy boy who knew little of suffering or the young man who never ached. In the same line of thought, was the
notion that the years were steadily creeping up on him.

Perhaps he was excusing that he was entertaining the idea of leaving it all behind for a woman an ocean away.

One matter was certain, his life was no longer his own.

If he fell, a woman on the other side of the world would be left alone without her mate. It was unjustly and abhorrent to think about. That she would walk through life a solitary figure with only whispers of who her mate had been. That despite his sacrificing and heroics of his job, it would not balm her soul as it splintered in two, forever missing a piece and forever stained an ashy grey.

“Be safe, please, for me,” she had whispered, so quiet was her plea that it was no more than a ghost to haunt him but there was a power there, a brilliant motivation that stirred him.

He could not deny her a thing, his sun, whom burned with a passion that she guarded like the fierce hold on her heart. One day, he knew he would bask in her light and carefully gain her trust, she would open her arms and heart to him, only him, and he was willing to wait. Waiting was something he knew well, excelled in by no will of his own.

“For you, always,” was his promised reply.

He meant it, every cell in his body was responsive to her, she owned him, whether she knew that, he was unsure, but it did not change the matter or sentiment behind his every move.

Ben would do anything for her.

His mind was shadowed though, her haunted eyes the source behind such doubt in his ability to cope or succeed at his job.

Rationally, he knew he was overthinking and assuming the worst, which was never advisable. Although his job was hazardous, his reputation for his clear, quick thinking and precaution in even the most difficult situations was known over the city.

Most thought highly of him and his spark for his quick decision-making and ability to ensure the safety of his company and fellow fighters.

Over the years, he had gained a wealth of information, he had experienced it all and so he was confident going forward but not foolishly so, that he would risk arriving on scene and believing he could conquer all.

Ben was no god, some invisible enigma, just a man made of flesh and bone but his mighty alpha heart raged on and fuelled him.

He could not dupe himself into believing that it was enough to protect against hazards, he was human and despite his sharp mind and body, he was weak, all humans were in a sense. While some were stronger than others, all were small and insignificant when compared to the mighty power of the elements and he respected that. Others did not and it was their undoing.

Fire was both a giver and a taker, a roaring destructor who snarled and consumed all who dared to stand in its way. It crept and unleashed its dark smoke, quietly taking lives in its fatal path to the sky and beyond.

But Ben was a man falling in love; he was touching clouds and was more than prepared to swim across an ocean if he had to.
Love could terrify, love could start a fire and so he rivalled the element’s passion, it was a wicked stand off, man against chemical reaction.

Over the years, mistakes had been made; his choices were often caused by his emotions but he had learned from them, he carried each one close to his heart. It ensured he never failed in the same way again.

Rushing down the stairs with Rey’s eyes burned into his retinas, he decided then that he would need to evaluate all he thought he knew. Could he continue worrying her? Could he focus on his writing and live the rest of his days without regret for walking away?

For now, he needed to clear his mind of all distraction, even if that included Rey. There was a mindset he reclined into, a special place in his mind where all his experience was gathered and his body took on a new resolve, a determination that saw him through it all.

The noise was a trigger; a potent rush of adrenaline powered him forward as he went about the motions that were more muscle memory than skill.

Luckily, he was already half dressed in his turn out gear, the thick red suspenders held up his heavy, protective bunker pants. They were black, covered in reflective patches bordered in yellow, which ensured visibility in even the darkest of places.

The station was in full swing, everyone moved with a practiced finesse, long ingrained into their minds. Together, they were a well-oiled machine that worked in time and efficiently with a speedy output, one of the finest in the district.

Observing the situation, Ben raced to the changing room; a small space but no one bumped shoulders. His spot was by the door, his locker already opened by someone who thought to aid him and so he stepped into his boots. They were leather and heavy like most of his gear, steel toed and liberally in-soled, they offered a great deal of protection from falling debris.

Beside Ben, Gwen was fast at work, already ahead of him in her outfitting, it was a friendly competition between the two and so it encouraged him to fasten his movements. After shrugging on his bunker coat and patting it down, he pulled on his gloves then smoothed on his hood. The hood was invaluable, beige in colour; it was fire resistant and had saved his ears more times than he could count.

It offered coverage and shielded his head and neck from any errant flames that waded too close. Next was his breathing apparatus, his air supply. The mask was tight against his skin, perfect in conserving and containing the fresh, invaluable air. Hoisting the air supply tank, he shouldered it and locked the holster in place before connecting the tubes. He adjusted the pressure gauge and regulator, as he was not in need of its air, not while he was still at the firehouse. On top of it all, he donned his black helmet, which proudly displayed his precinct number.

He secured the chinstrap and ushered the visor downwards.

All of his preparation took just over a minute.

Gwen winked at him, despite finishing first, Hux was not far behind and even Bazine was prepared in a timely manner.

As a ladder company, they were tasked primarily with search and rescue. The others in the firehouse were the engine company who were charged with securing a viable water supply and clearing the space around a fire hydrant. After that, they would release the hoses and battle the
flames, the essential service of a firefighter.

Moving quickly, they left the changing room, Gwen led them and they found Han sitting in front of their mapped walls, suggesting expedited routes to ‘Top Gun’s’ driver, Mitaka.

Ben pocketed his talkie but listened carefully to the voices around him, Han’s eyes found his own.

“Ten-seventy-seven,” he uttered, his thin lips formed into grim line. It was a weighty code.

The code was not too common. High rise multiple dwelling fire. It was a nasty call, one thick with casualties. It was precarious, something that demanded immediate attention to preserve life but also one taken with extreme caution.

It hit too close to what his father had experienced that day back in two thousand and one. Every level cleared and scaled meant an ascent up into the clouds, a long way from the stability and relative safety of the ground below.

There would be troves of trucks on site; their ladder company alone would be one of five ladder companies on scene next to a plethora of other specialised units.

The father and son shared a moment, eyes locked with one another. Ben was breathing hard, already experiencing the wild rush of adrenaline that would assist him through what was to come.

After he accepted the code with a brisk nod of his head, he walked to his father’s side and kneeled, Han’s hand found purchase on his shoulder, he squeezed hard and then tapped Ben’s helmet.

“You know what to do, kid,” Han said, ushering him onwards.

His father’s faith in him knew no end but still, there was nothing like directing your only child into danger, not when Han knew of the sacrifice and risks of doing so more than most.

Ben squeezed his father’s hand and then he was flying, he ran to ‘Top Gun’ and pulled himself inside. It was a tight squeeze; normally the bulk of their gear would be stored until they were on site but not in situations like these. He sat between Phasma and Bazine and across from Hux and Thannison. Bazine brushed her knee against his, looking upon him with wanting eyes though heavily masked. Ben stilled, shuffling his leg away and scooted closer to Gwen who accommodated him without a word.

“Here we go,” Mitaka shouted and ‘Top Gun’ came to life, the sirens blared and Ben closed his eyes as he levelled his breathing.

He entered the mind space of a fire fighter.

They were on the move; the truck weaved in traffic and darted past commuters. Gwen was shouting above the noise, assigning roles and rattling off the details she knew of the situation.

From what they could discern, there were confirmed civilians inside of the blaze on floors nine and eleven, it was an apparent arson but it had not been confirmed. It left a bitter taste in his mouth, to think of a monster who could spread such visceral hate, but he squashed it and entered the state of calm once more.

Ben’s sights shifted and he hoped their response time had been efficient enough to perhaps guide people out, all the while, maintaining a sense of order as the engine company doused the flames.

It was decided that Hux, Bazine and Thannison would work the ladder and Gwen and Ben would
make the climb the old-fashioned way, elevators were not an option and so the flights of stairs would suffice.

Already, Ben was sweating, the gear was a considerable weight but it was necessary, each item was essential and increased his chances of continued life. The climb was always something he excelled at, between him and Gwen, their success rate of managing to guide people from the destruction was above average.

Luckily for all, the drive had only taken two minutes, Ben had counted. Every second was worth something, it all mattered, those seconds most would take for granted could mean the difference between life and death.

Exiting the truck, Ben traversed through the crowd that had gathered, it was always a sorry sight, people screaming for the ones left behind inside, others cried and begged the first responders to do something, to do anything.

It was always hard to endure but he knew had to keep his mind focused. Battalion chiefs were on site as well as a special operations battalion chief who was hard at work, instructing all whom had gathered.

Ben knew Old Ben Kenobi well, the chief was close with his father and mother and once they caught sight of each other, he ushered them forward. His namesake was quick to instruct him and before he patted his back and left, he told him to stay safe.

They shared some words, they were much the same as Gwen’s which she had listed off in the truck due to her having been in constant contact with people on scene.

There were other companies but theirs had been the first ladder company to arrive, Bazine, Hux and Thannison were already at work, gathering their supplies as they evaluated the situation but it was Gwen and Ben who approached the inferno first.

Gazing upwards, Ben could see that the fire had ravaged the upper floors. The hazy blue sky was stained black. Most had been lucky to escape but he knew they were souls on floors nine and eleven, ones that were depending on him.

Lowering his visor once more, he motioned to Phasma and the pair entered, cautious to their surroundings, they walked with care.

The lower floors were mostly free of smoke and clear, it made their race up the stairs easier but with every floor passed, the heat and slithers of smoke increased, slowing them down.

Ben heard it all.

The wicked symphony of splintering wood, the hissing of burned plastic and the screams of people trapped and in need of rescue or a glimmer of hope. They were loud and could not be ignored.

Then there was the quiet roar that fire emitted, a harsh sound like death, it was cold but hot, a chilling and present promise of violence.

The pair shared a knowing glance as they traversed through the thick plumes of smoke; Ben regulated his fresh air intake, adjusting the gauge to an appropriate level. He sucked in deep lungfuls, his chest heaved with the exertion of his movement.

By the time they had reached nine, they had located the problem; a blockage of the stairway, a fallen handrail deterred any escape, as it lay pinned against the door, locking all of those behind it
away from freedom. Booming thumps, frantic knocks and desperate shouts sounded the space, all the while, the inferno raged on and Ben grew hotter, thick black smoke crept out from under the door.

Between the two of them, they managed to dislodge the heavy metal structure, as soon as he cleared it; he noticed the throb of his upper arms and shake of his hands. It had been a trying task and he knew how important the conservation of his energy was.

Opening the staircase door, they were barraged by a flood of bodies, all eager to find their way out. One woman wrapped her arms around Ben, her tears rolled off on to his coat as she mumbled something he could not translate. She rolled her rosary across his chest in line with the cross of Christ before huddling behind him with a quiet thank you.

Order was important, with the sense of panic; people would make mistakes or act out of character. Ben knew, despite there being people on the eleventh floor, that the ones who had escaped the ninth needed a calm leader to guide them to safety despite the floors below being free of destruction. Trampling was a common thing, self-preservation would kick in and someone could easily be left behind or lost in the hurried activity.

Reaching for his walkie-talkie, he brought it to his mask and pressed the transmission button.

“Ninth floor blockage has been cleared; we have civilians ready for accompaniment downwards. How is the situation on eleven? Over,” he said.

“Ten-four, we need you to investigate, Ladder Company are still unable to broach the higher level by scaling,” Hux replied, he was panting, obviously exerting himself outside.

Obviously, it was too dangerous to engage from the outside, the equipment was useless if the flames were not doused properly.

“Ten-five, over,” Ben replied, sparing a glance at Gwen who was calming the people around her, assuring they would take them away from the horrors they must have witnessed.

Someone had to go on.

His best friend knew this also and for a moment they were frozen, Gwen’s eyes were heated blue under her mask, filled with determination.

“Ben, escort them down. I will be right behind you,” Gwen said, squaring her shoulders back as she walked to the door, peering upwards.

Visibility was low, the space hot but still they heard voices.

Ben clenched his fist by his side and gazed once more at the people who were now hysterical and looking to him for rescue.

This was against protocol. The two were never to separate, it had been their own personal philosophy since they were fresh faced eighteen year olds who did not quite understand the gravity of the career they had chosen.

Ben shook his head once.

Gwen rounded upon him, standing taller than his impressive height.

“Solo, get these people to safety, I will radio my progress throughout,” Gwen shouted, already she
had stepped towards the door again, she gave him no room to argue and Ben bit his tongue.

It hurt him, to see her disappear into the darkness but he had a job to do. Surely more companies had arrived and were tackling the spreading fire from all sides.

Maybe others were already making progress with gaining access to the higher levels; maybe he was reaching and consoling himself. It did not matter, he had to move.

Chewing his lip, he swallowed hard and then burst into action, urging people downwards on the narrow staircase.

With very little smoke and high visibility, the journey downwards was easier, the incline a relief to his aching frame.

Thankfully, half way down he was met by more firefighters, there was two of them and immediately he tasked them with the responsibility of transporting everyone outdoors.

A child brushed Ben’s leather glad fingers in passing, eyes reminiscent of Rey’s, the shine was familiar, the unshed tears that accompanied fear.

Ben coaxed the child onward, a small boy whose skin was smattered in soot.

Turning quickly, Ben picked up his talkie and realised then that Gwen had not updated him with her progress.

His heart sank.

“Gwen, ten-twenty,” Ben pleaded, already making fast work of rushing the stairs once more.

There was no answer.

“Gwen, your location,” he tried again, although code was something they used often, it was not necessarily required.

Ben was desperate and clinging to the last shred of hope inside of him.

Nothing.

The silence and occasional staticky crackle was more than worrisome, Gwen was always vocal, her voice loud and booming as she navigated through life and he needed to hear it, he had to.

Nothing.

Voices were behind him but none could keep up with him.

He knew what he had to do.

As he reached the ninth level door, he stopped, catching his breath as he inhaled sharply through his nose and adjusted his mask, righting it.

The smoke was worse than before, all was lost to the ashy plumes that were darker than night itself.

Stilling, he peered upwards, the amber hue lit up the roof, the crude scent of death lay up ahead, he knew this. The previous screams had died down, only faint whimpers called to him now, far fewer than before.
Before he moved onwards, he thought of the drastic change in his line of thinking.

Days before, he had questioned if as he battled flames or walked through the steaming caresses of smoke, he would think of Rey.

The truth was, he had not, not until the foreign feel of his own fear had entombed him and confronted him to face the possibility of being lost to the world without never having really known or touched her.

He thought of his mate waiting in her garage awaiting his call, her anxiety bleeding heavily at the edges of her psyche.

He imagined her counting the seconds as she busied herself with her hands on work, losing herself in oil smears and gears but not quite focusing, crippled by her worry as it manifested into something physical.

Gulping hard, he mustered his courage and ignored the sting of his fresh tears, he blinked them away as they obscured his vision but a stubborn few remained. Raising his hand, he steadied himself on the doorframe, knowing the real and potential dangers that lay ahead, ones he would face when he stepped over the threshold.

A safe return was not promised.

Rey would be the one to power him on, his light, his shining sun in the suffocating darkness; she would keep his heart true and guide him home.

With her name upon his lips, he traced his hand over his heart and then moved upwards. The smoke engulfed and enveloped him in black, the unknown dragged him forward with wispy tendrils that were hot but also so cold.

Chapter End Notes

I managed to post on my birthday as promised (Tuesday the 10th) and thank you to all who have wished me a happy birthday, I am awed.

I will say that I took a lot of liberties with this chapter with the whole process of firefighting but it is fiction so I am glad we can play about a bit? Don’t judge me too harshly.

So, I would just like to say that I know we all want these two to be together. Perhaps I do more than anyone but a few things need to happen first but TRUST me when I say, the wait is far shorter than you imagine.

Thank you for reading, I want to hear from you! You all spur me on.
Reaper

Chapter Notes

AVENGED SEVENFOLD-ROMAN SKY

As the embers rose through the Roman sky
Tell me were you calm when they took your life?
Just before you go, tell us how the heavens flow
Weightless evermore, as you walk beyond that door
Shine forever true

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Ben-New York, United States of America

As he ventured forward, the stability of the structure was one of Ben’s main concerns, his boots slapped the concrete steps, the echo reverberated the length of the staircase. The sounds were secondary only to the crackling, popping and rushing tunes of the roaring flames above.

It was clear that the old building lacked an updated ventilation unit and so naturally, his mind wondered to what else was against regulation. He was bitter, to think that the building lacked common devices such as refurbished sprinkler system that could have alleviated the struggles of all who had ran for their lives or minimised the extent of the damage from the fire’s warpath.

The world was full of greed and those without the means suffered more than most, their lives were nothing but collateral damage and inconsequential next to the meagre cost that was required to upgrade the building. It did not help that Ben could scent, despite the circumstances, that most of inhabitants were betas, the lower class in society and often looked down upon with a rife kind of prejudice.

It was a fight for another day.

Any lapse in his concentration could mean the difference of life and death; it was a substantially precarious situation.

It was fast becoming near impossible to see, the visibility going forward was severely hindered by the growing smoke that filtered around him as he pressed on to the higher floor. It was sweltering; he sweated profusely and peered around, hoping, waiting, to catch even the smallest glimmers from Gwen’s gear.

The climb to the tenth floor was the most difficult, it was straining but by now, the adrenaline flooded his system and carried him through it and he felt powerful once more.

His sight was not needed to adjust the airflow; he increased it, filling his lungs with fresh air that was untainted by his surroundings. On the final step to the tenth, there was an audible crack below his foot and so he sidestepped quickly and bent, his leather glad fingers brushed the hot concrete
step until he fingered the source.

Curling his fingers, he brought the pieces of Gwen’s destroyed talkie closer to his face. It explained the lack of communication and yet it brought no form of relief. Gwen was a diligent firefighter, more so than most, and it seemed almost impossible that she would make a mistake and risk her life in such a way.

The device was vital in detailing her location, a way of summoning assistance for when she found herself in danger. The pieces dropped the floor below him as he dropped his hand to his side and breached the tenth floor, willing his legs to move faster.

All the while, he was vigilant of his surroundings. In the stairwell, windows had been shattered and so smoke escaped outwards, clearing the space substantially as his boots sloshed through pools of water. Despite the small reprieve from the smoke, he was met by the scorching heat and promise of flames and so he adjusted his mind once more and lifted his talkie to his face.

After pressing the transmission, he dealt the words that would tear a man’s heart in two.

“Hux, I need assistance on the tenth and eleventh floor. Gwen…Gwen and me were separated and she went onwards.

For a moment, all was silent and only the sounds of his own heavy breaths and crackling remained.

“The other companies are coming from the east, they are nearly there. Ben, please-”

Ben pocketed the device, cutting Hux’s words off. He was unsure if he was going to tell him to continue and save his mate or retreat but it did not matter, he could not let his emotions consume him. If he did, there was a real chance of an error being made.

That did not go to say he was completely turned off and numb to it all. His attachment to Gwen, his closest friend, obviously played a part in his thought processes, it was what made him disregard his own safety and to continue despite the risks.

If she fell victim to the flames, there would be no healing him. Then there was Rey, she drove him to act carefully and with a rationality to see him through the plague.

Amber lit up the tight space, the gratified walls were painted in soot as wallpaper peeled and curled from the surface. Ben raged on and entered ten.

Cries broke him from his reverie as a slew of people appeared in front of him, all were flushed a brilliant red but cloaked in black and perspiration. There were two of them, two women and one was looking worse for wear, her movements were sluggish and slower than the other’s were.

Ben rushed towards them and they did the same, racing towards the man in black and yellow.

“The other firefighter, where is she?” Ben shouted above the noise.

A woman, eyes rimmed red and bloodshot, answered him. On closer inspection, the burns she received were visible, her skin bubbling and blistering already as the body tried valiantly to fight the damage and prevent infection.

“She’s stuck; the beam of our ceiling fell as she cleared our route. We tried to help, we really did but she told us to leave,” the woman cried, sobbing them as she heaved, coughing violently.

Ben’s heart skipped a beat and nausea took hold of him. It was worse than he had ever imagined,
Shaking his head, he pointed behind him.

“Go, there should be more people behind me.”

He wasted no more time and rounded the stairs, breathing hard as he ascended eleven. While he did, he was still wary but the image of Gwen stuck amongst flames was enough to fasten him.

There were flames now, they licked almost every surface and he had to sidestep more than once to avoid brushing against them to avoid a licking. Peering around, he squinted as he picked up his talkie for a final time.

“Gwen is down on eleven, she is stuck. What are the status of the other companies?”

“They are right behind you.”

It offered some relief.

Ben walked through the lit up space and faced the element head on, he did so without fear, he had shed it, as it was useless to him now. In this new area, he stood to conquer. Scattered around the hollowed, gnarled space, were victims who had succumbed to the torrid and suffocating smoke. They lay in the belly of the beast whose hungry flames roared for more and he appraised each of the fallen, hoping for the faint signs of life despite knowing that he would likely find none. Smoke inhalation was the major cause of death in fires, something he knew too well, it gripped its victims thick and fast. Like a reaper, it creeped and snatched their consciousness in minutes with its inky tendrils.

It was a sight of horror, a scene that reeked of death and destruction but also a strange peacefulness.

Ben gulped hard as he pushed forward; most who lay at his feet were curled up into the foetal position, they left the earth as they had come into it and he did not miss the irony. A position that once shielded them, the one they had developed in for months inside their mother’s womb, was now their final pose. Instead of bearing life, it welcomed death. Ben gulped hard, making sure to kneel as he quickly checked for pulses, but none were found and so he prayed to whatever was above, that they were at peace now and free of pain as they walked in light, free from the darkness that had carried them away.

Throughout it all, there was the possibility that he could find Gwen, limp and devoid of all life so he continued his search, knowing each step taken could lead him to her.

“Gwen,” Ben hollered, it was muffled by the mask he wore but it was loud enough.

“Ben,” she answered his voice; her quiet call rang from one of the apartments.

With his hope rejuvenated, he raced and followed her quiet response, he passed the open door and found her soon after. As soon as he entered, he raised his arm, covered in his bulky bunker sleeve, to shield his eyes from the new brightness and heat of the flames that snarled and danced around him. In the middle of the room, lay Gwen sprawled on her back and pinned to the ground. Like the stairwell windows, the room’s windows were smashed and scattered about the floor and the room was doused in errant sprays of water, which kept the worst of the flames maimed and tamed. Ben was not stupid, he knew of the threat that faced them. A barrage of fire was still active and teetered closer; they taunted the two and hissed its nasty promise of death.

After crossing the room, he dropped to his knees by her side and quickly accessed the damage, a
plethora of similar situations he had seen and experienced, flooded his mind. Still, he choked and fisted his side when he realised the bleak outlook with only himself on scene. The beam was strewn across her legs but it was her left leg that was contorted, horribly broken and he knew the slim chances of her escaping the building were drastically reduced.

Gwen knew this too, he could see it through her blackened mask and the way she made no movements to adjust or free herself. It was as if all the fight that usually radiated through her had been sucked away like the breaths of those they had been unable to save.

Gone was the courageous alpha, a drained woman had taken her place whose spark was flickering, almost extinguished.

No.

No, if she would not fight, he would do so for her.

“No, we are going to get you out of here; the others are right behind me.”

Quickly standing, he grasped the beam and bent his knees, attempting to lift the offending item. All of his strength was honed into the action, his arms ached and strained below his gear and his back burned, it was his body screaming from the exertion but still he carried on.

The beam barely moved, shaking his head he tried again, not willing this to beat him, it could not, it meant so much, it was everything.

Again, he tried, despite his trembling hands and a heart that raced so hard he was sure it would stop then.

And again.

His entire body was sore, his muscles bulged and strained and still it would not move, when it had fallen, the structure surrounding it had crumbled and so it was weighed down with a chunk of concrete on each end of it.

Ben refused to believe it.

Her fate was not solidified; the memories of their life together blinded him and they pushed him to shun all logical reason as he fought, all he had ever learned was forgotten as it urged him to leave, that she was beyond even his help.

Ben kept trying despite Gwen’s protests; he ignored her even when the end of the beam fell upon his own arm, crushing it momentarily. There was a tight snap, a sharp twinge as he rolled over and dislodged himself out. Now, he had doomed them both, realistically, he knew his arm was broken but he was oblivious to it, untouched by the deep pain. Moving again, he refused to fail her in this grievous way. Ignoring the now useless arm, he manoeuvred with his right and curled his arm around the beam, he bent and in doing so, he brushed his broken arm against the wood. Like a wounded animal, he dropped back to the ground, gritting his teeth as a pang of wretched agony finally hit him.

“Ben, stop!” Gwen screamed after the weakened attempt had sent him flat onto his back. Like her, he lay sprawled, exhausted and dizzied.

Breathing hard, Ben sat up, dodging flames as he did so. With his good hand, he leaned over and shuffled, claiming the spot beside her. When he did, he grasped her hand and she squeezed, tightly, just as he had always known her to.
“You need to leave, Ben,” were her haunting words and again he shook his head so hard that his neck ached, he could not entertain her plea.

They were a team ever since he could remember; he had known her all of his days and that meant he could not imagine a day when she would not be there to greet him. He gazed down at the proud woman, someone who succeeded in life and whose strength and courage raged on.

“You have someone waiting for you. I have made peace with this. Don’t make me beg, Ben, please.”

It was something that hurt him deeply; it was never his intention to reduce his wounded and fallen sister, his closest friend, to a beggar. But she asked too much of him, it was a task he could not follow through with even if it was the last thing she would ever ask of him.

Ben sobbed then; his broad shoulders quaked as he cried, the sounds were inhuman and wrenched straight from his heart. A man was broken and ached so horribly that he was fast losing his humanity as he hurled his primal screams and cursed above. The troves of tears became one with the sweat that rolled off every inch of him, each undistinguishable from the other.

Shamefully so, for a second, he reconsidered it. There was an opportunity to walk out of the building that was not so easily extended to Gwen. With one final race down the stairs, he could drop to his knees outside, tear his mask off, and breathe in all the fresh air he desired. With little effort, he could cleanse the day from his skin with soap and water but he could not erase the ache that would riddle him if he did so. For he could go to his mate and claim her but Hux and Gwen would never do the same, especially if he left her. Leaving her meant cementing her fate in stone and sentencing her to die. He could not bear such a burden.

Although he knew what he had to do, he feared that he was not strong enough to do it.

It was Rey he thought of then, he was sure she would begrudge him for his choice but he hoped she would come to understand it and cherish the brief time they had together.

Making his decision, his resolution sure and true, he tightened his hold on Gwen’s hand and appraised her, his closest friend.

It was similar to the time that he had fallen from a tree. There were seven and both tall, which only extended the invincibleness they felt. They were young and nothing could touch them, they could fly upwards and climb to the moon if they so pleased.

Ben’s family estate was home to a trove of trees, towering oaks and sprawling cedars and so they picked the tallest one and proclaimed whoever reached the top would rule the world.

It had been naïve of them but their childlike minds were set and so they raced, making quick work with their climbs. Both used their long limbs to their advantage but both were reckless, wild in their movements.

Ben fell.

Winded and sure that he was about to face death as he gasped for treasured breaths, he lay there under the clouds and watched the sun. The lush grass had cushioned his fall but to a boy of seven who had never experienced having the air knocked out of him, he was fearful but oddly accepting of his fate. After all, the final thing he would witness was the bright gift that was the sun. European starlings had flown overhead and he watched them as he struggled for breath, admiring their pretty plumage with a watery grin.
Gwen’s descent was quicker than her ascent, the girl raced to his side; his little inhales were like tiny death rattles. Despite her own fear, Gwen had taken his hand and called out for help, mindful of the nannies, servants and groundskeeper who walked around the estate.

She screamed until her throat was raw and she could not do so anymore, her pleas soon came out like the wispy gasps from Ben’s quivering lips as he fought to inhale.

Throughout it all, her hold on his hand was iron clad and never wavered. She sat by his side, whispering for him to breathe, for him to stand so they could continue on with the adventures they had planned for their lives.

Even when the rain fell and the footfalls of a flustered nanny approached, she held on.

So, he would do the same for her.

He would hold on and hope for help but if none came, he would not leave her, he would stay by her side until their breaths were no more.

“You never did listen to a word I said, stubborn, just like your mother,” Gwen cried out, her head fell into his lap as he moved closer to her, sheltering her upper body with his.

“You love that about me,” was Ben’s response, a watery smile played on his lips as he inspected his arm.

It was most definitely broken and the pain lanced him, it was a reminder of his rash and frantic struggle to free her but if he was faced with it all again, he would have mirrored the same choices.

The adrenaline was slowly ebbing away and so he felt the deep trickles of pain but it was nothing compared to what he faced then. The fire raged on but the spray from the hoses outside fought them and in turn, drenched the pair.

It was a thin line, the elements battled for dominance and the pair shivered, alternating between hot and cold convulsions.

Ben was unsure if he knew what they were waiting for, rescue or death.

Together, they would face whatever was their fate, it was one more final adventure.

Fate was a curious thing; Rey had long denied joining the service because of her belief in fate to bring them together while Ben had quickly dismissed that option. Had he been wrong the entire time? Did fate present itself in the form of Match’s ‘Mating Service’?

Now he hoped such a power existed. That if it was truly his fate, to die amongst fire, he hoped fate would be so kind to introduce him to Rey again. He would take whatever it offered, any form of manifestation. if it meant he could know her and love her for all and who she truly was.

Staring into the flames, he dreamed of a new life as their souls, the same as they were now, searched for and found the other again. Perhaps, an afterlife existed where he would wait for her and be the one to welcome her after her time on earth ended.

It did not matter; he just wanted to see her again.

That was what he clung to as he closed his eyes, a quiet acceptance of what was to come.

“Hey!”
Ben’s eyes snapped open to the site of a company storming the room. There were six of them, three doused the flames around the pair with the hand held fire extinguishers that had been placed throughout the building and the other three quickly accessed the problem of Gwen’s predicament and set about moving the beam.

With three men there, the beam was easily manoeuvred, Gwen screeched as the pressure on her mangled leg was removed. Ben kept holding on despite the fact that he was sure she would rip his hand off, he owed her this.

It killed him to see her in pain, especially after what they had experienced together.

They had brazenly stared death in the face.

They could do anything now.

Ben began to stand, hissing as he felt the full extent of the damage to his arm and another firefighter looked his way and offered him a hand midway up to help him rise.

“We need to hoist her up, it is going to hurt but we need to move, now,” the tallest of the six said and Ben felt his desperation and his urgency.

Only then did Ben release his hold on Gwen’s hand.

The man kneeled and pulled her upwards, she screamed again but did not fight the move, after some adjustment, she was taut against him and they were on the move, quickly darting through the halls as water bellowed and sprayed around them.

Ben stayed close behind; following the route, it was not the one he had taken but was clearer than his one. That side of the building had been gladly tamed of the fire before it had spread. It was a quick ascent despite Gwen’s condition, she clutched to the man, her eyes tightly shut.

Once they reached the ground level, other first responders swarmed them and Gwen was promptly laid out on a waiting stretcher. The crowd cheered and Ben noticed the two that Gwen had saved in front, paramedics were ushering them away but still they had waited with bated breath for their hero.

Although they had been saved, Ben recalled the slumped and motionless bodies of those who were unfortunate enough to have lost their lives. If it was an arson, Ben hoped for penance and whoever was responsible to suffer the weight of their actions.

Weaving through the crowd, he followed Gwen’s stretcher to the ambulance, cradling his own arm. By then, Gwen was quiet and luckily freed from some of her gear.

Ben shed his mask and tucked it under his good arm as he sat in the ambulance and watched his dearest friend. Hux was likely busy, continuing the struggle with extinguishing the last of the dying flames, no doubt aiding the engine company in anyway he could.

As the ambulance began to move and blared its sirens, Gwen looked upon him.

“You didn’t leave me.”

Ben sat back, allowing the paramedic to examine his arm.

“Of course I didn’t.”
Many hours later, Ben made it home. His arm had indeed been broken but apart from that, he was deemed fit and healthy despite everything he had endured. The tests had dragged, he sat through many but he was quiet, tired and morose. Gwen was faring well, Hux had made it to the hospital and she was being kept in, as surgery was needed to remedy some of the significant damage to her leg. Ben had been lucky in that regard.

Leia had driven him home, the white cast on his arm would have made driving difficult and with the painkillers, it was completely out of the question. It took some time for him to escape his mother’s clutches who had insisted she stayed with him. He refused, preferring his own company after particularly draining jobs, each took their toll and he would remember this one above all.

Exhausted, he collapsed in bed, much too tired to shed his clothes but still, he reached for his bag pack and rifled through it until he located his phone and plucked it up.

Yawning, Ben curled in on himself; Callie’s purrs lulled him as she settled beside him. He pressed the screen to call Rey, his tired eyes fluttered shut as he struggled to stay awake.

“Ben!”

“I’m okay, sunshine, I’m okay,” he whispered.
Rey-London, England

The wait had been agonising.

Distraction was something she thrived and excelled in but all of her previous ways of coping had failed her. The sense and saving form of escapism was crushed, her hands shook too much and her mind refused clearance. Ben’s safety and the potentially precarious situation he was in, consumed her.

For a while, she carried on. With slick palms and far from dexterous hands, she threw herself on her creeper and rolled under a client’s car. Flat on her back, she worked until her hands were washed black and the smell of oil filled her nostrils, so much so, it was the only thing she could taste. A crude sense of dread enveloped her, it coiled deep in her gut and she wanted to tear it out with her soiled fingertips until there was no more but nothing she did could balm it.

Only contact from Ben would ease her fear.

Not even her treasured paperback, filled with the moving words that had been her lifeline for six years since its publication could calm her. The faceless man, one who hid behind a fake name, Kylo Ren, had been a source of comfort, a companion who lacked an image. His voice though, his words spoke volumes and sometimes she imagined that he was the one whispering those intense and insanely passionate lines to her as she opened her heart to the idea of love, quite like the opening of his pages. He lay his longing and loneliness down on them and now, six years later, she hoped that he was no longer alone.

She thought back to Ben and whispered the words of a man who she felt connected to in ways she hoped that would mirror there with Ben.

The rational part of her mind, unblemished by biased instinctual feelings, knew that Ben was a professional with nearly two decades of experience in his chosen career. In that time, as far as she knew, he was successful in navigating through risky and life threatening situations and so she trusted that he was well versed in ensuring his own personal safety.

Everyday, men and woman fought for the lives of others and Ben was just one of those, she could not expect the worst every time he answered a call and left her to run off to a place that required his valued expertise.

Selfishness came to mind, despite her only knowing him a matter of days; she knew that in a way, his life and the rest of his days belonged to her. It was the same in regards to her own life, no matter how they went forward or how much time they spent separated; a part of her was undoubtedly forever his.

It was why she could not ask him to leave his career behind, although she felt some right to it. Her own peace of mind was inconsequential in comparison to his passion and love for his work. It was a matter of finding a way to healthily manage her own doubts and aversion to his service.

Still, every breath tasted like oil and ash, she envisioned him wading through smoke with an inferno at his back and it was enough to send her too into the abyss.
In that darkness, she was lost.

Sucking in a deep, shaky breath, she kicked her feet and sailed out from underneath the car. It was a job well ahead of schedule and so she allowed herself a moment of reprieve as her anguished mind manifested its pain in a physical way.

Rising up, she grabbed a rag and plucked at her hands but only dirtied them further. In a daze, she walked to the small restroom nestled in the back of the garage and leaned heavily on the sink. It was once porcelain white but after years of use and some neglect from the previous owner, it was now stained yellow with mucky stains that refused movement no matter how hard she tried.

Curling her fingertips around the cool surface, she closed her eyes and steadied herself, unwilling to face her image in the mirror ahead of her. Overreacting was something foreign to her; normally Rey was a grounded and thoughtful person. Unused to feeling so incredibly helpless or irrational, she worried her bottom lip until she tasted a sharp, copper tang.

Finally, she went about the notions of turning the water on, the old plumbing grumbled as it came to life, it took a minute for the water to fade from a chilly cold to hot, the kind that threatened to blister your skin red.

In a way, she was numb to it as she wet her hands and lathered them in soap, the fragrant, citrus scent was familiar and so she scrubbed, her fingers burned under the scorching flow but still she worked her hands, long after the remains of oil slithered down the plughole. Hot steam accumulated around her, condensing on the mirror and bathed her in a warm embrace.

It was only after she tasted salt, did she realise she had began crying, the tears flowed freely then.

“He’ll be okay,” she mumbled, jerking her neck upwards as she finally regarded herself in the mirror.

Tiny cracks chasmed throughout it, all were vivid and small splinters but they did not affect the overall image of her but it was reminiscent of how she felt. The cracks were showing, her dull eyes without light were rimmed pink and puffy.

“Peanut, stars, what are you doing?” Finn cried from behind her, she jumped, stepping away from the sink as he rushed in.

Suddenly aware of her actions and no longer dazed, her eyes fell to her boots. Moving to the sink, he turned off the hot water tap and instead filled the sink full of cold water until some sloshed over the rim. Hesitantly, he took hold of her pink hands, still hot from the scalding.

It was only then did she register the pain and followed him willingly when he dipped them beneath the surface and drenched them in coldness. Hissing, she looked to her closest friend as he tried, in vain, to mask his concern.

“Ben…he is fighting a fire. I…I know he will be okay but I cannot help but expect the worst. We have just found each other and I know I’m overreacting but I can’t lose him,” she whispered.

Now that she had spoken the words aloud, they were cemented in a sense. They hung heavy in the air and she realised just how desperate she sounded.

“Rey, you’re allowed to be worried about him. Don’t apologise for feeling.”

After wrapping his arms around her, he rocked, lulling them. The silence that followed was welcomed, it gave her time to assess her mind and fill it with hope.
Ben would be okay, fate was not that cruel. It would not tear him away from her after bringing them together in the form of ‘Match’s Mating Service.’

That kind of cruelty was rife in the world but she held out and chose to believe in what would happen. Ben would call her when he was finished with the job and she would laugh at herself for doubting his promise to her, that he would be safe.

Yes, he promised he would be safe for her and she trusted in him fully.

Wiping the tears away with a quick wipe of her hand, damp with cool water, she shook her head and clung to Finn. It all seemed so silly now, a foolish lapse in her processing. The threat had seemed so real; it had hooked its scorching tendrils in her mind and left a foggy haze in its wake, her reverie only broken by Finn’s reassuring words.

Still, she would not feel whole until she heard from Ben.

“But let’s get you home, Poe’s outside.”

Both Finn and Poe brought Rey a great deal of comfort. Finn was an omega like herself and so they related to one another in a way that others could never pretend to understand. Then there was Poe, Finn’s alpha mate. He was a jovial man who radiated with goodness, he was always one to make her laugh or keep her right.

Rey chose not to argue against Finn’s suggestion, deciding, for once, to extend a kindness to herself. Work had been a focal point of her life; the work ethic her parents instilled within her ran deep, right to the very bones of her. After earning her degree and juggling working in Plutt’s garage, she had managed to open one of her own. It had been tiresome and gruelling work but it had all been worth it.

It was not often that she took breaks; she always made sure she stayed in the garage long after she flipped the sign and proclaimed her business closed for the day.

Now, she understood the need for time away. Her lack of focus and wandering mind would only hinder any efforts of repair. After submerging her hands once more in the cooling pool of water, Finn set about gathering her bag, Rey had told him to ensure her paperback was tucked away in there, and then he waited outside.

Once the ache in her hands died down considerably, she wiped them down on the front of her overalls, never quite breaking that habit. Finn and Poe were waiting for her by the door, Finn shouldered her bag and Poe greeted her with a side hug as she locked up the garage.

Rey was acutely aware of Poe’s scent. It had never taken her interest before but now, she pondered what her own alpha would smell like. Once they consummated their mating, their scents would blend into one, she would carry him and he would perfume her skin until her final day. That kind of belonging sat well with Rey although it terrified her too, the intensity and permanence of it all. All would know that she was his and he, hers.

The trio set a lazy pace, the general chatter was the usual kind of gossip and the tone was light. Rey was glad that neither once looked down at her hands or breached the subject. Her fingers were still coloured a rosy pink but dulling.

Ben still plagued her but now, out in the open air, she could finally breathe again and fill her lungs with fresh air and ripe hope for his safe return.

Rounding the corner to her flat, she stilled, her skin prickly hot but the presence sent shivers
throughout her and they pebbled on her skin. Instinctually, she fisted her hands despite the ache and kept them taut at her sides. It was Snap Wexley, his construction crew were still at work across from her flat and the moment the breeze carried her scent towards him, he stopped laying down bricks and snapped his head in her direction.

What confronted her was a savage form of retribution. His face was almost unrecognisable and gnarly in appearance. It was coloured violet and black; there were smudges of indigo as the injuries healed. It was a fresh set of injuries, one made by fists or elbows or even boots. Circular imprints where his attacker’s knuckles connected with the finer bones in his face were stark against his pale pallor. One eye was completely swollen shut, the other was vermillion and bloodshot. His lip was split in two, a vivid bloody line had crusted over it but every movement threatened a reopening.

Rey’s gawking was noticed and he glared at her, baring his teeth before he swirled around and proceeded his workings, pretending to be blissfully ignorant of her. Finn and Poe had noticed the whole exchange and ushered her along to which she gladly accepted. The two were protective, each walked on either side of her.

Who had beaten him so viciously?

While his predicament did not bother her, her mind trailed to the suspects. Snap was unliked by many.

“Are you okay? Do you need us to come in with you?” Poe asked, gesturing to her front door, it was painted blue but it was peeling and the old paint curled upwards under the summer sun.

Quite distracted, she shook her head, no.

It did not escape her notice that while Poe focused on her, his attention was elsewhere, he peered over his shoulder at where Snap was working. Rey supposed it was natural, for an alpha to feel obliged to worry for an omega, despite him being mated.

“I am okay, I am going to go upstairs and try relax. Hopefully I will hear from Ben soon,” she tried to smile but she was painfully aware that her gesture was forced and far from genuine.

Although the pair in front of her were obviously unconvinced by her façade, they relented, each taking their time to hug her goodbye. Poe’s hug lingered longer than usual and she wondered if he was sending a message to Snap across the road.

He pulled away, his eyes narrowed a fraction and then he grasped Finn’s hand in his own. His dark, coffee coloured eyes searched hers for a moment before they turned to leave.

Rey let herself in the building and climbed the two floors before finding herself in her own flat. She set her belongings down and shuffled around the modestly sized space. While it was nothing grand, it was her own and well lived in. All the walls were painted varying shades of blue, each representative of her love of the ocean.

A trip to the coast was well overdue, one day Ben would maybe join her as she showed him the sights of what England had to offer.

Sighing, she traipsed straight towards the bedroom. Shedding her overalls, she stepped out of them and pulled her top over her head. Left in her underwear, she curled up in bed and clutched her phone to her chest.

It was her lifeline to Ben and so she handled it was care and urged it to ring. A text would have sufficed, a measly text composed of nothing more than a thumbs up would have meant the world.
The more time that passed, the harder it became to banish the darker thoughts and the chill that took hold of her. Instead of letting herself dwell and become victim to her anxiety, she stood up and found herself cleaning.

Now, this was unusual as she was a self confessed clutter bug, maintaining the cleanliness of her work space was trying enough, all her tools gleamed and it was clean despite the dirty work.

At home, during her weekends, she spent her time exercising, either running or swimming and often neglected the arduous chore of keeping her flat cleansed of all disarray. So, it was odd for her to feel the need to lose herself by neatening her flat until it gleamed.

By the end of it all, after an hour on her hands and knees scrubbing the bathroom until the tiles shone, she was exhausted but gratefully occupied. After changing her bedsheets and blankets, she spent extra time arranging her bed, more so than she had ever done so before.

 Unsatisfied with the positioning of her blankets and pillows, she shifted them and adjusted them until she unloaded more upon the bed, having procured extra bedding and throw pillows from the hallway closet.

Huffing, she lay down once more despite it not feeling comfortable. She tossed and turned, crushing her phone above her racing heart. The silence was difficult, the dripping of the leaky tap and the tinkling of her wind chime were not what she wanted to hear.

It was another hour before her silent wishing was answered. Her phone lit up with Ben’s name, the orange flame emoji seemed especially daunting now but she was quick to answer, securing her hold on the device as she sat up, quite breathless.

“Ben!”

“I’m okay, sunshine, I’m okay.”

The relief was instantaneous; her limbs were no longer weighted down by dream. The feeling coursed through her and so she breathed, really breathed, knowing that he was well.

Despite his words, she could heard the tiredness in them. She had never heard him so quiet or positively frazzled. Yet, despite his own struggles, he only spoke to comfort her.

“Are you sure? You sound so tired,” Rey spoke softly and waited for his reply but none came.

It was obvious he had fallen asleep, she listened hard for his soft intakes of breath, she closed her eyes and focused only on them.

Smiling, she laughed, not loud enough to wake him though.

Ben was okay, tired but she did not begrudge him, she could only imagine the effort it took to perform his job. It must have taken its toll, despite how fit Ben appeared; his physique was something she marvelled over.

Laying back in bed, she understood why Ben would not end the conversation after she fell asleep. When she shut her eyes, it was all too easy to pretend that the breaths sounding from the phone were from the space beside her. Physically, Ben was a picture of masculinity, he was tall and impossibly broad, he was a true alpha. She would make space for him in her bed, him on the right and her on the left. Then she would cling to him until it was impossible to decipher where one ended and the other began.
It was a nice game of pretend and soon after, the events of the day caught up with her, drained, she was lulled to sleep by Ben, despite him vacating in the land of dreams.

She did so with a smile on her face, he was safe and that was all that mattered.

The next morning an idea sprung to mind. Their heated encounter the weekend before was at the forefront of her thoughts, so she gathered what she needed and set off to the post office, feeling as if all eyes were on her.

Too many times, she had to remind herself that no one could see what she concealed in her back pocket. The shop beside her local was a WHSmith. In the window, sat a moleskin notebook trimmed in red.

Rey could not walk by it. For a while, she stared and thought of all of Ben’s words. His intensity was something that shone above most; his words were all carefully selected and brimming with beauty.

Buying the moleskin notebook, she was unsure if he would make use of such a gift but she was sure that if she asked him to dedicate some of his time to journalling or expressing himself in a way, which preserved some of his sweet nothings, he would do so.

Happy with her purchase, she had also bought a large postal envelope and slid the book in; it was lined with bubble wrap that ensured a safe journey. Walking into the post office, she gazed around, finding only an elderly woman at the counter. Swiftly, she slipped his final gift in and a small note too, with a slyness she never thought possible of herself. Sealing the envelope, she patted it down and wrote Ben’s address on the manila, she had saved it to both her phone and memory hours before.

Once the elderly woman finished about her business, she stepped forward and slid the package over the counter. The transaction was quick, after she paid for postage, express, which included tracking, the parcel was deposited in a waiting pile and she set off, in the direction of ‘The Rogue.’

It was early but Jyn was already at work. The mother and daughter shared a knowing look as Rey perched herself at the bar and ordered a water.

They clinked their waters, a glassy ring sounded and then silence followed.

She sipped the refreshing drink and eyed the raw and bruised knuckles that decorated her mother's fists in vivid colours and smiled softly, shaking her head.

A most fierce and protective alpha mother had avenged her omega daughter.

Chapter End Notes

Sooo

Hmm

Snap?

What did Rey send?
It is looking like Skype/phone smut is in the next...so that will make up for the angst? I have nearly finished the next chapter.

Rey has not made her mistake yet-NO CHEATING-but do not worry, they will be together VERY soon.

Can't one thing ever be easy with you?

NO.

Exactly, exactly
Chapter Notes

This is for all the ladies of The Writing Den but most importantly, my fellow dungeon dwellers there. You know who you are ;)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Ben-New York, United States of America

The following days passed in a new routine. With his broken arm, he was out of commission and with that, came a restless pent up energy that Ben was used to expelling with his physically demanding profession.

Upon waking the morning after the fire, he decided against revealing the full extent of how precarious the situation had been. With her busyness with work, they had mostly conversed through phone conversations so she had yet to find about his broken arm.

It was something he was hesitant to divulge. The white lie or lack of disclosure did not come from a dark place, no, he knew that informing her of how close to death he had come, he would put her in a position which might influence her decisions. While Ben wanted nothing more than to see her, only intensified by his recent brush with death and the lick of flames, he was aware that in a sense, it was borderline coercion. It was a form of persuasion to hasten her to make the journey to tend to him. If Rey was not ready to see him, he would bide his time and not influence her with tales of how he was almost lost to her.

After all, they were only matched a week before and while he approached life with an open heart and mind, he understood Rey was unlike him in that regard. While she was warming to him, baring herself to him physically and sharing more about her life, he could sense she was still mindful of that sensitive heart of hers. For years she had shunned the service, not quite believing in its ways, she yearned for a deeper emotional connection alongside the physically passionate times their bodies promised.

There was no doubt that when his hands touched her ripe flesh, untouched by all, he would make her fly and together they would fall and he would never let her go again. He was certain of that, wherever she roamed, he would follow as long as she allowed it. Separation after the two finally meeting was hardly an option, it was out of question.

It was beautiful though, to see her increasing confidence in both herself and the validity of his intentions and feelings. Before him, like a fresh flower responding to a change in season, she flourished and blossomed to the idea of him and that was enough, at least for now.

There was some guilt on his part that influenced his decision not to share the grim details of the fire. A thoughtful silence had entombed him and he reflected, carrying the souls that had perished but also the full extent of his choice. It was easier not to transport himself back into that room where flames hissed and smoked killed.

It was difficult for him to live with and comprehend that Gwen and him had boldly stared death in the face without fear for themselves, only the ones they would have left behind. It was cruel, he
knew, that he had chosen to stay with her but he could have never have lived with himself if he had left his closest friend, one of the few constants in his life, to die alone.

It was simply not him.

Other than that, things were progressing well with Rey. While she had been admittedly nervous when he spoke to her the day after the fire, she was overcome with the joy that he was well.

It warmed him and he hoped she had not been sickened with worry. They conversed with messages or phone calls frequently, working around the hours Rey spent grafting in her garage.

Ben had decided to use his time off wisely. Luckily, the arm that was broken was not his writing one, he lost himself in writing and he was relentless with his efforts. With Rey as his muse, shining brighter than ever, the words flowed with a stunning ease. He had swiftly filled his moleskin, the rapid scratches from his number two pencil and Callie’s ever-present purrs were the only sounds to be heard.

Rubbing his eyes, he yawned, although the words fell freely, it was draining to unleash his innermost thoughts, feelings, desires, and all for judgment.

It was mid-afternoon and he had yet to leave his bed. The idleness and lack of routine differed from what he was used to but his writing kept him occupied. Regardless, rest was almost a foreign concept and his mother had not let him lift a finger.

Only the day before, she had stormed in and coddled him as if he was a boy. At the time, he felt like one as he had been under the influence of some potent painkillers. It was a short-term dose and he lay back and allowed her the need to make herself useful. Although his apartment was neat, spacious and meticulously kept, his mother busied herself with cleaning, rearranging and preparing him meals that could be stored in the freezer for reheating. Despite his capable ability to care for himself, he appreciated it, probably more with his buzz.

Now, he was alone with Callie and nothing to do. His mother did not retrieve the mail the day before so he took it upon himself to carry out that menial task. Callie looked on, her chartreuse eyes were narrowed a fraction as Ben slipped from the bed; she had been sprawled across his chest, pawing his arms.

Now she sat up, her long, sleek tail swung from side to side as Ben pulled on his jogging bottoms and his trusty, red plaid shirt.

Side eyeing her, he sighed and kneeled.

“Don’t look at me like that, girl,” he pleaded.

Callie looked on and reared her head, nudging his palm. Diligently, he scratched behind her ear, the spot she enjoyed the most and then recalled how the feisty feline had entered his life.

“Ben, that damned hellion is not letting anyone near, perhaps we should just leave it to find its own way down,” Gwen pondered aloud.

*Ben shifted and gazed at her, the hellion in question was a small, lithe creature, a cat the colour of charcoal. It was young; a kitten by the looks of it but it spit fire at Gwen.*

*Its claws had slashed Gwen’s face; tiny slashes of vermilion split her porcelain skin and were evidence of how much the cat had truly got her.*
It was winter and Ben knew that the tiny feline would not last longer out in the cold, not so high up, anyway.

“Let me try,” Ben suggested, already securing a hold on the ladder, shaking it once for good measure to access the stability.

Gwen huffed, gesturing towards the cat.

“Be my guest,” she muttered as she stepped on the bottom step of the ladder as an extra form of support.

Ben began his climb, the tree was quite tall, a mighty oak whose age surpassed his own. Heights were not a fear of his despite a fall from one as a child. He feared very little, none more so than being alone.

The rickety ladder trembled as he ascended and finally, he came within inches of the hissing beast.

“Hello there, friend, how about we get you somewhere warm?” Ben asked, regarding the cat carefully, he was aware that it was acting out of fear.

This hisses stopped and he offered it his gloved hand to smell. Like the flip of a coin, the cat calmed and walked towards him, it was a slow approach as it balanced on a thin branch. Ben steadied it as much as he could and then finally, the cat made it to him.

Even through his glove, he felt the coldness of its nose as it sniffed and sought out to interpret his intentions.

“You’re okay,” Ben chuckled as he scooped the little thing up and held it to his chest, it immediately nuzzled into his chest.

“Really?” Gwen shouted upwards, indigence and disbelief laced her tone.

Ben shook his head; apparently, he had made a new friend. His descent was slowed as he took his time with only one hand available.

The other cradled the cat into his chest and its purrs evoked a smile as it warmed to him.

When they reached the bottom, Gwen rolled her eyes at the beast.

It wore no collar and it was too thin. Later when Ben escorted it to a local vet near the fire station, the cat clung to him and refused movement. Ben knew then that the cat, a girl, would be coming home with him after it was clear she had no owners.

Therefore, he named her Calligraphy, an odd name but the craft had meant something to him growing up. It was a mouthful so he found himself calling her ‘Callie’ more often than not.

With her by his side, his loneliness was not so heavy.

Smiling down at her, he apologised and promised he would return in a few minutes. As if understanding him, Callie tilted her head before she disappeared once more under the blankets, no doubt in search of warmth and to bask herself in his scent.

Ben stepped into some old sneakers, not bothering too much with his appearance and rode the elevator down into the front lobby. As soon as the doors opened, he was greeted by a familiar scent and then the sight of someone he did not wish to see, not in this context.
At the front desk, Bazine conversed with Jeffrey, laughing jovially as if they were old friends. Right away, Ben knew Bazine was trying to sway the man; she leaned across the desk and touched his forearms, her fingers danced in feather touches.

Was she trying to manipulate him into allowing her access to his penthouse?

Unable to remain grounded, Ben stalked toward the two, aware that he was falling into her trap. While he did not mind conversing with her at work, surrounded by colleagues, most importantly Gwen, Bazine would try at least to adhere herself professionally. That was not always the case, more than once, she had ‘forgotten’ a dose of suppressants and turned up to the station in midst of her heat. More than once, Ben had ran and shut himself away in his apartment and suffered his rut alone.

Doing so was painful and a test of his self-restraint. An alpha in rut was goaded into becoming a servant to his baser instincts, every part of him would scream for him to take the first omega he came across and Bazine was there and willing. He never did though.

The truth was, while he had sex with his two ex girlfriends, Bazine being one of them, their time together had only lasted a week or two before she cheated on him. He had never been with an omega in heat or knotted one.

That was something he saved for his mate, he had wished he had remained untouched like Rey but at the time, he was young and touch starved and convinced he was destined to walk the earth alone. He would carry that guilt, it was his mistake and he hoped that one day, Rey would come to understand his actions even if he could not.

Ben could only imagine what it would be like to be with Rey, especially during her heat when she would be most welcoming of him and all he offered. It would be heaven, nirvana, a faraway plane where only goodness, light and pleasure ruled.

Shaking the thoughts from his head, he stopped by the desk, his free hand in his pocket and regarded Bazine who had turned and smiled up at him.

“Oh Ben, I was just telling Jeffrey of how I was coming to see you, to check in on our resident hero,” she beamed, leaning forward, she brushed his cast.

Ben gritted his teeth as her nails, painted crimson, trailed the length of it. Jeffrey looked between the two.

“I was just telling the lady that only listed visitors are allowed access to your elevator and penthouse, Mr Solo.”

Ben stepped away from Bazine then and stared at the man. For years, he had always reminded Bazine of this but still, she tried to persuade him.

“Thank you, Jeffrey.”

Bazine huffed, her faux smile curled into a sneer.

“I just wanted to see how you were, Ben,” she tried, her face softened once more and she closed the space between them, side eyeing the man at the front desk.

Ben breathed through his nose as he realised that once again, Bazine had purposefully not taken her suppressants.
He snatched her arm and the two walked towards a quieter section of the front lobby.

“What are you doing, Bazine? For over a decade, you have pursued me and disrespected my feelings of the matter. Now, you try to dangle yourself in front of me, do you know how dangerous it is? Other alphas could take you as you flaunt yourself in public, is that what you want?” Ben hissed, releasing his hold on her as he backed against the wall.

Bazine glared, her features resembling thunder.

“No, I only want you, alpha. Take me,” she growled, she fist the front of his shirt and pressed herself flush against him.

Incensed, Ben grasped her shoulder with one hand and pushed her away from him, perhaps too hard as she hit the opposite wall.

She smiled, chest heaving as she walked towards him once again.

“You cannot have me, I have a mate. Leave here, now,” he growled lowly, his heart raced as she ceased her movement.

She sniffed and then laughed.

“Oh yes, I have heard of your so called mate. The one that refuses to see you. Don’t you see, she doesn’t want you and you will always be alone unless you choose me,” Bazine spat out.

Ben held his breath as her words sliced his heart.

It was a low blow and Bazine knew it. It was his greatest weakness, the fear of being alone. Instead of hurting, he chose to rise up and warn Bazine away.

“Get out of my sight, now. I don’t want to see you here again.”

It was something Ben had little experience of; an alpha command was something he had sparingly used. When an alpha spoke, omegas and betas would listen.

It was primal and a show of the societal hierarchy.

Bazine fought it, her body trembling as her feet took her away from him, her hands clenched into fists. She bowed her head, obeyed, and swiftly left the building.

Ben sucked in a deep breath and raked his hand through his hair. A weight had been lifted; he hoped he no longer had to deal with the woman who had cast a shadow on his life. Her words though, the vicious little barbs were sharp and sunk into him.

Unwilling to dwell or overthink, he approached the front desk and Jeffrey offered him a sympathetic smile, he knew of the harassment Ben had faced.

“Not much mail for you today, Mr Solo, just a package, one from England.”

Ben lightened and stood straighter.

“England?”

Rey.

“Yes, sir.”
Ben’s heart beat true again, ridding itself of some of those barbs. Jeffrey slid the package across the desk and without much grace; Ben clutched it to his chest, already turning back towards the elevator.

“Thank you,” he called behind him, waving his thanks.

Once in the elevator, he examined the manila packet. It was padded and weighed very little, what had she sent him?

Her handwriting was unexpected, while his was neat and impeccable, a script that appeared like something from the past, hers was blocky, quite scruffy in fact and he laughed, admiring how her scrawl was right before him.

It suited her.

It was a simple thing but writing had been a hugely important point of his life. You could decipher a lot about someone by examining their written words.

More than anything, he traced his fingertips over his name, the idea that a small part of him was touched by her, was thrilling.

He would write his name into her skin if he could, her heart most preferably.

By the time he reached his penthouse, his body was alive with anticipation again. He sat back in bed and like a gleeful child on Christmas morning; he ripped the packaging open at the top and waited for the wonders inside.

His hand first made contact with a texture he knew well. Pulling out the moleskin, black and detailed with red stitching, he sat back and questioned fate once again. How could she have known what he was in need of? His writing had never been a subject discussed between the two.

Only a short while before, he had filled his other notebook with poems. His second novel had been almost completed in a matter of days, all thanks to her, his most giving and exquisite muse. It would be a quick publication; there was a demand for his writing.

Just one final poem remained unwritten and she had gifted him a new canvas to lavish his art upon. A tear or two formed from his ducts as he kissed it, christening it with his lips as the liquid joy that spilled from his eyes. He did so with a voiceless promise to fill it with words only meant for Rey. All the love in his heart and all of his burning longing had only ever belonged to her.

He fingered the cover for the longest time before inhaling deeply and his heart stopped. Now that the package was opened, the scents within wafted out freely and something hit him hard.

It could not be.

Surely, he was mistaken.

Groping for the manila package, weightless in his good hand, his fingers brushed paper.

Retrieving the note, he was met by more of her written words.

‘Evidence of my want for you, I hope you recognise these.’

Ben’s assumptions were confirmed then and he sat stunned, reading the note again. His omega, his bold little mate had presented her scent to him. It was not just a general one, it was of her arousal.
Unable to deny himself any longer, his realised his self-control was scattered as he relinquished himself to his most primal urges, the ones that clouded his vision and pointed him towards one blissful ending. With a bated breath, he dipped his fingers into the package and brushed lace, groaning, he pulled the panties free from their confinement.

They were a stark white, the same she had worn that night when she allowed him to see her, all of her. Closing his eyes, he recalled how they had complimented her tawny skin and set off her colouring. Of course, he saw the symbolism there, white was often associated with virgins, Rey was untouched, pure, and it appeased him but also triggered his want to claim her.

Below him, he would deflower her, his sunflower and blossom her skin in worshipping kisses that would imprint her flesh in cherry red. As he spilled his seed within her, he would rise higher and claim her with his teeth, connecting the pair with the consummation. If he were lucky, his little mate would bite him then too.

Her scent was driving him towards a beautiful kind of madness, it was floral almost, like daisies but there was a touch of the ocean there, like salt as it blended with the heavy fragrance of her want.

He imagined tasting the delight from its source. His tongue would run all over her until she begged him to consume her elsewhere, right at her heated core where wetness would coat him in a never-ending abundance, like an untouched spring. For days, he would carry the taste of her on his tongue and lips like a man who showed his thirst to the world.

Thinking of Rey, he allowed himself some sweetness. His fingers trembled as he brought the delicate piece, so tiny, to his face. He wet his lips with a delicate swipe of his tongue and swallowed hard as he buried his nose and lips into the crotch.

Immediately dizzied, he breathed through the fabric and tasted her, he mouthed it softly at first as he worked his plump lips over the delicate lace. A man reduced to a desperate boy, he flattened his tongue along the carefully stitched seams and poked the patterns.

“Fuck,” he growled, he freed himself from his jogging bottoms and boxer shorts and held the panties with his casted arm. The other hand, it roamed where he needed it the most.

Cursing, he looked down at his cock, it was most notably the hardest he had ever seen it, he licked his palm with a tongue decorated in Rey’s arousal and then he fisted himself, hard.

The relief was indescribable, he cried out, a rather muted response unlike the primal scream he had expected. It vibrated in his throat as he gasped more as he tightened his hold on his cock and spread his own slickness from his head all the way down to the shaft.

There was nothing gentle about how he handled himself but he wanted to prolong it all. Ready to begin, the start of a most fulfilling release, he was brought out of his reverie by the familiar sound of a Skype call.

Without a thought, he traipsed nude with only Rey’s panties in his hand to his laptop that was set up on his dining table.

Only one person communicated with him through the application, he would not have stopped his workings for anyone but her. There was hope there that she would see him through his current predicament but he would not press her for it.

Glancing at his lit up screen, his thoughts were confirmed, it was Rey. Of course it was, he sat
down and adjusted the screen so he would not reveal himself to her. While he had no qualms with showing his body, he did not want to expose himself like that, especially without Rey’s consent; he considered her wellbeing above his own. Then, he accepted her call, breathing hard as he composed himself.

His body was a coil sprung tight, his toes curled into the plush rug below him as he fought the need to bring about his release. Perhaps he would mention it, his need; after all, she was the one who incited it with such a wanton gift. The gift was more than sexual, it was his first physical contact with his mate and he was incredibly touch starved so he cherished her offering. It cemented him to her forever and confirmed what he knew to be true, she was his mate, his divine omega and the service was undoubtedly right, he had never questioned it though.

With just one whiff of her scent, her overwhelming arousal like the sweetest ambrosia, he was a man reduced to his knees and made a slave to her. Maybe, that had been her desired effect.

Did she know of the power she possessed over him? That he sat willingly in the palm of her hand and awaited direction from his tempting goddess who ruled him from an ocean away despite his own instincts. Those impulses demanded dominance and the conquering of her body below his own fingertips.

It thrilled him to think of who would come out the victor when they tangled in person.

Any thought of composure was lost when Rey smiled coyly at him, her eyes gleamed with a mischievous spark he never thought possible of her. Like him, she was nude, save for another pair of skimpy panties, this time they were coloured crimson. No, she was no wilting flower in need of watering and shade; she was a temptress who burned as hot as the sun.

He dropped her panties and felt his jaw slacken as he took her in. Already, her glorious, little body shone with perspiration as if she had been waiting for him and feeling the heat of what was to come.

In one hand, she had her phone raised and briefly flashed her screen at him before she placed it down on the bed below her.

“I checked the tracking of your package, they said you received it,” she whispered, her cheeks reddened then but her eyes held strong, freezing him to the spot.

“I did,” he breathed out, grinning at her display of confidence.

“I trust they were to your satisfaction.”

If only she knew.

Bending, he retrieved the fallen panties.

“I was just in the middle of appreciating them.”

Rey bit her lip and angled herself so that she was leaning forward, giving him a delicious view of her breasts.

“Your arm,” she gasped and he cursed himself.

“I’m okay, Rey, better than okay, even more so thanks to your gifts,” he tried to defer her from further question.
For a moment, she was quiet as she regarded him.

“Okay, I trust you,” she finally said.

Ben closed his eyes.

“Now, tell me how much you like my gift,” she ordered and that caught his attention.

An omega ordering an alpha.

It was thrilling and went straight to his cock, it jolted him and for a moment, he was speechless and gaping at her.

Heart racing, he dangled the panties in front of the screen.

“These make me want to bury myself between your thighs and never leave again.”

Like always, she was responsive to him.

“What have you done with them, Ben?”

Ben avoided her eyes, the ones that pierced. Then she said something that he knew he could not deny her.

“I want to see you, all of you, show me how much you love what I sent you. Please, alpha,” it was worded as a plea but there was no denying who was in control.

As if in a trance, he adjusted his seat and sat back, allowing her to see him in his entirety. His proud cock, a lengthy appendage with an impressive girth brushed along his naval.

Her response did not disappoint, her eyes widened, her pupils blown and ready to burst took him in. They trailed over him and when she peered lower, her mouth gaped as a whoosh of air escaped her lungs. Her rosy nipples peaked then into hard points that did not escape his observation. Other than that, she made no move to pleasure herself.

As if reading him, she leaned forward.

“Right now, this is all about you. Please, Ben, show me how much you want me, show me how you pleasure yourself.”

It was little more than a whine and he saw her desperation, her need was perhaps even more than his own was.

“You are all I want,” his voice lowered an octave.

More than ready, he brought the panties again to his face and bunched them up as he sniffed them; he was left intoxicated and momentally thrown. It took some manoeuvring and adjustment with his cast but he managed well enough, his long fingers found purchase on the lace and nothing could tear them from him.

“Rey, you smell so fucking good,” he groaned, unable to stop the curse that fell from his lips.

Rey looked on, her teeth clamped into her bottom lip, he was sure she would split the flesh there and stain it a rosy vermillion.

“After I devoured you, I would show you what biting your lip does to me. I would bite it for you,
my lips wet with your spend and stain you forever,” he moaned, fisting his cock.

“Please.”

Aware that he would not last with her scent influencing him, he squeezed his shaft, lazily tugging as he unfurled her panties and brought them to his nose. Like a man gasping for breath, he breathed in quick and harsh and basked in the delirium of it all.

“I need you,” he whispered, his grip on the panties tightened and he opened his eyes, Rey sat with her hands splayed on her thighs, as if she waited instruction.

“I know,” was her answer and it awakened him; his thumb circled his weeping head as he pumped.

“You have suck a beautiful cock, Ben. You will be gentle me with me at first, won’t you? You’ll be the only one to have me,” Rey said, her fingertips brushed her nipples and without an order, she squeezed them, just as he had taught her.

Ben’s heart raced harder then, he felt the thrum of his blood rushing through his system as his mind honed in on that singular thought.

He would the first one to have her and nothing pleased him more.

“Yes, I will worship you and then ruin you, Rey. I will tear you apart but you will beg for it, you will beg for my thick cock and I’ll give it to you, I’ll give you anything.”

“Everything?”

Ben nodded frantically, his workings increased in their speed, his calloused palm met the soft skin of his cock and it brushed against the veins there.

Inclining her neck to the side, she offered him a clear view of where her mating gland hid beneath the skin. Rey leaned forward, switching her stance as she positioned herself on her hands and knees. Ben admired her in this position, he wanted to have her that way and flatten her into the mattress as she took him.

The position riled him on, he took hold of his cock with a new fervour and imagined his skin slapping against her own, he would leave violet imprints on her hips and he would know the taste of her. Below him, he would cage her with his flesh and offer no release from his wicked hold. As he rutted inside of her like a wild beast, she would whisper and beg for more when she could find her breaths.

Underneath him, he would bring her to the brink and see her through it all.

“I need to see you undone, come for me, Ben,” Rey begged, her lips curved into a pout and it ruined him.

As if, he could not deny her anything.

A fire raged within as he viewed her further, in that position her breasts swayed as she moved, perspiration licked them and so they glimmered, a most delicious visage in the summer heat. With her movement, her panties rode up her hips, the rich red met her golden skin and exuded warmth and he knew how hot she burned for him. If he were there, the heat of her core would scorch him. Between her thighs with her calves strewn over his shoulders and his faced buried there, they would declare him the man who flew too close to the sun without a thought for himself.
“On your back, omega,” he ordered, reclining into his seat.

Without question, she turned and offered him a delightful view of her round, firm ass before she settled on her back. Her chestnut locks sprawled over her pillow and spilled over her shoulders, brushing the soft curves of her breasts. It was angelic but behind those soulful eyes lay the devil who enraptured him.

Groaning at the glorious sight, he felt his cock twitch against his hand.

“Use my panties, Ben.”

Lost in his fantasies, he had almost forgotten the gift she had bestowed him with. Slowly, he raised them to his face; it contrasted with the speed of how he jerked his cock. Appreciating the skimpy piece of lace, he tongued the crotch of them and he could taste her, it was physical evidence of how he moved her. His eyes clamped shut as it overcame him, the scent was musky and lovely, befitting of the woman he called mate.

He lapped up and sucked the fabric, hard, relishing how faint traces of her coated his tongue; he hoped he would taste her for days. Breathing deeply, he inhaled and his grip on himself was almost painfully tight.

“Fuck,” he moaned, he rolled his wrist and made sure to spend more time providing attention his sensitive head that wept freely then as his strokes shortened.

“Use my panties on your cock, Ben,” Rey whispered.

The mere mention of that nearly resulted in his climax, he snapped his eyes open and witnessed Rey lazily fingering the hem of her sinful panties.

“Do it,” she encouraged and he was sure she was the female form of Eros who encouraged Ben’s sexual desires with a godly ease.

Not wanting to keep her waiting, he relinquished his hold on himself and transferred the panties into his waiting hand. He rested his arm, the one encased in a cast.

With the taste of her upon his lips and tongue, he carefully curled the lace around his cock, he hissed as it brushed his sensitive head. Marvelled, he watched as it absorbed his own arousal and melded with Rey’s. Their combined scent was otherworldly.

He looked upon Rey once more and then picked up his pace, the panties added an extra dose of sensation that he revelled in, his stomach tensed, a signal of his impending release as he moved the panties along his length. The softness circled his cockhead with every precise movement; he panted and grunted as he felt the burning weight of Rey’s wide eyes on him.

Her watching him was triggering something inside of him, he wanted to impress and please her and hopefully she would see how well he could taint her.

“Please come, Ben, I need it,” her chest heaved with the admission, her nipples peaked hard.

With a few more strokes, he obeyed her request, gasping.

In that moment he saw white, a blissful heaven as he spilled into the panties, coating them as Rey had done before him. His release was hot and thick and he could not help himself when he smeared it into the fabric with his thumb and blended it with Rey’s, invisible to his eyes.
After he was finished, he carefully laid them on the table in front of him, soiled but not ruined. He met Rey’s image and noticed how alive her eyes appeared, her cheeks were painted pink as she gaped at him.

Still coming down from his high, he sagged as Rey stood and walked towards the camera. Her hips swayed in an enchanting dance as she moved with a purpose, she was a huntress. She grabbed something off screen and his interest was piqued, she held it up for him to see and he blanched, his cock began to harden again.

Licking her lips, she smiled.

“Now, it’s my turn.”

Chapter End Notes

*clears throat*

Well...uh

I have already began writing the next chapter so be sure to leave me your thoughts about this one, if you know me, writing smut is something that tends to throw me haha :)

More smut? In the next chapter?

YES
Passion

Chapter Notes

As always, this goes out to the ladies of The Writing Den, my dungeon dwellers and Flydams keep me going.

Also...Reyl-Hoes, I see you ;)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Rey-London, England

Ben was everything she had ever wanted and more. There was something about seeing him come undone, the way he expelled passion and drifted into a state of bliss that ignited a kindred spirit within her. One day, she hoped to ride that wave with him despite him being a riptide, he would sweep her away and she would be lost in him.

Discovering her sexuality with him was thrilling.

Over the last week, she had been increasingly moved and her sexual appetite apparently knew no end. It was hot, she found herself bringing about her release more often that she had ever done so before. Mewling, she would work her nimble fingers within herself, day or night but it was never enough, not when she had seen the size of her mate’s hands.

Ben had been the one to light the embers below her navel and only he could extinguish them.

Without Ben’s physical presence, she had decided to take matters into her own hands. For hours, she had browsed and blushed over online sex stores and the products they offered. Most of her life, she had considered herself borderline asexual with her lack of attraction to most. While her friends had strings of lovers, she had kept to herself, buried in work, content with her lacklustre sexual drive and muted libido.

She lost herself in testimonials and reviews of the products that stood out to her, all were advertised for omegas. Finally, she settled on one, it was a silicone vibrator, it was sleek, curved and coloured a pretty plum. It was not large by any means, she knew it would not compare to Ben in anyway but she had no experience with penetration other than her slender fingers.

Holding it now, she observed Ben carefully. He was beautiful, a remarkable sight and even more so with the wild spark in his obsidian eyes as his pupils swallowed all.

Under his gaze, she did not falter, instead her confidence bloomed as she showed him the toy. It was unused and although there was a nervousness within her, it was quickly overrode by a simmering excitement and washed away by her want.

There was no doubt, she had never been this wet before, her thighs were drizzled with her slick and they shone.

Seeing Ben pleasure himself and his nude figure for the first time had quite the effect on her. It was hardly surprising, biologically, they were made for one another but she had never expected such beauty.
There was nothing small about the man; he was a hulking, refined mass of a specimen. He was pale unlike her, kissed by the moon and lavishly so. He was decorated in stars, his skin dotted in the form of constellations of dark beauty marks and moles, the same midnight raven as his hair.

His physique was something that brought her to her knees and willed her into submission. It called to her in more ways than one, it promised safety and security. It also promised destruction, the splitting of her soul and flesh as he took her and made all she ever was or would be, undoubtedly his. It was a welcome possession.

Who would possess whom?

His parted thighs, thick and embroiled with deep, well-earned muscle, would make a fine place for her to sit and rule. Would she make him powerless and left begging for mercy below her? It thrilled her; she would deny him some and then take him when she reduced the mighty alpha to the desperate one.

In that moment, emboldened, she flashed the toy at him and then proceeded to drag it slowly along the seam of her lips, coating it in a hot trail of saliva. Its curved body was soft against her flesh, she made sure to kiss the head, bulbous and bulky compared to the slim body and Ben gasped. Inclined to burn hotter under his scrutiny, she noted how her blood seemed to hum as his mouth gaped, clearly taken aback by the direction the night had taken.

"Fuck, Rey," was his awaited reply; it was a low whisper that set the embers aflame.

Skimming his body, she saw him growing hard despite him only just achieving climax. It startled her, to think of how quickly he recovered and how they could restart their fun.

She licked her lips and turned, setting the toy on the bed, right in the centre, before she turned to face him, the man who completed her. There was nothing to fear but fear itself, he was no monster in the dark, he was flesh and blood and obviously enamoured by the sight of her.

It was time to gather her courage.

Anticipation flooded her flushed body as she struggled to compose her breaths. Blind confidence could only lead her so far but she went forward with a willingness to bare much more than her body to him.

Standing straighter, she hooked her thumbs under the delicate waistband of her panties, they were coloured crimson, a passionate contrast to the white she had sent him. He made her abandon her innocence and embrace wanton indulgence.

Not once did her eyes leave his. It was a slow thing, the way her fingers pulled at the lace and dragged them down. Bent over, she observed how his tongue darted out, wetting his lips as he leaned forward and took himself in hand.

It was only natural, he knew her scent, the taste of her, as he had tongued and mouthed at the crotch of her panties as if a man denied of sustenance. The way he had acted only assured her that he would devour her; he had proclaimed he would bury himself between her thighs and she would hold him to it. Like a fleshy cage, she would bracket him in and only let him up to breathe, but by then, all he would smell and taste was she, the rightful order of things.

Once her soaked panties hit the floor, she stepped out of them, mindful to avoid stepping on the flimsy fabric and then stood at full height. All the air had been sucked from the room; nothing refuted that more than her ragged breaths as she stepped closer to the laptop and secured her hold
on it.

Quickly transferring it to her bedside table, she tilted it until Ben possessed a clear look of her bed and nothing else. Sitting on her knees, she picked up the toy and once again brought it to her lips.

It was something she enjoyed, feeling it upon and below her tongue. She wrapped her tongue around the head and suckled it, releasing it with a wet pop.

“Jesus fucking Christ, Rey,” Ben cursed.

Knowing the effect she had on him was encouraging.

“I have never done this before, Ben. I have only used my fingers on myself but you have left me wanting for more, I need to be filled.”

Ben choked, mumbling something under his breath; he closed his eyes and then blinked.

“I will fill you up, Rey. I promise, I will make you come alive and then I will build you up and then ruin you. You will beg me for it. I will fill that pretty cunt of yours up time and time again until I no longer can.”

She wanted it, oh how she wanted it. The lewdness and filth emitted from him only heated her further.

“Perhaps it will be you begging me, Ben,” she quipped, raising her brow as she tongued the inside of her cheeks.

There was something there, a ghost of a wicked grin and the morphing of his face, his demeanour darkened, long gone were the innocent smiles and sweet nothings. Perhaps he was the devil, a fallen angel who burned with a passion reminiscent of the fires of hell.

It did not matter, he was the man for her and she hoped she could rise to meet him, for when they clashed and became one, she would be undone.

“We’ll see,” he said.

They would.

Until then, Rey leaned forward, resting one hand on her thigh and the other trailed the vibrator along her collar bone, dipping into the groove there. She sucked in a much-needed breath as Ben lost interest in himself and focused primarily on her.

She almost mourned the loss of seeing his fist wrapped around his cock but now, she could watch it as it twitched against his navel and revealed its true size to her. It would be a miracle if he could fit fully inside of her but she desired to feel him, all of him, as he took her and pressed his skin against her own. The weight of him atop her would make her breathe properly for the first time in her life.

“Where do you want me to put it?”

“In your mouth, first, show me how you would suck my cock, omega.”

As intended, his words spiked below her naval, arousal dripped freely and those primal instincts told her to please him, to present how capable she was of taking him.

Holding up the toy, she gulped, it was nothing compared to the size of Ben’s but she was
inexperienced.

“Do not be afraid; take your time with it, Rey. Find what works for you,” he guided, smiling at her.

He knew exactly what to say and it warmed her to know how much he was able to read her, despite the distance between the two.

Sitting back, she crossed her legs and reclined into the pillows. They were soft against her back and so inviting, she had to be comfortable for what was to come. For a moment, she observed the vibrator and its ribbed head and then once again, she pressed it to her lips. Humming, she berthed it passed the seam and slowly guided it inwards.

“Good girl,” Ben crooned and with her mouth full, she keened over his praise, accepting it with an ease she never thought possible of herself.

It encouraged her to slide it in and out of her mouth, each time she lavished it with her tongue, alternating between broad strokes or hollowing her cheeks and slurping, loudly. It was for his benefit, each time she gasped or swallowed its full length; Ben rewarded her with a low groan of his own.

Saliva coated the toy; it dribbled out of her mouth and drooled down her chin.

“What a messy girl you are,” Ben whispered and Rey witnessed how the muscles in his abdomen tensed as his cock jutted against it.

With each movement, she felt herself becoming increasingly wound up, she needed more.

As if sensing her frustration, Ben spoke.

“Take that toy out of that pretty mouth of yours and turn it on.”

She gave it a final swipe, wetting it and then pulled it free. On the side were a number of buttons, all of which she had tested after she received it. Wanting to prolong the experience as much as she could, she turned it on and clicked the lowest setting.

It hummed to life and her heart raced then, her senses were overwhelmed, a live wire in the dark and so she relaxed, laying sprawled back entirely. She kept her legs firmly pressed together, clenching and squeezing them as her body demanded fulfilment.

“What do you want me to do next?”

It was a loaded question, oozing with anticipation as the vibrations raced in the inside of her palm; she shivered as she imagined them where she needed them the most.

“I want you to tease yourself, Rey, do not put it on your cunt, not yet, I want to see you blossom,” he explained, she gazed at him from under hooded lids.

With those eyes as dark as death, he would have her a begging mess.

Nodding, her teeth took purchase in her bottom lip as she dragged the vibrator straight to her nipples.

Oh.

Gasping, she lifted her hips upwards, her back arching into a delicious curve that only offered invitation.
Sensitive was an understatement; it was like straight electric had infused deep within her, she whimpered as she increased the pressure and rolled the head over the hardened bud and used her freehand to pinch her other nipple, just as Ben had taught her. A rush of deep pleasure quickly followed the jolt of pain, she throbbed and her core ached as she pursued her pleasure.

From her position, she saw how Ben’s broad shoulders rose and fell as he witnessed the delights she offered, both of his hands remained firmly locked on his bare thighs as he watched, a helpless but most wanted voyeur. His breathing was a ragged sound, almost like a growl as she brought the vibrator lower, pulling it downwards along her ribcage.

Closing her eyes, she allowed herself to drown in the sensations; awash with nothing but pure neediness, she brought the toy lower until it hummed against her navel. Despite her lack of sight, she could see Ben’s image, he was burned behind her lids and would be until her dying day.

“Open your legs Rey,” he ordered.

Holding her breath, she parted them slowly, bringing her legs down flat onto the mattress. Cool air hit her where her want was most evident; it curled and brushed across her folds as Ben appraised her.

“Beautiful, Rey, what did I do to deserve you?” He asked and she gazed at him, knowing, feeling the weight of his longing and desperation for her.

It reflected her own.

Swallowing hard, she blinked away a tear, suddenly overcome with what she realised to be true. Her want for him was more than biology despite their heated display.

“Tell me want you want,” she breathed, the vibrator danced along the inside of her thigh and she shook, trembling as it teetered closer to her entrance.

“You,” he whispered.

They locked eyes and both stared, the want made her heart beat wildly.

“Tell me what do, Ben.”

Biting his lip, he once again palmed his cock; his mammoth hands did not dwarf it.

“Put it inside you, sunshine, I want to see you come all over it. I will dream of it, that it was my cock you found the finest pleasure with until the day we meet.”

Unable to hold off any longer, especially with the added imagery, she brought the sleek toy to her folds, she ran it down the length of them, soaking it in her arousal until it was hot and slick.

As she adjusted her position and braced herself, she peered across at Ben who coaxed her on, whispering assurances and then cursing as he jerked himself off to her nude body.

There was no resistance, she was much too hot for that, the thick, round head slid in with ease, she swallowed it and moaned, loud.

“That’s it, Rey, take all of it.”

It was easy to pretend it was him filling her; she pushed on until the entire length of the toy was nestled inside of her, buzzing away at her textured, slick walls.
“Fuck, Ben, I wish this was you,” she cried out, clenching around the soft vibrator.

“Show me how much you want me, Rey.”

Her eyes rolled into the back of her head as she adjusted the vibrator and turned it on to the highest setting, her toes curled into her sheets and with her free hand, she parted her folds and located her clit and pressed it, hard.

“Ben,” she moaned, sure that all in the surrounding flats and the street below her would hear all.

She did so without a care, she was inhibited, intoxicated by lust and revelling of how her mate offered guidance. It was only fair all knew whom she thought of when bringing herself to new heights.

With a flick of the wrist, she moved the vibrator outwards, until the head crested her entrance and then drove it back in. Her wetness was all to be heard, she gushed as she found her rhythm, her walls fluttered around the curved length.

“I can hear how wet you are, Rey, did you like seeing me come? Are you wet for me?”

He did not need to ask.

Unable to locate her voice besides a series of incoherent mumbles, she nodded frantically, watching as his strokes increased in speed. His knuckles were stark white as he set a relentless pace.

“Of course you are wet for me, you know I would fuck you better than your little toy could,” it was all but a growl as he snarled, baring his teeth as he clamped them into his bottom lip and hissed, sucking the abused flesh after he released it.

His mouth was sinful in both appearance and the risqué words it formulated. It was cherry red and she wondered how he would taste, sweet or sour? Both perhaps but she hoped he would stain her red wherever he placed his lips upon her, a part of her forever branded by him.

Spreading her legs wider, she afforded him a better view as the vibrator dipped inside her time and time again. It rolled in her palm with a newfound practiced ease and she quickened the thrusts and moved her hips in time so she could fuck herself on it.

“Look at you, you are a natural, Rey,” Ben whispered as they once again caught sight of the other.

She was close to her release, she knew that and his running commentary incited it, she clenched the length, shuddering as it pulsed deep within her.

Every breath she drew was sweet ecstasy.

The vibes brought her to a new plane, she had seen the white light and stars, the feeling as she lost herself for a moment as pleasure ruled and conquered her tiny frame.

“Ben, I am so close,” she mewed; the cry was like a verse before a chorus with the anticipation and climactic thrill on the golden horizon.

They both knew the glorious delight of what awaited them.

“Let go, sunshine,” he adjured roughly.

Peeking at him, she admired how wild and far gone he was. A lush scarlet painted his high
cheekbones as his breaths came out in harsh, little pants. The veins in his forearm bulged underneath his skin, taut blue tracks stressed against porcelain as he worked himself.

The image of his hand swallowing his cock was enough for her to envision that it was him thrusting inside of her, she drew back her hand and nudged the vibrator further in, rotating it as she discovered this new part of herself.

Righting her angle, she hit a spot, one that knocked the breath out of her and left her gasping and thrashing, it was divine.

“Fuck, Rey, keep going,” Ben begged, it was more of a grunt; some of his hair had fallen over his face, shadowing half his face.

Desperate, she did as he instructed, angling herself just right as the vibrator bottomed out and up inside of her, she took advantage of its curve and brushed that rigged piece of flesh in quick little jabs. The sheets were soaked underneath her but she could not care, evidence of her want was something she had yearned for Ben to see.

She wanted him to know he was wanted and in that moment as their eyes locked and she frantically thumbed her clit, she knew that he had realised that this was all for him. That he had brought her into a frenzied state of lust and that she only desired him.

Gulping, she continued, her movements without much grace as she whined, sweating profusely as Ben worked his cock.

“Ben, I’m going to come!” she screamed it aloud to the skies above and across the ocean.

Then she was lost, like waves crashing into the face of a cliff, she gushed, spraying her sheets as she twitched and convulsed, manically clenching and unclenching as she came.

“Rey,” Ben chanted repeatedly he moaned it aloud, he followed soon after, coming and it spilled over his tight fist and onto his chest and stomach.

Both were coated in their spend.

Rey was flushed, having not fully returned to Earth, she tried to catch her breaths as she removed the vibrator and turned it off but her limbs were light and she basked in euphoria.

“You’re beautiful,” Ben whispered.

She believed him.

“You’re mine,” she whispered back.

The morning after, Rey woke with a moan, yawning, she stretched and sprawled across her tousled sheets. A combination of the sun’s rays and her body had heated them, blinking, she realised at some point she had kicked her blankets from her bed.

Her dreams had been a symphony of moans, groans and explicit imagery, all featuring Ben as the carnal conductor of all her pleasure. More than once, she had woken up breathless and gasping, certain that he was in the bed beside her, whispering praise and lewd promises of how he would have his wicked way with her. However, each time she patted the space to her right, it was barren and cold, despite her longing and will to have him there.
That hurt her more than she was ever willing to admit to herself, the extended separation was entirely her fault. Resolute, she would remain staunch and resilient and wait for him; after all, she transferred the length of their time apart into Ben’s capable hands.

When he loved her, he would come to her and she would welcome him with an open heart and mind and let him love her. A part of her already loved him despite her lack of vocalisation. Her mind silenced her. It was natural. Loving him was like breathing, it was an automatic response that kept her going and she felt alive, just as he promised her.

Whenever they did speak, she said too much but not enough.

So, when she woke numerous times during the night, in want and need of him, she recalled his low timber and curled fist and she mimicked him and gripped her sheets. Then she slid her fingers inside of herself and curled them upwards until she was knuckle deep and then brought herself a desperate release.

Now, she awoke, flushed and pink all over. Her hair was stuck to her forehead and the nape of her neck, slick and heavy with her sweat, it curled in the heat. It was a Saturday, so she rolled over, slumping over her pillow as she checked the time and groaned when she realised she had slept longer than she usually would.

It was well past noon, it was odd, she normally rose with the sun but she could not shake the feeling of lethargy that weighed heavy in her bones. Unable to rationalise it, she wrote it off, dismissing a fear that had long terrified her since she presented as an omega. It was most likely a resort of all the activity the day before, baring herself to him was both emotionally and physically draining. At the time, it had been heaven and she flew, weightless and unanchored to the world but it had been demanding of her.

Rey was guarded; it was a trait she had carried since she was a young girl. Experiencing a betrayal was something Rey had unfortunately suffered. Someone had hurt her, badly and she rarely allowed herself to think of it, choosing instead to keep her circles tight and a fortress high. Trust was something earned and although she had been quick to show her nude form to Ben, nothing felt rushed of it. There was nothing but adoration and pure, uninhibited want when his eyes swelled like the midnight sea and offered a glimpse to the passion that lay below the surface.

Admittedly, his broken arm had thrown her but she decided to trust him, to take a leap into the dark and hope that he would someday offer an explanation. The sight of him wounded had spurred something within her, her mate was hurt, she wanted to comfort and tend to him but she was helpless and so far away.

Sighing, she draped her arm across her face, exhaling hard. Quite dizzy, she lay there for a while, only standing when her need for water surpassed any longing to remain flat on her back, static and moping about her circumstance.

Stumbling, she made it to her modest sized kitchen, which, thanks to her recent and unexpected bursts of cleanliness, was gleaming, her worktops shone and no item was out of its place. Grabbing a glass, her movements sluggish, she filled it with a refreshing and healthy dose of filtered water from the fridge. After she gulped down two full glasses in quick succession, she steadied herself against the dining room table and shut her eyes.

Standing still was a rarity, her fingers curled around the lip of the table, it was a small oak piece she had refurbished herself after she found it at a car boot sale. She had spent hours sanding it by hand and then coating it in varnish and it was remade, something new from something old.
Normally, she had a knack for solving problems or fixing things but her own budding relationship was foreign to her so she allowed herself to drift with the flow and natural progression of it all.

Sighing, she scrapped her blunt nails across the polished wood as she breathed through her nose and shed her shirt; it dropped to the floor leaving her topless. Tilting her head, she palmed her neck. It was incredibly sensitive and wet with perspiration, her fingers slid across the fevered skin and then she shifted, the ring of her phone sounded the small place.

Expecting it to be Ben, she rushed over, ignoring how heavy she felt and scooped up the incessantly noisy device, the sound drilled into her skull, she cradled it with the heel of her hand. Hushing the phone’s rings with a quick, blind slide of her finger, she lifted it to her ear and rubbed her eyes.

“Hello?”

“Rey, dear, I hope I did not wake you!” Leia exclaimed.

Her enthusiasm was contagious but something Rey could not fathom, especially with how early it was in New York.

Sitting, Rey nestled deeper into the couch cushions and tucked her legs underneath her.

“No, I did sleep in though,” She admitted, pulling at some stray strands of fabric below her, the couch needed replacing but it was comfortable and something she did not wish to part with.

“I know. Ben has done nothing but sleep with those painkillers for his arm, my poor boy.”

Rey swallowed down the bitter taste the words left in her mouth.

“Is he recovering okay?” She tried, hoping her voice did not reveal her true feelings regarding the matter. Was she jealous that his mother was the one looking after him? Or was it the fact that he had kept it from her, she was unsure.

“Oh yes, as well as can be expected. He is always quiet after the big jobs, we were so close to losing him but he prefers to reflect about it alone,” the woman sighed, her enthusiasm was gone and scattered like dust in the wind.

The back of Rey’s neck prickled with hot heat and unease. Surely, she had misheard.

“Lose him,” she repeated, it hurt to say the words aloud but she was in desperate need of confirmation.

“Yes, it was a close one. I cannot blame him for not leaving Gwen when she was injured but it hurts, knowing he was willing lose his life alongside his best friend. That boy is selfless, just like his father. Luckily, they were rescued. I just wanted to make sure you were okay, no doubt you two conversed about this.”

Lose his life

“Leia, do you mind if I call you back later? I woke up ill and I think I need to go back to bed.”

“Of course, dear, I will tell Ben for you, rest up, I will send you my chicken soup recipe.”

Rey was only half listening; she ended the call and dropped her phone to the space beside her. The ringing in her ears was befitting of the cold numbness that took hold of her.
Ben had nearly died.

Ben had nearly died because he would not leave a friend.

Ben had nearly died because he would not leave a friend and he had not told her of how he had nearly left her alone in the world.

Blinking, she swiped the tears and raced to the bathroom, she expelled her measly stomach contents, heaving until only bile dribbled into the bowl. It hurt, her throat was raw and sore and the acidic taste matched her mood and darkening thoughts.

Sweating, she knew she could not deny what was happening to her any longer, it was a rare moment of pure clarity and she recalled all the events leading up to that moment.

Standing up, she rifled through her medical cupboard, shifting bottles until she found her suppressants. She had been on the highest legal dose since a girl of fourteen but she swallowed twice her usual dosage. She scooped up some water in her shaking palms and used it to rinse them down.

Trembling, she trudged back into the living room, she felt heavier than before as if the weight of the world had come crashing down on her shoulders, she curled inwards on herself, her shoulders no longer straight and set back.

Still nauseous, she picked up her phone. She moved to the window, one arm wound tightly around her middle. The sunflowers Ben had gifted her were wilting, dying, the petals curling in, quite like herself, as the sky darkened and the clouds, a molten grey, opened and the first summer rain of the season fell.

It chilled her space, no longer hot, she looked on, her glazed eyes a lifeless light in her reflection.

Chewing her lip, she felt a new sense of emptiness as she searched for the familiar name and called him.

“Peanut, are you okay?”

No

No, she was not but she had more than one problem to deal with.

Gazing at the skyline and streaky rain on the glass, she shook her head.

“Finn, do you still have some of your old suppressants laying around?”

Chapter End Notes

Smut and angst...I know. Smut is still...hm but I hope it was good to see things from her perspective.

BUT

Be assured that the next chapter is not angsty as we visit Ben. 19 & 20 will be the ones where things come to a head but please trust me when I say, I HAVE GOT YOU! ;)
Trust me :D <3

Oh did I mention I have nearly finished 18? *coughs* Calendar shoot *coughs*

As always, your comments spur me on, they make me want to write faster to get these chapters out for you.

And to the number one question...SOON, VERY VERY SOON.
Instinct

Chapter Notes

The ladies of The Writing Den have wanted his calendar shoot for a while ;)  
Hanging hoses between your legs...am I right? :D

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Ben-New York, United States of America

A couple of weeks had passed by.

The time that followed had been different, a muted contrast to the heated interactions of the days succeeding the emails of their confirmed mating through ‘Match’s’ mating service.

Ben had noticed a change in Rey that he could not quite understand. While they still spoke regularly, each day remained filled with messages and conversations, she seemed somewhat distant. Every day, they learned more about the other but Rey, there was something in her eyes that told him she was keeping something from him and it was hurting her, terribly.

It irked him, he wanted to shake her and beg her for her secrets so he could carry the weight of her burden but whenever he asked about her wellbeing, she would proclaim that she was okay. What had she chosen to hide from him, why had she chosen to suffer in silence when he was ready to hold her up and listen to whatever shrouded her mind in a shadow that overwhelmed the light that played there.

Unconvinced with her declarations, Ben decided to let her experience whatever she was dealing with alone in hope that it was a fleeting problem. It crushed him to do so but he respected her choice to remain quiet on the matter. Some things were meant to be walked alone. However, if it continued much longer, he would confront her and quietly urge her for the truth until she admitted her problems to him.

All he wanted to do was balm her soul and offer a reprieve or solution that would ease that faraway look in her eyes. That gesture and telltale sign of her hurt killed him; they were always glazed as if she was buried below the forest green grass and fresh soil that coloured her orbs.

They had not indulged in anything sexual either, not since that heated night. It had been one of the most moving moments in his life; he had never seen anything as beautiful and arousing as her climaxing as she screamed his name.

There was an innocence to it all; of how she explored herself with him guiding her but there was also a wicked sense of possessiveness. All her pleasure was his for the taking; it belonged to both her and him. He could not wait until she came undone below him. It showed her profound sense of trust in him but also her willingness to accept that they were more than their biology, already, he knew her mind so well and unearthed most of who of the layers of who she was below the surface.

Things had changed though and he could not figure out what was shadowing her but he would give her some more time before taking action, he would cross the ocean if he had to.
Not wanting to trouble her further, he kept the subjects light between them and he found himself a most avid reader of the woman he would one day claim. She liked her tea strong, with only one sugar and a splash of milk. While she found solace in numbers and equations, reading was also an interest of hers. She quoted the classics from Austen to Shelley.

One night she quoted a Shelley quote that Ben still whispered days after her repeating it.

‘Nothing is so painful to the human mind as a great and sudden change.’

Was she trying to tell him something? Had there been a change that caused her pain?

It kept him awake at night.

Later on, she confessed that she owned some rare Stephen King hardbacks; all were first editions that she found at car boot sales, diamonds amongst the rough. While she owned no pets, she preferred dogs and Callie appeared unamused when Ben confessed that little snippet of information, it was odd that he somehow convinced himself that she understood exactly what he was telling her.

“She’ll love you, girl,” he assured the feisty feline, even though he was unconvinced that his companion would tolerate Rey’s presence in their lives.

During one conversation, Ben had been called away by a knock on the door and left the two of them to stare at one another through Skype. When he returned, Callie was sitting on the keyboard, having stepped on the power button, effectively ending the conversation with Rey.

It was telling of his clingy cat.

More than anything, Ben learned how selfless Rey was. She would spend her lunch hour at the pub her mother owned and volunteer if the rush and crowds that usually spiked around noon were too much for the men on staff. Her favourite colour was blue and she divulged that while she adored the bustling atmosphere of London, it was her holidays on the coast that brought her true happiness. A wild swimmer and an avid runner, she liked to keep fit and the leisure holidays served her well.

One night, she offered to show him her favourite nature spot and Ben lit up at the idea of walking beside her and taking in the beauty of her country with an even greater beauty gracing his side.

Like her, he had sent a package of his own. While he could not find himself able to part with her panties, he decided on something more sentimental and not loaded with expectation. It was a simple gift, one that would hopefully bring comfort. It was one of his old fire station t-shirts that he had worn when he first joined his profession.

At eighteen, he had been a lot smaller than he was now and although he imagined the t-shirt would drown Rey, he sent it anyway. She had yet to receive it and the wait was agonising. There was something about her receiving his scent that stirred him, he wondered if it would affect her as hers had him. Not only that, there was a manly pride and attraction to see his mate in his clothes, that she would wear something that he had once wore, that their skin would touch the same fabric, years apart.

His final poem was long complete; it had manifested itself in the moleskin notebook that Rey had instinctually bought him. His words peppered the pages like breathy kisses, draft after draft; he scribbled and killed his number two in the process. Once he replaced it, finding comfort with the wood behind his ear, he set back to work and had finished it late one evening with Rey’s soft
breaths, the shallow kind that came with sleep, sounding his working space.

It was his finest work.

His editor, a lovely woman named Rose, had been steadily compiling all of the works Ben sent her way, there were rarely any changes and she praised his style and the deep emotion included within his words. It was rooted entirely around how his loneliness had come to an end; he was no longer cowering in darkness for fear of being alone. Instead, it only intensified the deep longing within him but he was weightless and anchored by the strength of his mate who kept her heart strong and true to the belief in her ideals.

Ben doubted Rey had heard of him, he did not seem like her type of author. While some of his earlier poems in his debut novel had been darker in nature, he had often wrote of the crippling vice of despair and loneliness and cursed the world for it all, he was no Stephen King. The master of horror was someone Rey spoke about often and he knew he did not compare.

There was a hope that she had read his book, it sold extremely well and topped book charts internationally but he knew better than to assume and only to have his hopes dashed.

If she had not read his words, he would make sure she memorised them as he kissed them into her skin and breathed them into her open lips as she gave him everything. Reciting his words to her was deeply ingrained fantasy of his and he would see it through to the end.

After Rose had read all he had sent her and shaped it into stylistic art, it was sent away to the eager publishers who had been pushing him for another novel since the success of the first. Apparently, there was a huge demand for more of his work, the public craved tension and passion, both of which Ben seemed to possess a flair for.

Truthfully, Ben had never anticipated completing a second novel. For the last six years, he thought his first would be his last and remain as a standalone and that he would quietly bow out and let it speak for itself.

That was until Rey.

All his words, all of that passion, they were for her and they always had been. They were incomplete; meeting her had made him whole so it was only right that he completed the circle of loneliness and longing with the establishment of his fulfilment.

It was mid morning and he had been roused from sleep hours before by the hard patters of rain pelting at his window. Although it was still summer, the day was overcast with thick plumes of charcoal grey clouds. The heat had been stifling in his room and urged his movement to the bathroom for a cold shower.

Now, he sat hunched over his coffee table, fingering the tubs of samples that Luke had brought him. His uncle sat opposite him, smiling softly as Ben marvelled over his newest creations. Whenever he visited, Ben was transported to another time, Luke was better suited to the freethinking and love of the sixties and some habits of that era lived with his uncle. Skywalker’s were hardly subtle with much in their life and the recreational activities Luke partook in were visible to the eye without the aid of smelling him. His ponchos were colourful, coloured in rich, earthy shades and homemade bead necklaces swung around his neck. Sandals were always on his feet, rain or shine and his faded, blue jeans were decades old. The tips of his fingers were sometimes stained yellow. More than once, Ben had spotted a joint or two hiding behind his uncle’s ear amongst his shaggy hair despite marijuana use being illegal in the state of New York but he knew all about his uncle’s ‘private garden.’
Luke was a simple man, despite the mammoth fortune he had been born into. He lived outside the city, preferring the quiet and privacy the great outdoors offered. He lived off the land, growing and producing his own sustenance and natural health products. As a child, Ben spent his summers at the cabin, there; he discovered a love for watching things grow and blossom.

It was only natural that Luke came to his nephew for advice or his opinions. The first thing Ben scooped up from the package was his famed oatmeal, witch hazel and honey facemask. Inhaling deeply, he hummed. It was something he coveted, a miracle cure for his once acne ridden skin. It reminded him of those summers spent exploring the wilderness or days spent on his knees in soil as he plucked bounties from the Earth.

“You say your mate is British? Will I need to make her some of my aloe lotion for this heat? Does she seem the type to burn?” Luke pondered, scratching his chin; it was covered in a scraggly but relatively well-maintained beard, it was more grey than blonde these days.

Ben shook his head, no. Rey did not burn, at least in than sense.

“Her father is Mexican. She glows under the sun,” Ben replied, leaning forward as he presented his phone to Luke.

He had pulled up a photo of Rey, one she sent from one of her holidays on the coast, with shorts and a bikini top, an eyeful of her tawny skin was on display.

Luke grinned; squinting as he had once again, misplaced his glasses. The last time he had lost them, he ended up find them in a flowerpot and Ben was willing to guess that they were there again.

“She is a beauty, Ben, the apricot oil and shea butter lotion it is then, to make sure that skin of hers stays hydrated and dewy.”

Luke brought out his little pocket book and noted the details down, no doubt calculating what he needed to make a fresh batch of the product as only the finest would do for the newest member of the family.

Ben knew that his uncle wanted to gift her something so he did not argue; instead, he pocketed his phone and set to work. He liked a few products, for his calloused hands he tested one that immediately soaked into the skin and softened it. Nodding, he sniffed and recognised the scent of coconut oil as the primary ingredient.

“Can I keep this?” He asked, lifting the small tub.

Luke’s eyes brightened.

“Of course.”

The two remained like that; discussing the pros and cons of each item until Ben’s head was swimming with delicious aromas. More than once, he asked to keep samples, especially the ones regarding hair care. The pair shared a knowing look; Ben’s hair was not just an inherited feature.

Rubbing his eyes, he reclined back into his seat as Luke’s lips curled up into a mischievous smile. He was all shifty eyes and twitching whiskers.

“It seems I am escorting you to your calendar shoot today, again, I have been asked to photograph.”
It was something Ben already knew, Luke had a sharp eye for all things artistic and creative so every year he lent his expertise in the subject to the charitable cause. He offered his services freely, pro bono, having once been a photographer. In his youth, he had waded through war zones, nearly losing the use of his hand when he was caught up in a blast. After that, he ducked out and studied texts on pacifism before discovering his love for nature and all it entailed.

Ben peered at him and then at the reusable bag at his side, swallowing hard. The humour was missed on him.

“Your mother asked me to bring something along, Mr July,” Luke retrieved the final item from the bag and threw it at Ben.

Even with one hand, his reflexes were sharp and well tuned so he caught the small bottle with ease.

Groaning, Ben keeled over and launched a pillow at his uncle.

It was baby oil.

The pair arrived at the fire station shortly after lunch. It was not a silent walk, Ben huffed, a reluctant party in the situation. While he firmly believed in the cause, charity meant a great deal to him, he was not entirely pleased with his month. He had always posed for the later months, which usually meant showing less flesh.

My July was usually the main attraction of the calendar. Only the day before, he had tried to quietly bow out of the role, using his casted arm as an excuse. Han did not budge, only Gwen was excused as she was still recovering in a wheelchair.

Grunbling, Ben protested and was only persuaded with the promise of cinnamon buns being on site, a box of them, all for him and made by Chewie. As soon as they arrived, Ben darted towards the break room, following the familiar scent of cinnamon. On the table, sat a large pink box.

Peering around, Ben tiptoed forward, thankful for the lack of audience. Licking his lips, he lifted the lid.

“I see you, Solo,” Gwen quipped, rolling herself into the room, as always, she had shown up at the most inopportune time.

Ben jumped, swivelling around and sighed, plopping down into the chair. For now, all thoughts of cinnamon buns were forgotten and he averted his full attention to his best friend.

Gwen appeared well, despite being bound to a chair with her left leg hoisted up and horizontal. There was a glow in her cheeks, her eyes were bright and her hair down, something rarely seen by Ben. Her sharp bob framed her face beautifully.

Once she reached the table, she extended her hand and he placed his hand in hers. This was the first time they had found themselves alone since the day of the fire. Gwen squeezed his hand, just as she had then.

“Ready to do this?”

It was amusing that shedding himself of some layers in front of a camera was more daunting than facing the roars of flames that promised death and destruction.

Ben was proud of his body, it was evidence of his strength and power but he was conscious of who
viewed it. The only one he wanted to please with his appearance was Rey and from what he had gathered by noting her reactions, she liked what he had built. Hours upon hours and sweat and tears had made him the man he was.

Her eyes were the only ones he wanted on him but he swallowed any insecurities or grievances and stood tall, holding onto Gwen’s hand for a second longer before they parted. She playfully nudged at the back of his legs until he switched positions and grabbed the handles, pushing her out of the break room.

“I am not some invalid, Ben Solo!” She complained, chuckling as he wheeled her into the back of the station house.

It was bustling with activity, a flurry of people traipsed around in various states of undress. All wore their bunker clothes and a great deal of equipment. Luke was standing by a high tripod, fiddling about with the camera as Hux and Mitaka secured the green screen over the old brick wall.

Gwen looked on amused at Hux who had drawn Mr June, so like Ben; there was an expectation for quite a wealth of his pale, alabaster skin to be on show. Hux hardly compared to Ben in terms of confidence or size, the man was comically small next to Gwen but he was in no way shy.

Already, he moved about with only his bunker trousers on.

Sighing, Ben moved forward, shedding his shirt. His bunker trousers were waiting for him, folded up neat on a chair. Stripping down to his boxer shorts, he pulled them on, the red suspenders held them up, decorating his torso with a strip of the lavish colour.

He breathed in deeply, despite the heat of the space, his body shivered; his skin was coated in goosebumps.

“You’re up,” Han said from behind him.

“Hello, father.”

Turning, Ben bent and offered his father a hug; the kind only men could give, all strong and tight.

His father smelled like old spice and newspapers, his fingers inked from ‘The Times’ and his breath like the toffees he always chewed on. It was home.

Han patted his back once more and released him, gesturing to Luke who stood behind the camera, shaking the bottle of baby oil at him. Ben shuddered and eyed the nearest exit, but Han caught his wrist and laughed.

“It will be over before you know it! Just hold the hose and look pretty, that isn’t too hard for a Solo, is it?”

Ben’s cheeks flamed, in his day, his father was well known for the string of women who wanted him but it was Leia who conquered his heart and steered him away from his womanising ways.

“Easy for you to say,” he sighed, running a hand through his hair, gently tugging the locks as he walked towards Luke.

“Who is going to help Ben oil up?” Luke asked around, clearly not wanting to pat down his nephew or handle equipment with messy hands.

“I will!” Bazine volunteered, shuffling through the crowd of gathered people.
Ben froze, gritting his teeth.

As if sensing his predicament, Chewie appeared and took the bottle from Luke’s waiting hand.

“I’ve got it covered,” he smiled at Ben, raising a brow at him, his piercing there gleamed in the light.

Bazine scowled at the giant man, still for a moment as she shifted her attentions to Ben and openly ogled him. It was unnerving and the worst thing of all was that he could smell her arousal.

It was all wrong, it was off putting and could not compare to the intoxicating scent that rolled off Rey in suffocating waves. She would drown him, like the ocean that separated them but he would wade in the shallows and wait for her to take him.

“Best get going, girl, plenty of hands are needed with the others,” Chewie said, nodding towards Thannison.

It was a kind dismissal. Chewie appeared intimidating, he was much taller than Ben and hairy all over, his skin decorated in bold tattoos and he donned a piercing or two but he was all heart. Though he was quiet, his actions spoke volumes and none was louder than his kindness.

Ben stared down at his own name that took pride of place on Chewie’s forearm; he was family, regardless of the lack of blood shared between the two. They were bonded by love and fire and it was unbreakable, cemented deep and rooted without any weakness.

Chewie soaked his hands in the oil and began patting Ben down, lathering his skin until it was sleek and it shone. Ben was not uncomfortable, not in the slightest. It took very little time at all for Chewie to cover Ben’s upper half until he gleamed, from the sidelines, Ben witnessed Bazine gazing his way but he refused to look at her or give her any inclination that he was interested in her affections.

More than once, he caught Gwen scowling in her direction and all felt right again, she was less kind with her ways of warding the woman away from him. There was no subtly in her actions and it was something Ben appreciated.

While he had always depended on Gwen in many ways, he knew this was his own battle and the confrontation in the lobby was the beginning of that. There was no more time for him to play the nice guy and quietly brush her off. He owed it to Rey to keep others away with a biting finality.

The bright lights surrounding the scene momentarily blinded Ben as Chewie gave him a final slap on the back and urged him forward.

Stepping into the spotlight, Ben eyed his shoes, feeling everyone’s eyes on him. Attention was something he had often shied away from but now was not the time for that, sucking in a breath, he stood straight and rolled his shoulders back.

Breathing in caused his body to tense and reveal his deep-rooted muscles. All of them surfaced as Hux passed him the hose that he was meant to hold. The two shared a knowing look.

“Soak the ground at your feet Ben,” Luke instructed, still bent behind the camera.

Apparently, Hux had already connected it to the building’s plumbing system and adjusted the pressure as when Ben pointed the hose, the stream was weaker than what he was used to but appropriate for the shoot.
Ben did as he was instructed, spraying around him, there was splash back, soaking his already wet body but from the sounds that Luke made, high above the noise, he was pleased with the result.

It was odd, trying to pose but he managed, choosing not to smile but rather to keep a serious expression painted upon his face, he hoped intensity would work.

After a few more shots, twisting and turnings, Luke called for the water supply to be cut off. The hose went limp but Hux remained by the wall, leaning next to the lever in case further water was needed.

Ben brushed his hand through his hair; the water slicked it back, giving him a fresh out of shower look. Some strands were slick and clung to his cheeks.

“Now, Ben, I need you to put the hose between your legs and let it hang,” Luke said, unable to stop the laughter that followed.

Han dropped his face into his hands, shaking his head, his face lit up like a ripe beetroot in colour as his own groans and laughter shook through his frame.

“What?” Ben blanched and his mouth grew dry.

“Sex sells, Ben!” Gwen called out from the sidelines, reclining as she shimmied in her seat, wolf whistling in his direction.

Blinking, Ben glared at all the others who were struggling to contain themselves; it was for charity after all. He gathered the hose and stepped over it, hoisting it between his crotch and pulling it up until it reached his hips. After slackening his grip on it, it hung limply between his thighs, swaying.

Flashes proceeded in rapid succession and Ben was sure that his face only showed his embarrassment; even Han refused to look his way as Chewie gripped his shoulders, chuckling.

Luke stood straight.

“No one is going to buy the calendar with you looking like someone just ran over your cat. We need passion, Ben, entice us.”

If only it were that easy.

They tried again but Ben’s glower and pinked cheeks remained. Luke tutted and Bazine stared more than ever. If she were gone, perhaps it would offer some relaxation.

“Hose me down, daddy!” Gwen squealed from the sidelines and Ben was stunned, Hux fell onto the lever and a heavy stream burst from the end of the hose, soaking Bazine.

It slipped from Ben’s fingers, landing with a metallic clunk and drenched her more, she squealed as Hux finally regained control and turned it off.

Bazine disappeared into the bathroom, cursing as her hair and make up were ruined and Ben chuckled, smiling for the first time since he had walked into the spotlight.

Gwen mouthed, ‘You’re welcome.’

He nodded and picked up the hose again.

“Let’s do this.”
The next half hour was inspiring; Ben sunk into his role and lost himself into what felt right. Pose after pose, he found his confidence, draping the hose between his legs or over his shoulders. He shone under the lights with an easy sultry smile gracing his features.

When he was finished and walked towards Gwen, Luke beamed at him.

“Oh this will certainly draw the ladies in.”

Shaking his head, he accepted the towel Gwen held out to him, he towelled his body down when he noticed his phone, which he had left in his folded up pants, in Gwen’s lap.

“You didn’t.”

Gwen passed him his phone.

“You know, using your birthday as your passcode is amateur. I managed to take some great shots of you and I sent them a certain someone’s way. Rey with the sun emoji is her, right?”

Ben’s face heated as he skimmed the plethora of images, admittedly, he liked what he saw despite the ridiculousness of holding a hose between his legs. They showed off his physique but also his confidence in himself.

Just as he was searching, a message came up from Rey.

Three fire emojis.

Ben grinned, burning hotter than before.

Later, Ben sat at home listening to the sounds of ‘Moonlight Sonata’ fill the space. It was a song that resonated deeply with him. While music was rooted in meaning to the composer, Ben found solace in his own interpretation of the song.

To him, the piece was dark in nature, a taunt of passion lingered in the keys for what was to come when a desperate man caught sight of something he desired. It was unbridled in its representation of emotion, there was power behind the notes, a sharp bite as it reached its thrilling climax. The ferocity of the changing movements and the storm they conjured was something that enraptured Ben; he was one with that blast.

The composition had been a friend in the dark nights alone as he came to the realisation he was the desperate man who coveted something he could not possess.

He nursed a whiskey, neat, as the events of the day steadily crept up on him. Although Rey had been pleased with the photos that Gwen sent, he knew, he just felt it in his gut, that there was something not entirely right about her and he could not deny or resist the pull any longer.

Browsing and determining a suitable day was hard.

Purchasing was easy.

He swallowed thickly and drained his glass as a confirmation appeared on his screen.

A month.

He booked his ticket to London for a month’s time.
By then, there was the hope that Rey would be ready for him.

Chapter End Notes

I am well into the next chapter...so the next update will not be too far away.

I know a lot of you are not the greatest fans of angst... but 19 is back to Rey and her decision as things come to a head...20 is when things reach a confrontation between the two but trust me, the air will be cleared.

Trust me, things will be okay.

SOON.

How soon?

VERY SOON.

As always, it is your support and comments that fuel me to write faster, thank you for reading <3
Rey-London, England

Rey had slept in…again.

It was fast becoming a common occurrence, only one of the many side effects she had noticed since increasing her suppressant dose. A fog had gathered around her mind and most of the time, she was numb to the world around her.

Although she was physically present, her conscious was not, at least not fully.

The increased dosage had staved off her heat, at least for the time being but she was not foolish enough to think they would keep it at bay forever. Something had ignited in her body and it wanted released, it clawed at her insides and roared to which she responded by taking more pills in hope of dulling that primal scream.

Finn had been reluctant to give her the medication he no longer had use for. Since he mated with Poe, the suppressants had been long forgotten and gathering dust. It was only when Rey fell to her knees in hysterics and begged him, proclaiming she could not experience her heat, not yet, did he offer them to her.

It unsettled him and he did not condone it but for the sake of Rey’s sanity, he gave in. That night, she had spent hours with Finn and Poe as they offered her comfort in her time of need.

Her heat was something that terrified her, it was one of the reasons she fought so staunchly. While she knew she would have to experience it eventually, her past shadowed what was to be a passionate and enjoyable time for an omega. Snap was not the first to make advances upon her and at fourteen; she presented and found herself a target. It ended with her fighting off an alpha twice
her size but he had left his marks, long after the violet imprints of his fists healed. Although she came out of the experience stronger, she had fought against an alpha and it had soured her, hurt her badly. Ever since then, she had relied on suppressants to ward off the unwanted heat.

It was important for her to feel in control of the situation, she did not want to be reduced to a helpless woman at the mercy of an alpha she could not trust.

Then there was Ben. Her trust in him had been compromised ever since that morning a couple of weeks before. It crushed her to know that his injury was a result of a fire, one that was more precarious than he had declared. While she trusted that he cared for her and possessed reasons of his own for keeping her blind and in the dark about the situation, it did not soothe her.

It only hurt her.

It was indescribable, that battered and bruised weight she felt in her heart and mind when she allowed herself to think of Ben nearly dying. Never before had she been so utterly terrified, it kept her awake at night and haunted her dreams. In them, he was lost to the flames and in the dark she screamed his name until the smoke claimed her voice and burned her raw. The worst ones were when he whispered and called out to her but she could never find him, not when she was assaulted by dense, muggy clouds of pure black.

Every night she woke plagued and gasping, half-delirious as her frantic hands ran wild in the dark room, each time expecting to find Ben beside her but he never was. His place was by her side and she had kept him away, the empty spot was a cold and harsh reminder of her mistakes.

Granted, she knew that she was the one to blame for her current predicament but each time she mustered the last innards of her courage and readied herself to confront him or explain why she was distant, her voice was lost and caught thickly in her throat.

Therefore, she continued with the increased dosage of suppressants, it was not a decision she took lightly. There was a real chance of overdose if she did not pace herself and act accordingly. Online, she had researched extensively of the countries whose legal doses of suppressants were far higher than her own; it included countries like Germany and France. After scouring endless medical sites from the respective countries, which included English versions, she calculated the right dose for a woman of her height and weight.

In the back of her mind, she appreciated that she was not a medical expert and there could be an extensive list of mitigating factors but it was a risk she was willing to take. With her own medication and the supplement of Finn’s, she managed to ration herself for two months and then she would find herself out of options. At the end of those months, it would be highly likely she would be forced to suffer a heat and by then, she hoped she would have found the strength to face Ben.

He was her only hope.

It did not matter though, she could not bring herself to confront him just yet and he had not brought it forward in their discussions. There was a part of her screaming for her to go forward with honesty but she was a coward and it meant addressing Ben’s mortality, which she was unsure she could cope with, especially in her hazy state.

Instead, she focused on keeping both her mind and body busy. Work was hectic despite her frazzled state. Only for a few hours of her day did she find herself being able to focus fully, the rest of the time she was almost inebriated and numb.
It was the medication, she knew. Some days, she found herself staring at a wall for hours on end. When that happened, she cut down her workload and began closing the garage some days during the week, limiting her client intake. It was unsafe for her to handle machinery.

Ben had noticed the change in her behaviour, more than once he had asked what was troubling her but each time she told him she was okay despite that being the opposite of the truth. It was a barefaced lie but his own had clouded what she determined what was right or wrong.

If he could keep his near death experience from her, which he willingly accepted, she was allowed to keep the secrets of her body from him. Or, that was how she rationalised it to herself.

It was difficult at first to pretend all was well, during their conversations she would often sit quietly and listen to him speak which was not entirely a bad thing. Over the last couple of weeks, she had learned much about the man she called mate.

Ben was a Scorpio, a most fitting star sign for a man who exuded raw passion. His favourite season was winter, which initially surprised her. Life and goodness was something Ben carried with every word but winter, it brought coldness and death and nights that seemed to have no end. They were dark and long but he had quickly dismissed her musings, he explained that winter was the charge for rebirth, where life and death was balanced. One of his favourite activities was to wake early and be the first one to leave his footprints in freshly fallen snow. The cold was something he preferred, especially after a long day fighting flames. Though the nights were long and dark, he found them peaceful and quiet.

It was an interesting development.

She found winter difficult, especially when loneliness knocked at her door and curled inwards despite her attempts to keep it at bay.

There was more, he shared his apartment with a cat named Calligraphy, shortened to Callie and he had rescued her from a tree when she was a kitten. Ben kept fit but he had a sweet tooth, frequenting the bakery across from the fire station, which was run by his uncle Chewie. Cinnamon buns were his poison and he freely admitted to once eating eight in one day before.

The little details made her heart warm and her trust in him garner more weight.

She thought of him as she woke and noted she was no longer the early riser she had once proclaimed herself to be, lethargy was rife in her frame with the increased suppressants so she sat up and decided not to rush into the garage.

A knock startled her; she stood, traipsing towards the door. Peeking through the peephole, she sighed in relief when she realised it was only the postman.

“Package for Rey Andor,” was what greeted her, she eyed the item warily, signing for it and then bid the man dressed from head to toe in red goodbye.

Bumping the door closed with her hip, she swivelled and sunk into the couch cushions. Her attention fell solely to the package in hand, it was soft and not too heavy, she patted it and gave it a once over before carefully peeling it open.

Immediately, she was hit with a heady scent that swam thickly into her nostrils and planted itself on her tongue. Dizzied, she cradled her head, sucking in deep lungfuls of air, acquainting herself with the scent.

Ben.
The scent was irrevocably and undeniably *him*.

Her alpha had returned the favour.

Able to breathe soundly, she pulled the garment from the packaging and quickly realised it was a t-shirt. It was just what she needed, a memento rooted in comfort.

A sob ripped through her as she crushed it to her chest, draping the expanse of fabric to her. She clutched it tight, hugging it to her with whitened knuckles and desperate breaths. Rocking, she nuzzled into the navy cotton, drowning herself in all he was.

The tears did not soil it and they did not come from a place of grief. For the first time in weeks, she felt grounded and alive. No longer did she float in the abyss and breathed only to merely exist.

No, she lived for *them*, she lived for *him*.

Unsure of how long she remained that way, huddled over into the fabric as she bunched it with tight fists, she finally moved, standing.

Once upright, she pulled her own t-shirt over her head and let it fall to the ground before she shrugged on Ben’s shirt, it pooled on her. The hem reached her knees and the fabric billowed around her like a dress but it felt right.

For a while, she could pretend it was him draped over her, offering warm reassurances. Curling up on the couch, she allowed herself time to become lost in his fragrant notes.

It was sage with light cedar and sweet grass undertones. Sandalwood was also prominent with a hint of sweet apple. It was undoubtedly masculine and it called to her in more ways than one. It was like warm hands on a winter day or a cool breeze in summer.

It made her feel in ways that had not seemed possible before. For the first time in her life, she felt safe with no gnawing pressure to question, her naturally guarded and sceptic ways were laid to rest. It was all she needed in life.

Smiling, she swiped the tears away that had gathered and changed for work, despite the lateness of the morning, some work was better than no work. Plus, there was the added incentive that she felt alert and no longer sluggish, it was as if his scent had cleared all.

Pulling on her navy blue coveralls, she made sure to button them high, as far as they would go for fear of ruining the shirt she wore beneath that she could not part with. She slung her hair into a high bun to keep her wavy tendrils from her face and stepped into her heavy work-boots.

After a quick freshening up in the bathroom, she locked up and walked the few streets over to her garage. Thinking ahead, she had kept the workload light for the upcoming months, choosing only to accept easy jobs that involved very little use of tools and none of the more complicated machinery. There was a risk that she could make mistakes and it was something she held only herself accountable for so she would minimise those odds.

The hours passed by in relative silence; by mid-afternoon, she had turned the radio on but kept it low. The station played classical pieces, everything from Bach to Beethoven but modern pieces too, Einaudi was a prominent presence.

Under a car, her movements stilled when the familiar notes of ‘Moonlight Sonata’ boomed through the echoey space. Despite the low volume setting, it was a tune that demanded attention and rung loud. It ricocheted deep into the bones of all who happened to hear it.
With a careful push of her heel, she rolled out, the squeal of her creeper only adding to the intensity of the sounds.

It was enough work for the day; she went about cleaning her workspace and hands as she listened thoughtfully to the sharp and stormy notes of the composition.

For her, it was shrouded in darkness and desire and so she adored it despite that kind of passion scaring her. With it fresh in her ears, her movements were quick as she thought of home.

Tonight, she would thank Ben for his shirt and broach the subject that she had been so obviously avoiding. It was only fair that he knew of her heat and how she battled to stop it, he deserved an explanation of what had soured her experience and the brutish alpha who had scared her so badly that she once thought she would never experience a heat.

Then there was the knowledge of his own quietness on the matter of the fire, her hurt did not stem entirely from his decision to stay with a friend when they could not escape and faced death.

No.

It was that he did not tell her that he had come so close to losing his life, it was how he thought to shield her when all she wanted and valued was his honesty.

Her own honesty was dampened, their line of communication was rusted and not entirely sound as she withheld the threat of her heat and suppressant use from him.

If he would not burden her with his problems, then she would save him from her own.

That had to change though.

It was the only way for them to move forward in a positive light and achieve productivity so their relationship could blossom with an unbreakable foundation.

Whistling, she made quick work of closing up, the routine was ingrained deep, more muscle memory than anything else. The clink of keys and the heavy metallic sound of the shutter hitting concrete were familiar, she jiggled the padlock once and then again, before she stepped away.

It was warm but a chill clung to the lazy wind that brushed at her back, she dug her hands into her deep pockets despite how she sweat, it was almost dizzying and hit her from out of nowhere.

Blanching, she shook her head only for a cramp to pierce her middle; it was a vicious and deep pain right in the core of her. Gasping, she stooped over, hands like claws as she raked her fingers across her abdomen. Her other palm lay splayed flat on the pavement as she balanced herself from a near fall.

Another one tore through her, knocking the air from her lungs as it sliced near her hips and gnawed at her innards. Sweat from her forehead, like hot embers, steadily dripped onto the concrete below. They did not scorch it despite their heat. No one was around; the streets were empty save for parked cars and closed curtains.

A heat simmered between her thighs and her blood boiled, sizzling to the surface as her drenched body shook. Unsteady but determined, she managed to stand upright although she swayed heavily to the left. Teetering, she stepped forward, her moment sluggish and uncoordinated.

There was no denial from her now.
This was her heat.

It took hold of her with a roaring force as it spread throughout her system, it moved fast, like wildfire and spared nothing, lighting up her insides with a primal need.

Nothing terrified her more. While she had thought she was vulnerable in her haze of suppressants and slowed reactions, nothing compared to the real danger she found herself in then. It seemed as if this rush had burned all of her medication from her veins.

While she was Ben’s mate, she was unclaimed and despite the efforts of blockers, any red-blooded alpha would find it difficult to ignore her in her precarious but enticing state.

It hit her then, as she absentmindedly brushed the collar of the shirt he gifted her. His scent had triggered her heat. It was so powerful that it blasted through the numbing suppressants and ate her alive but he was not there to see her through it, she had kept him away.

Increasing her speed, she cantered forward and attempted to transition into a full run but her knees were weak and her thighs quivered. All her limbs were light and untrustworthy.

With her flat in sight, she pushed onwards, ignoring the series of stares, ranging from judgemental to sympathetic. Nudging shoulders and pushing bodies, she made it onto her street, desperate for breath and in need of release.

Whimpering, she continued until a burly hand wrapped around her wrist and tugged her into the alley next to her flat. It was painful; his nails dug into her flesh and drew blood as she was shoved against the red brick wall, hard. More pain spasmed through her frame as she came face to face with Snap Wexley.

The last couple of weeks had been blessedly free of him but they had not been kind to the man, although his face had healed, the damage was noticeable, his nose did not sit straight and there was a small dip where her mother’s fist had shattered his eye socket.

Now, he caged her in, one hand smacked flat against the wall and the other gripped her chin. His thumb and forefinger squeezed as she attempted to face away, the sight of him sickened her, even in her desperate state.

“Well, look what we have here. The little omega bitch is in heat and came running to me, did I not predict this? Why can you not look at me? Do you not like seeing the handwork of your alpha mother?”

The words crepted in her psyche.

“Let go of me or-”

“Or what? We are all alone now and you have denied me for too long, I will see you through this heat and you will beg for it,” he growled.

Unable to word a reply, Snap pressed himself flush against her, fully acknowledging the weight and height advantage he possessed over her lithe frame.

It was all wrong, she grasped the front of his t-shirt and fisted it, shoving but he did not budge, not even an inch.

She was in trouble.
Transported to a decade before, she was fourteen again and she was at the mercy of an alpha, she blinked, unable to discern the difference between the two as her vision blurred.

Snap hummed, tilting his neck as he trailed his nose along her collarbone. His lips inched closer to her mating gland and she wanted to rip him off her and his scent from her skin. Surprisingly, he recoiled.

“You smell like an alpha, it seems you were truthful about him. I wonder, why has he not claimed you with his bite? Where is he now, Rey? Is he going to rush to your rescue?

Rey gulped, unwilling to move her mask of coldness, he wanted her fear, that much was obvious. Men like him craved the fear in doe eyes and trembling lips as realisation dawned upon their victims. It was a power move and she would not cower or give him the satisfaction.

“He would kill you if he knew you had your hands on me,” she threatened and spat right into his face.

Enraged, Snap unhanded her for a brief moment and allowed his arm to fly, he backhanded her, his hard knuckles colliding with her cheekbone with a quick smack.

A blossom of pain exploded there and she found herself lightheaded, already feeling the blood rush to her warm cheeks.

“Look what you made me do, omega!” He snarled, shoving his meaty palm across her lips, it was horrid, being able to taste him.

It was an effort to silence her.

If victims were silenced, there would be no justice.

So she used her voice, screaming as loud as she could but it was muffled, the heel of his hand jutted against her mouth, her teeth scraped her lip, slicing it and the taste of copper tainted her and her attacker.

It was her warpaint.

She had to fight.

His wandering hands fell to her coveralls, he managed to undo her top button, he pulled it from her chest, it fell to the ground as he made way to pluck the other one free from its stitching.

No.

He would not have her; she would rather die than allow him to take her this way.

Snatching a shallow breath through her nose, she thrashed outwards, kicking him hard in the shin with the toe of her boot, it was all steel smashing bone and his fingers faltered. Hissing, he drooped and his hand fell from her mouth painted red.

Slithering along the wall, she moved to run, knowing flight was her best option, his size left her at a disadvantage, one that could mean the difference between her walking out of the alley with her body and soul whole or torn in two.

Her back scratched the rough brick as she swivelled but he was right there, ready for her. His thick fingers found purchase in her bun; he ripped her back, tugging her hair free from her ribbon as her
roots throbbed.

Burly arms cradled her to him, he was everywhere, she could smell the nauseating aroma of stale cigarettes fanning across her face as he panted in her ear. The sounds of his wheezing and groans as he splayed his hand below her breasts filled and soiled her ears and mind. The slick wetness of his sweat rolled into her hair, soaking it. As he rutted his hips against the small of her back, she felt evidence of his arousal.

There was no time left for standing around.

“You’ll like this, omega, I promise you,” he grunted as he shifted their positions, shoving her forcefully against the wall.

The rough surface scraped her face but she caught herself and once again, she found herself in the past, a decade younger.

The alpha then had resumed the same position then but he had suffered for that choice and she would make sure she would instil the same ferocity in her fight as she had that night.

“Just take it.”

Snap grabbed her wrists, curling his digits around the delicate points until she began to lose the feeling in her hands. With one hand, he cupped her breast and then trailed lower, pulling the bottoms from her coveralls as he worked to free her from her confining uniform.

Weakness.

No.

Strength.

Ben was at the forefront of her mind as she swiftly ducked down, bringing him with her due to his relentless hold, she twisted and warped until she heard an audible click from his arm.

He howled like the wounded animal he was.

Both of them dropped to the ground, littered in glass and cigarette ends as he swipe his leg out and tripped her, causing her descent. On the way down, she reared her palm back curling her fingers back as she jabbed his nose with the heel of her hand.

Another crunch.

Blood sprayed them both, coating them in a liberal covering of the source. When they landed, Rey presumed an upward position but even with a broken nose and wounded arm, Snap rolled and hovered above her. The weight of him was crushing.

“You fucking bitch,” he huffed out as the stream pooled in Rey’s face; it filled her mouth as she choked, coughing and spluttering.

Knowing the extent of her circumstance, she became desperate and exercised something she should have used from the beginning.

Arching her back, she lifted her knee, thrust it upwards with a heavy forward momentum and caught him between the legs.

Red in the face, he gasped, falling off her. Quickly shuffling away from him, she stood, breathing
hard as she wiped her face with the back of her hand.

Exhaustion was setting in and her heat was in full intensity.

One more short dash and she would be free of him, home and safe behind her door. It was not that easy, he secured his fingers around her ankle and she saw red.

No one would make her feel like this again.

With one almighty stomp, she stamped on his fingers, crushing them to the concrete below them. Her work boots were heavy duty so she rained down on the limb, time and time again, despite how he screamed.

“You will never look at me again! You will not touch me. If you come near me, I will kill you,” she roared, her stampede was not without casualty; his hand would never be the same.

Snap moaned pitifully and cradled his injured arm to his chest, his storm blues eyes focused on her.

“If I hear about you assaulting any other person or touching someone with those grubby hands against their will, I will kill you!”

The man nodded, defeated and slain, gurgling on his own blood, the crotch of his trousers was drenched in urine.

Disgusting.

“I will not be your victim,” she whispered as she took her leave, unwilling to spend another moment in the same proximity as him.

She ran, adrenaline the source of her power. Hyperventilating, she made it home, locking the door behind her. Unwilling to deal with anyone, she shoved her couch against the door and loaded items on it until she was sure of her safety.

She felt her panic rise instead of decrease as she rushed to the bathroom, she stripped off, choking when she realised that blood stained the t-shirt Ben had gifted her.

Sobbing, she sat in the bath, naked as she turned on the spray of the shower above; she rocked as the piping hot water cleaned her of her ordeal. Like a viper, she hissed and spit the blood that soured in her mouth, bidding him goodbye as the red slithered down the drain.

Hands secured tightly around her knees and head balanced on them too, she lay there, even when the stream turned cold.

It suited her, her heat ached and all she felt was the blistering hot spasms below her navel and the slick rolling out of her.

Hours passed, she shivered, hot and cold and reached a weighty conclusion.

Now was not the time to summon Ben to see her through it all, not while she was so fragile and emotionally torn. The assault had frightened her and only affirmed her darkest thoughts.

This time, she would suffer alone.

In her brief moments of clarity, she managed to send messages to her loved ones as she described her absence and lack of presence in their lives. It was difficult, her fingers shook and her palms
were laden and soaked in sweat, meaning the effort to type was challenging, an arduous but essential task. A façade was required to ensure no one disturbed her while she was both physically and mentally fragile.

The attack was something she had lived through, unlike some, she walked away as a victor but it was a mirror image of what she has survived before and her mind was scrambled, her trust in others and the world in general, dismantled. It was decimated but her solitude offered a time for reflection in which she was no longer blinded by prejudice. By painting all alpha males with the same brush, she only caused damage. It was wrong of her to assume their intentions, not all were black shadows who bid their time as they lurked and waited for victims. Ben had shown nothing but love and understanding, complete and total patience with her and she had betrayed him by thinking that he could hurt her.

It was something that she planned to atone for.

It was clear to her now, he wanted to love her and for her to love him with abandon, so desperately so, those eyes begged her for it, bare and true.

Using the flu as an excuse, she expressed that she was not to be approached. Of course, her family and friends fought her on the issue but she remained stoic, despite the knocks at the door.

It was hard to see Ben’s name on her screen as she messaged him intermittently. Using the flu as an excuse worked in her favour, he did not press her for phone or video calls as she feigned that her voice was useless and her image was something not worth seeing. It was not all a lie, her face was bruised and raw from scraping her face against the wall, her arms were black and blue, her wrists cuffed in violet.

Seemingly understanding her hesitation, he texted her all day long and offered comfort, sharing recipes or ways that could fasten her recovery, all were natural solutions.

If only he knew that only he could quell her aches.

The week had been agony, her body wrought tight and coiled deep with hot throbbing and pounding misery. With each passing day, it waned, slowly; the scorching tendrils uncurled and withdrew from her abused flesh.

Rolled up, cramping and sweating, she spent most of her time in the bathtub for hours on end; her skin pruned and middle aching, it was the only way to maintain some of her sanity as she sunk below the surface and floated there. It was quiet, save for the errant leak from the dripping tap, signalling the seconds that passed. It was helpful as she lost all sense of time as the days blurred, the night and day different but quite the same.

There was no reprieve, no matter how much she used her fingers on herself. It was never enough. She cried and wailed for hours, tugging at her hair. She wanted to scratch her skin down to the bone but she lay motionless, too weak to lift even a finger.

On the final day of her heat, her mother visited.

It was an unexpected visit, Jyn appreciated the need for privacy, whenever she was ill, she never allowed anyone to care for, preferring to lick her wounds in private, unseen and alone. It seemed like an alpha trait, an evolutionary habit that still presented itself in modern times. Alphas were rooted in strength and to show weakness meant they were questioned. It was illogical, trivial illness was natural and recovery almost always guaranteed. The development of medicine made sure of it.
A week was what her mother allowed her before she showed up, unexpected and not invited. By then, Rey was in better spirits but still in the throes of the dissipating heat, her body pushing a final time as it demanded fulfilment and nourishment.

As she felt stronger and no longer completely crippled by weakness, the couch had been moved away from the door and set back in its rightful place. All the other items used for strengthening her makeshift blockade were put away until her flat was neat and tidy.

It was because of this, that when her mother used her set of spare keys on the door that it opened without difficulty and she gained entrance. Rey jolted from her position on the floor, she had been curled up in the foetal position, the same one in which she developed in her mother’s womb. A couch cushion was crushed between her thighs as she sweated through another set of flimsy clothes. Shuddering, her teeth chattering, she gazed up at her mother through hooded eyes, too weak to raise her head.

“Rey!” Jyn cried out, dropping her bag, she slammed the door behind her and rushed to her side, dropping to her knees.

The panic in her mother’s eyes wounded her but she could not deny how her presence affected her, it reminded her of being a child again as Jyn cared for her diligently through everything.

Rey gasped, moaning and sore as her mother carefully unrooted her from the wooden flooring and cradled her like a new mother would do a newborn babe.

It did not take long for Jyn to figure out the problem with her, it was a hushed realisation as Jyn cried out, hissing as she rocked Rey. It was undoubtedly a hard pill to swallow.

“You went through your heat alone! Rey, do you know how dangerous that is? Does Ben know? Why isn’t he here?” Her tone was harsh, bitter and accusatory but her hold did not falter, she pressed her lips into Rey’s hair.

Rey wanted to withdraw into herself. She had asked herself the same questions over a thousand times that week and her own answer barely satisfied her own internal musing.

No, she had not told Ben and it was a regret she would carry, a heavy one, until her dying day but her fear outweighed it all.

Grasping her mother’s blouse, she clenched her eyes shut and shook her head but she refused to pity herself.

“Rey, you have a man who loves you, who gives a damn about you! How could you do this to him?” Her voice rose from the whisper into a yell as her anger and confusion settled in.

Rey welcomed it all. Of course, her mother would see things from an alpha view; she was one, all black and white and strong with a clear and resolute mindset. In her head, an omega had denied her alpha the right to her first heat. It was almost inconceivable.

“Well? Rey, answer me! Jyn snapped, shaking Rey a fraction as her hold on her daughter tightened.

It was rare for her to see her mother so encompassed by rage, she was positively maddened.

“Please, Stardust, help me understand why you have done this, not only to yourself but to Ben,” Jyn pleaded, her embrace slackened into one of accommodating reassurance and comfort.

Rey winced, feeling the sting of her words. It was a reminder that she had hurt the man she was
falling in love with, it could have all been easily avoided if she had just found the courage to speak with pure honesty.

Heaving in a deep breath, the smell of her mother’s rosy scent blanketed all around her.

“Snap attacked me, just like the one when I was fourteen. He nearly succeeded. I was scared, okay! I’m still terrified because of who I am, an omega. It makes me weak and people continue to victimise me, I am tired of it!” Rey replied, just as hotly.

Never before had she raised her voice to her mother like this.

There was silence.

Then Jyn crushed her to her chest, her breath hitching as she quietly sobbed. Her shoulders quaked; her frame shook wildly as Rey clung to her, refusing to pull away. Curling her legs underneath her, Rey resumed a rested position as her mother’s tears flooded her hair and face, saturating with her own.

“Stardust, you are strong…I will kill him,” Jyn muttered, her voice reminiscent of a low snarl, she was a vicious mother wolf, intent on exacting a final revenge for her wounded cub.

Rey shook her head.

Violence, there had been too much violence and would mostly result in more, an eye for an eye would make the world blind and too many were ignorant of that.

Only chaos could ensue.

Gulping, she swallowed thickly and attempted to articulate her stormy thoughts; she waded through and found the light.

“No, mum. I fought him off; I beat him before he could hurt me further. But he did hurt me, he made me question everything.”

She choked on her final word, her voice wobbled and she grasped her mother’s bicep and hid away in the crook of her neck.

“It’s okay, Rey. Ben…he is a good man, he would never hurt you like this.”

It was an absolute, her mother’s tone resolute.

Rey knew that already, it went against all she knew of him and she loathed that she ever doubted him.

“I know.”

“I have spoken to him a lot these past few days; he has been worried sick about you, Stardust. He is a good man who would never hurt you. You owe him honesty; you have to tell him everything.

She knew that too.

Nodding, she nuzzled against her mother’s chest, sighing as she felt the weight of the world leave her slight shoulders.

“Now, I am going go talk to him first. I want to tell him a few things before you speak to him, does that sound okay? I will run you a hot bath and after, you two need to talk all of this out.”
Tired and drained, Rey answered again by nodding.

“I will tell him everything.”

Chapter End Notes

I put a piece of my heart and soul into this chapter and used my own experiences in life to guide me.

*takes a deep breath*

So, this is what Rey chose to keep from him. I do not ask you to agree with her decisions in this but I would appreciate some understanding. The next chapter will include their confrontation and we will see another side of Ben, it is another angsty chapter but this was needed for them to move forward, to give the other complete honesty and move on and meet.

IN SUMMARY
Rey has upped her suppressant dose and has been feeling the adverse side effects of doing so.
She receives a gift from Ben, a t-shirt which ends up triggering her heat.
Snap attempts to sexually assault Rey but she fights him off like she has done in the past with another alpha which has warped her thinking and trust in men/alpha in general.
Traumatised and terrified, she goes through her heat alone.
Jyn, her mother finds her and confronts her, telling her that she is going to tell Ben and after that, Rey needs to tell him everything to which she readily agrees.

PLEASE

If you know someone who has been a victim of sexual assault or have experienced it yourself, please consider some of the resources I am about to share.

'If victims were silenced, there would be no justice.'

(Something I came up with during writing this emotionally challenging chapter)

Sexual Assault Resource Center-http://www.sarcbv.org/
Rape and sexual abuse resources-http://www.rcgp.org.uk/clinical-and-research/resources/a-to-z-clinical-resources/sexual-abuse-resource.aspx
Women Organized Against Rape-https://www.woar.org/sexual-assault-resources/ (this includes a list of other sources like suicide helplines)

<3 Big hugs for my sisters and brothers who keep going after facing hell. You are all warriors <3
Confrontation

Chapter Notes

Before I begin, I want to thank each and every one of you. I never imagined the support the last chapter would garner, so much so, I avoided reading the comments until I had finished this one so I would not be discouraged against writing on.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you for sharing your stories and own experiences with the sensitive subject I touched upon. I stand with you my beautiful sisters and brothers, we are strong and we continue on <3

Special thanks to my ladies on Discord who helped me deal with my response to posting the previous chapter <3

"I survived because the fire inside me burned brighter than the fire around me." - Joshua Graham.

Ben-New York, United States of America

Ben sat back, his new novel a small weight in his hand. It was a lavish design, unlike the paperback editions of his first novel. It was a leather bound hardback, sleek and black with crimson detailed stitching. There was no cover art, only a title and his pseudonym lining the top and bottom of the front cover. It was his own calligraphy, copied into digital form; his own writing welcomed his readers and willed them to read more of his words.

Idly, he traced that name, for him, it was like a mask, a way for him to share his works but still live in the comfort of anonymity and add a deep rooted sense of mystery. All public information about him or his chosen persona was brief. This way, he spoke individually to all of his readers and proclaimed that each one of them could be the object of a man’s want. Everyone desired the heady longing that come along with love, it was natural to feel wanted and so he gave them that.

There was hope that he instilled some kind of light into the reader’s heart, that no one was ever truly alone.

Of course, while a faceless man preached the importance of combating his loneliness with aspiration for lighter times, his words were only truly meant for one, all the words on the pages came alive and whispered true to her.

When she read them, he would no longer call himself Kylo Ren and hide behind a mask; he would fall to his knees as Ben Solo and project all of his longing to her as he finally felt true completion. With her hazel eyes upon him and his hands on her hips, he would know the true meaning of shedding the cold tendrils of loneliness as he warmed his palms with her heat.

It was surreal to think of, that in a couple of weeks’ time, he would set his eyes on her or feel her and perhaps kiss her if she would have him. When he thought of it too often, his heart would swell until he found himself breathless. It threatened to shatter, she had reduced his heart to glass, it was delicate but when he saw her, it would rage into an inferno, like hot steel. Nothing could touch it;
no one could come near, except her, only ever her.

Shaking his head, he smiled down at the book, hot off the press. It would be on the shelves in just over a week’s time. There had been an influx of pre-orders that promised superior sales than his first, the projections were bright.

Standing up, he ambled towards the wide window that filled his penthouse in natural light, though, that day there was not too much of it. It was overcast and rain fell heavily, pebbling against the glass in hard, fat taps. Pitter-patter sounded the space alongside the soft purrs of Callie who weaved between his ankles, nuzzling as her tail looped around his calf.

Leaning against the wall, he folded his arms loosely across his chest and observed the downfall. No rays of light shone through the grey and it drenched the concrete jungle in a darkness that had long been forgotten in the summer months, they had taken the brightness for granted.

Streaks shadowed his forearms as the day waned, grappling with the evening that was fast upon them all. The weather channels had predicted a storm and he felt it brewing with an eerie promise of chaos that he could not quite shake.

It was only natural that his thoughts drifted to Rey.

He thought of her, always.

Perhaps he thought of her more with his impending flight and that dull look in her eyes that told him she was not all entirely there. Could he piece her together again and ignite that spark, that life that had once sat behind them and drew him to her?

Hopefully.

Somehow, right in his gut, he believed she could only solve the solution to whatever she was dealing with. While he could build her up and shield her in more ways than one, true inner strength, the kind that could crush all that chipped away at one’s soul, had to come from within. With a solid grounding, none could stumble. While she had thanked him for his t-shirt, not much else was said about it and it came off as odd that her reaction to his scent had been muted while his had been overexposed.

The prior week had been difficult; it was hard to sit still as Rey confessed she was ill. Their communication had been achingly slow as he waited for replies, all of which were short, close ended answers.

The saving grace in the situation had been Jyn, Rey’s mother, who had quite obviously taken a fast liking to Ben if he was not mistaken. It was some consolidation, with Rey mostly absent; her mother stepped up and offered him guidance whenever he thought to call. She was there to reassure him. Never did she rush him, always answering on the first ring, she was refreshingly brash, bold and entirely unfiltered with her thinking. In a way, she reminded him of his own mother and so their friendship blossomed, often Rey was the main topic of conversation, each speculating about her behaviour in the recent weeks.

Apparently, Rey had been neglecting her garage, something, Jyn claimed, was unheard of. From the age of thirteen, Rey had worked, waking up before the sun to deliver newspapers on her bike. Gradually, as she aged and she finished her schooling, she spent hours painted in grease and oil, working her fingers to the bone. The admiration he felt for his mate and the bountiful pride knew no end, her work ethic was admirable and her kindness to volunteer and freely help others without question was endearing.
That made her avoiding her tight knit group of loved ones even more difficult to conceive.

It was uncharacteristic, an underhanded blow to all the morals and ideals she held so close.

Seemingly, she was suffering with the flu and refusing any visitors, a logical step in the prevention of infecting others but according to Jyn, Rey liked being cared for when she was ill. It was most notably seen in omegas, especially young ones. It left a bitter taste in his mouth, to doubt his mate but at this point, he questioned the validity of her tale.

Ben worried deeply and excessively, desperate for answers that he feared would never come.

The printing of his novel offered some distraction but it was not enough, nothing could shed Rey from his mind or every waking thought.

For hours, he had paced around his apartment, his feet bare and woody whispers on the dark hardwood flooring. Unsure of what to do with his fidgeting hands, he secured them behind his back in tight fists. Now, he was still, the wall supporting him as he observed the stormy clouds that were on the brink of breaking. They promised a torrid flooding from the sky above. Anticipation crackled in his limbs, he was restless and unnerved and it was all apparently without any real cause other than the thought of Rey alone and in need of him. An omen appeared overhead; a flock of crows flew into sight, dark, black blips in his peripheral, their caws like sharp death rattles as they flew into the grey. They did so without hesitation, the harbingers of death feared nothing, something he fully envied.

If he were fearless, he would have crossed the ocean the moment he was informed of her existence but he had not, and now he was left shadowed and sick with worry. Thousands of miles separated the two despite their hearts belonging to the other, it was not right but he respected her and could not force her to rush how her own mind took to him.

The rainfall sounded the spacious apartment.

Then a ring joined the quiet symphony.

Hoping it was further news of Rey, Ben immediately unfolded himself and sped to his phone, plucking it up from the small coffee table.

It was Jyn, he promptly answered, pleased that it was his bridge and constant connection to London.

“Ben, we have to talk.”

His breath hitched and ice leaked into his veins, gazing once more at the storm, he appreciated the warning he had been given. Swallowing hard, he readied himself for what was to come.

“Tell me.”

Ben had listened.

For over an hour, he had listened to the strong woman break as she spilled her guts to him. The words were like a knife in his heart, as she continued, it slid deeper into his precious organ until it was fully lodged. It was serrated and twisted as she wove her tale, beginning with Rey’s attack at the age of fourteen. Although she was not present during said attack, a young Rey had confided in her mother in hope that she would help weather the storm.
It broke him, split his spirit to the bone.

To think of her, so tiny but not entirely helpless as she fought repeatedly to ensure the basic right of safety and security for one’s own body. There were no words that he could conjure up that would fully express his grief. It was difficult to imagine, as an alpha, he had feared very little and it had never crippled him into a stoic silence like it had Rey.

It explained everything, at least in his eyes.

That guarded woman had survived a vicious attack but it had scarred her mind, it had shadowed her thinking and trust in others.

It was not the end of the story.

For years, a man had harassed her.

The week before, Rey had experienced her first ever heat and the vile man had attempted to take her but again, his warrior fought and succeeded.

Ben could not be more proud in her even thought it irked him. It was unnecessary for her to suffer alone but she did so without even a whisper his way. If he had been there…if he had witnessed the ordeal he would have swung true until the breath no longer left the attacker’s body. The concrete would have been his resting place amongst blood, bone and gory violence until he could not lift his arms again.

Why had she not told him of the man? The one who made advances and cared little for the fact she had said no and was now mated.

It hurt him that she had decided to spend the week alone, he had heard of the agony, the hardships, a lone omega faced if they chose to ride the hot currents of their heat alone.

Had she suffered? Did she curl up like a helpless babe and whisper his name?

Tears streaming, Ben pressed his lips together as the call ended, he crushed the device so tightly in his palm that he feared it would shatter into a million tiny pieces.

Lost, he slumped and slid down the wall and unhanded it before he did it damage. It was a lifeline, one of the few things that connected him to Rey, it was essential that he kept it in working order.

After his time in the deep recesses of grief where he drowned time and time again, there came a fiery hot anger that could not be quelled with the icy numbness of sadness.

He raged.

Rising to his feet, he screamed a primal scream, a sound that had no business coming from a man.

Unsure of how to cope, he exploded, desperate for some kind of release from his tumultuous and boiling emotions and thoughts. A battled waged on between deep understanding and right misunderstanding.

Had she thought of him similar to the monsters who had laid their hands on her? Did she group them all as one and shiver away from him because she thought him capable of such misdeeds?

No.

Surely not.
Roaring, he clenched his fists together, his skin hot and itchy as something inside of himself broke to the surface. The man he prided himself as being was thrown to the sky as he swirled and drove his fist into the wall. A resounding crack snapped through the room, the shadows clung to him. A fresh lick of pain swelled then as he pummelled the wall, thrashing and hissing as if he was burned alive with no escape in sight. Blood spat crimson patterns wherever his fist landed; his knuckles drooled heavily, weeping their sorrow and anguish. Seething, he heaved in noisy, heavy breaths, tasting salt and bile as he swung and landed a heavy blow to his bookshelf. Work rattled and then fell, the spines creaked as they lay splayed open but he had no time to worry himself with the words of others.

Only hers mattered.

Yet, she had told him nothing.

Groaning, he grabbed an ornate vase and let it fly, it smashed to the floor, littering it with shards strewn around. If he had stood on any, he was unsure, he felt no pain relating to the physical sense, it was his mind that was alive and blackened, his darker thoughts more like unwelcome tumours that he needed to rip out with his bare fingers.

Spewing profanities, he crouched and flipped the coffee table, rounding upon its contents as he searched for more items to bear his pain, the havoc that flowed through him would be their undoing. Jutting his leg, he rained down on the table until his muscles burned and splinters bathed him.

Grunting, he shoved the remains against the wall until something, a beacon of light caught his line of vision and his rage was brought to a simmer. Gulping, he bent over, brushing the pages clean. It was his novel and it had fallen open at the dedication page, a note he had thought over for hours. Rey.

It was all for Rey.

It was too overwhelming for him to comprehend.

He was wrong when he thought nothing could calm him, Rey was the answer. All of it hit him so viciously in the quiet of his apartment, as an empath, he felt everything so deeply and it struck within him.

What would she think of him now if she should lay those eyes on him? Bloodied, snarling and only the shred of the man she knew stood now. No doubt, what he had become would have terrified her, only affirmed her prejudice, and all but justified her image of alphas.

Everything he thought he knew was coated in some kind of sad deceit despite him understanding the reasoning for it all to some odd extent.

It consumed him like wildfire but he maintained some of himself and that man, the one with a true heart and open mind in desperate need of love, rose from ashes.

Ben’s rage was aimed at the monster who attacked her, the one who dared to touch her and attempt to make her a victim. Wincing, he caught a breath but it was short lived. Sweating, chest heaving, he rushed to the bathroom with the image of Rey cornered and caught in his mind. Dropping to his knees with a bony slap, he hugged the bowl as he vomited. A lake was expelled from him, time and time again, he heaved, his throat burning, scorched in acid. It was putrid poison as his stomach cleared and all that was left was the horrid taste of fresh bile. It clung to his tongue and cheeks,
which only made him retch more.

After a while, he could breathe again, face flushed and soaked with sweat. He shivered; his hands shook as he gripped the bathroom counter and pulled himself up. It was a trying task, his casted arm left very little room for manoeuvring and he was tired, depleted and drained, he accepted exhaustion.

Destruction was the cause of it.

It did not agree with him.

Ben was meant to bring construction; his calling was to build people up and to life with his words and presence. There was no doubt in his mind that he was supposed to crush Rey’s fear and offer love, acceptance and safety with the promise of protection with his own body.

Growing up, he loved to watch things blossom and to win in the battle for life and peek through soil. All started small but with the help of the sun and its glorious light, life flourished and stood tall. With her permission, he planned to nourish Rey in any way she needed and in turn, she would act as his light, his sun that banished any darkness that crept.

It came with requirements.

They could no longer continue with mistrust and miscommunication. All he wanted was her honesty, all of it. There was no rush, he would not demand she spill all her secrets in a single night but she had to show some inclination that she was willing to trust him.

Otherwise, what was love without trust?

Nothing.

Hot water stung his hand, it washed away the blood, the vermilion swirled in the porcelain sink before it disappeared down the drain with a quiet gurgle. Low hisses passed his lips, the flesh of his knuckles open and fresh, torn and scarlet. Deep indigo shadowed them, shades of violet and charcoal marred him but they brought nothing but shame. The spectrum of rich, deep colours were reminders of how he allowed his temper to best him. Never before had he spiralled like that and it frightened him, his instincts had spilled over and he had become the image of an alpha who acted before he thought.

Quite simply, it was not him.

It was a skewed and an ill misrepresentation of who he was inside but he understand those raw emotions, the types like grief, rage and sadness could make even the tallest man fall.

Confronting his reflection, he disliked what peered back at him. More than just dishevelled, he appeared more like a wild animal than a man, his charcoal eyes were rimmed red and the whites flushed with bloodshot veins. Leaning heavily forward, he slumped, cupping his hand as he turned the water cold. There, he gathered some water and drenched his face, clearing the sweat, tears and any other signs of grief from his features.

Digging deep, he found some of the strength he carried within himself and breathed, although it was a little shaky thing. It was delicate, tedious work cleaning his hand with a cast on the other but he managed well enough, glad that the gruesome markings had bled dry, ebbed down to nothing. No longer did his heart race and pump wildly, it resumed its strong, steady thump, his marching tune and despite everything, he felt lighter, ready to conquer what lay ahead.
A shower called to him but it was too much hassle, it would require him bagging his cast but he was sore, he felt the weight of his outburst with every slight movement. Opting for a quick once over with a washcloth, he shed his sweat-laden shirt and he scrubbed his skin despite the aches. There was a reason for him wanting to appear fresh; Jyn had ended their call with the promise that Rey would make a call of her own to him after she bathed. From what Ben understood, it was the final day of her heat and it killed him to stay away as his instincts screamed at him to go to her and offer support.

It did not matter, she obviously did want him there and he refused to intrude. Many in society believed alphas possessed a right to an omega’s first heat. While it would have been a delight, a special slice of heaven, it was not his call to make.

It was her body, her mind and the choices pertaining around them were her own. Pressure or force was something he would never exert over her and if she wanted to spend the rest of her heats locked away until she trusted him fully, he would allow it, encourage it, even.

That did not lift the suffocating want to partake in them, from what he had been told, they were otherworldly and only strengthened a bond between two mates.

He would wait, he knew all about waiting.

Callie appeared, hesitant at the doorway as her eyes shifted upwards. Ben stepped towards her and she stepped back, almost skittish.

“Did I scare you, girl? I’m sorry, I’m so sorry,” he whispered, kneeling, before he sat down on the tiles, legs crossed and back hunched.

Dropping his face into his hands, he scrubbed hard, feeling tears form again. How could he face her and act as a source of strength when it felt as if she had torn a part of his heart out by withholding information from him?

It was not only the idea of his little mate having to fight, not once, but twice that hurt him. They stung, the second attack would been avoidable if he were there but it was the lack of communication between them that truly worried him. The lack of real trust was obvious and he thought of every interaction and recalled his actions as he tried to pinpoint if anything had brought about her doubt in him.

Raking a hand through his hair, a lone tear wet his face, he forced his eyes shut and inhaled.

Could they survive this test? Could his heart take another wound; a purple bruising on pink muscle that beat red?

A soft nose nudged his leg, his eyes snapped open and he saw his beloved companion by his side, seemingly unafraid. In need of some comfort of his own, he lifted her up to his chest and indulged himself. Callie nuzzled his face, purring as her soft fur grazed across his skin and he felt better, not as lost as before.

For a while, he remained that way, long after the feline fell asleep and sounded the space with light snores that vibrated against his chest.

It was bliss amongst carnage as he carried her, tip toeing around his apartment as he avoided shards, splinters and any other entrails that he spilled in his destructive state. It was a sorry sight but he lacked the energy to make everything right.
Regret, he truly regretted his outburst but in the moment, it was exactly what he had needed, torrents of thick emotions had been unleashed and it left him reformed.

In the morning, he would clean and repair any damage and move forward from it all.

Sighing, he sat at his dining table and opened his laptop. Weary and apprehensive, he waited for it to load and drummed his fingers on the table despite the discomfort that came with that action. The hazy light lit up his face; he found it much too bright for his sensitive eyes, still bloodshot and puffy.

Sighing, he brought up the Skype application and signed in, grimacing as his knuckles flexed. They would need an icing treatment later. Much to his surprise, Rey was online. The profile photo that he already knew so well caught his interest; it was she, grinning wide, all doe eyes and freckles.

It had been a while since he had seen her beam that bright.

Swallowing hard, he attempted to prepare himself for what was to come, much needed discussing so the two of them could move forward but there was no telling how she would respond.

It was still the final day of her heat, her emotions were obviously heightened so he respected that perhaps a resolve was not in sight for that night.

It was a battle of instinct and conscience to stay away.

The tune of a Skype call started up, Ben was sharply tugged from his mind as his heart hammered, pounding as he clicked to accept.

Rey’s image flashed upon the screen, evoking a deep reaction from him. There she sat, wet, wide eyes and damp hair, dishevelled with skin pink and scrubbed raw. It was his shirt, stained darker along the neckline that moved him; one hand was wrapped tight around her middle as if she feared that without it, she would fall apart.

He could not speak.

The difficulty to remain rooted in his seat was astronomical, while she wore his shirt; it stirred something within him, something previously dormant. She was his; his scent would have clung heavy to her just as he wished his flesh would. There was nothing he wanted more than to wrap her up in his embrace and keep her together as she healed.

For a long time, they stared at one another and Ben watched her as she gradually brought her knees up on the seat, secured a tight hold around them, and then rested her chin there too. Curled in on herself, she appeared so small, so fragile but he knew it to be wrong, she was strong, more so than she knew. The shirt floated down and drowned her curves but it allowed the movement, the fabric did not stretch for such a position.

“Ben,” she finally whimpered, her full lips cracked and turned downwards into a frown, the bottom one quivered, the movements seemingly unavoidable and dragged from a place of fear or great sadness.

“Rey,” he croaked out, not quite trusting of his voice since the primal screams that had burst from his chest, he could still feel the aftershocks from them.

Rey visibly relaxed, her frame loosened from the stringent hold she had placed upon it as she tilted her head up, holding it high.
Ben clenched his fist; he ignored the pain and kept the appendage out of sight. There was a real possibility he could scare her with the influx of his chaotic emotions that had surfaced.

Of course, she was selfless but this was too much for him to accept.

“For what, Rey? You survived an attack. I should be apologising, I could’ve been there—” He shifted the blame to himself, willing to carry the burden and weight of both of their mistakes.

“-no. Do not try to turn this on you, Ben. You are not here because I asked you to stay away, do not try taking the blame for a man who wanted something that was not his!” She replied hotly, she raised her chin defiantly, her eyes no longer glazed and swimming with fresh tears.

Gone was the broken woman who had to hold herself together and in her place sat a spitfire with a vehemence that rivalled his own. In an odd way, it called to him, that intensity promised a passion that would burn them both.

He thought for a moment and pondered her words. Logically, he knew she was correct, that the rationality was clear and true but it still grieved him. A man had tried to take what was his and she acknowledged that fact.

“I don’t know what to do. I want to hurt him, badly, but you want me to stay away. Tell me what to do, tell me how I should be coping with the information that my mate had to fight a man off of her while I sit idle and tamed across an ocean,” he whispered back feverishly.

The anger, angst and hurt was steadily rising up again, it was as if he could taste the hotness of his words on the tip of his tongue as his rage reared its ugly head and threatened possession.

If only he had been there.

‘What ifs’ would only bring ruin.

‘What ifs’ would change nothing.

“You deserve my honesty and so I will give it to you. One of the reasons I never signed up for the service was because of my fear of men, alphas specifically. I thought they were all vicious creatures who would use my biology against me. The distrust continued, even after I met you because I cannot be hurt, I would not survive it this time,” her voice cracked at the end and another piece of his heart did so along with it.

It was hard for him to walk a mile in her shoes and understand the full extent of the reasoning behind her views.

Ben moved to speak but she silenced him with her hand raised in the air and finger held high, effective in its intended use.

“I judged you, unfairly so; I carried my past experiences and let it taint my vision of you, Ben. I was falling so fast for you and I was frightened and then your shirt triggered my heat—”

Ben blanched, a panic rose in him. Never did he imagine that his scent would have that much of a powerful effect on her. Nauseated, he gripped the edge of the table, uncaring of the twinges of stinging that followed.

The man attacked her because of her heat and he was the cause of that.
“My scent triggered your heat, you were attacked because of me,” he murmured, unable to withstand the guilt that washed him in torrent waves of salt and cold. It was hard to catch his breath.

Rey rose from her seat and began to pace, sometimes out of eyesight from the camera. Wringing her hands out in front of her, she chewed her bottom lip, eyes shifty as she formulated a reply.

“No! This was not your fault. My heat began presenting itself long before I received your shirt. I was the one numbing myself with the overuse of suppressants to keep it at bay, it is no wonder your scent worked through them, you are my mate. I think just seeing you set the changes in motion but it is only natural,” she stressed, muttering to herself as if he were a mere spectator.

There was so much that he did not know. While he once thought of himself as an avid reader of her, a voracious one who knew her tells, he had failed her and had not detected the signs of her anguish.

Not only that, she had been walking on the cliff edge, resorting to the overuse of suppressants despite the side effects to keep her heat away. Did it terrify her that much?

“What?” Ben was in need of clarification, there was the hope that he had misheard her or misunderstood in some way.

Rey’s hard pacing, more like a brutal stomp came to an end as she stilled and faced him, meek and with eyes that spoke louder than her words.

It was all the confirmation he needed.

“These past few weeks, I increased my suppressant use to double the legal dose. It numbed me, it made me cold but most of all, it kept my heat away which was what I needed at the time,” she rattled off, her nervousness obvious as she tugged at her damp strands and resumed her pacing.

All made sense now, the vacant stares and unregistered words that held no real emotion. It made him sick to the stomach, it coiled deep in his gut and churned.

To avoid her heat, she had resorted to desperate measures, which were dangerous; overdose was all too easy on suppressants and blockers if not carefully handled.

Anything could have happened to her and he hated that. Unable to accept such a notion, his leg bounced under the table as he tried to control himself but it was no easy feat. A part of him wanted to shake her while the other wanted to hold her and never let her go. The cracks within her were visible now.

“Jesus Christ, Rey. Do you know how dangerous that was? I just don’t understand, you could have hurt yourself, you could have overdosed,” he replied, his low timber was gravelly and thick with what boiled inside.

Glaring, she turned to face him and looked straight at the camera, her pupils blown and dark, far darker than he had ever seen them before.

“I know! Nevertheless, my heat is symbolic of me facing something I do not want to face. I do not want to be at an alpha’s mercy!” She boomed, her frustration bursting like the failure of a dam.

Ben stood too, unable to sit peacefully and began beating his fists off his thighs, in desperate need of an outlet for his broiling temper. It was a beastly mixture of frustration, anger, grief and guilt and together, they formed chaotic reactions that seeped hotly in his veins and infected his psyche.
“Do you think that of me?” He whispered, it was a broken wisp of a thing; the disbelief crept into his tone as darkness enveloped him further.

Rey stood motionless, eyeing him.

He brought his fist down on the table with a wicked smack, unable to prevent such an outburst.

“Tell me.”

She did not flinch; instead, she sat and folded her arms taut across her chest.

“I don’t but if I told you about my heat, you would have came here and I would have been made a slave to my instincts which I do not want, Ben.”

Ben growled, positively maddened.

How could she not see whom he was inside? Was she so blinded by prejudice and her scarring past experiences that she was blinded to the man who stood in front of her?

“You are judging me through your past experiences, you are making assumptions about me and I cannot accept it! If you had been honest with me and told me, I would have stayed where I was until you could face me. Even in your heat, I would have stayed here.”

“Really?” Her eyes narrowed as she collected his words and formed her opinions but still, he saw that doubt in her eyes and it hurt him, it flamed him.

“Yes! I have waited sixteen years for you, Rey! Do you know how that crushed me? It killed me knowing you could have shortened my wait but I respected you above all and continued my wait. I would wait another sixteen years if it would mean you wanted me and could believe in my heart!”

He shouted, he shook, his lips pressed together in a firm line.

It was an excessive reaction and he regretted raising his voice in response to her almost immediately. This was not who he was.

Ben raked a hand through his hair and found himself huffing as the anger returned and lit his blood to a boil.

All was quiet when he paced, his heart could not take any more heartbreak or pain, it would shatter and the shards would not realign if it did so.

Rey seemed mostly unaffected by his anger and outburst, as if she expected or supported it. Had she wanted to see him this way?

“I do want you.” She confessed quietly, peeking at him.

“All I wanted was your honesty,” he groaned, coming to a standstill.

She rose again and tossed her arms up in exasperation as her nostrils flared and eyes shone.

“Honesty, honesty! Are you one to preach about honesty when you did not tell me about how you chose to die with your friend? Or the full extent of that fire? You could have died and left me alone and that would have hurt me more than any other man has done before!” She screamed back, her cheeks flushed and teeth bared.

Ben stilled as realisation hit him hard and heavy.
She knew, she knew that he had nearly died and that he had chosen not to share such a horrible and weighty fact with her. He was a hypocrite in that sense, they both were. Each had kept something from the other so they reached an impasse, a wicked stand off.

“What told you?”

It did no matter but it was all he could think of.

“Your mother let it slip; she thought we had already discussed it. So do not preach honesty to me when you kept things from me too. I kept my heat and harassment from you but you hid much worse. You hurt me, Ben.”

The words tore at his heart and made it black; a part of it was ready to decay. How could he make her see that he only kept it from her to prevent any more hurt on her part? Instead, it had backfired on him and roasted his lips red.

“I didn’t tell you because I didn’t want you to worry; I saw your face when I ended the call as I was called away to the fire, your fear and worry. How could I tell you I nearly breathed my last breath without hurting you more?” He croaked and shook his head, his eyes threatened to flood, the events of that day and his decision hung heavy.

Rey gazed at him; her shoulders rose and dropped as she exhaled hard, her own anger apparently dissipated like his own.

“I just want your honesty, Ben.”

“All I want is yours, Rey,” was his retort.

The two stood at a standstill, eyes wicked and full of expectation. Both of their tempers had dwindled into kindling, only dead embers remained.

Rey sat in her seat, leaning back and Ben followed suit, emotionally exhausted.

“Can we start again? We can go forward with honesty, I will not keep something from you again,” Rey whispered, unwilling to gaze at the camera, she blinked a few times and fidgeted with the hem of his shirt.

Ben nodded slowly, wanting nothing more than to bury both of their past mistakes.

“Please. We have both made mistakes but we can’t give up on this, we can’t give up on us.”

Rey sniffled and then extended her hand towards the camera. Although her fingers shook, her resolution was firm and a smile, a genuine one, tugged at her lips. It was a dazzling sight, her new, fresh willingness to accept and trust in him. Her neat, trimmed nails tapped against the screen as she made contact, the audible taps rang quietly through his speakers.

“I’m Rey, my father calls me Luna, my mother calls me Stardust and my mate calls me Sunshine, which I prefer above all.”

Ben offered his own hand and mirrored her actions. Astounded, he found that his also trembled, lightly quaking as his own fingertips moved closer to the screen. Once he made contact, they stillled and for a brief moment, he pretended that they were touching and that was the cause of such calmness despite the storm they had waded through that evening.

“I’m Ben; it’s lovely to meet you, Rey…my sunshine.”
Both of them smiled in unison.

The hope in Ben bloomed, replenished like a new spring, all of the coldness and darkness was scattered to the corners of his psyche and was instead replaced by a warmth and promise of new life, a renewal of such. Smiling, he allowed himself a moment to appreciate the progress that had been carved between them. Sun filtered inwards, momentarily blinding him with its rays as the grey cleared and the light soared, thus winning the battle of the day.

The two continued that way and put their negativity and doubts to rest. Each vented their misgivings, confessed their fears and their want for honesty going forward but they also spoke of hope and a time where they would one day meet.

When Rey retired for the night, she did so with the words that struck deep in him. Without effort, she had pinned him to his seat, her eyes wide and appreciative but also vulnerable as she allowed him to see what really lay beneath.

“Come to me when you love me,” she whispered before disappearing.

Long after her departure, Ben stared at his black screen and then at the plane ticket tucked safely underneath his laptop.

It was then he confessed something aloud that he knew to be true.

It thrilled him how right they sounded as he formed the words with care, taking his time to pronounce each with love and affection.

“I already love you, Rey.”
So we saw Ben experience a Kylo Ren moment, he used a destructive way of coping with emotional pain. Luckily, he acknowledged the wrongness of it and realised it was not healthy. Please do not judge him too harshly.

You will all be glad to hear that the next two chapters more than make up for the hurt/angst and waiting for these two to meet...I will try to update on Monday or Tuesday.

^ Me approaching you all to explain just how SOON these two will meet but you are all having none of it :D
Revelation

Chapter Notes

As always, this goes out to the ladies of The Writing Den-my Flydam gals, Reyl-Hoes and CaP.

More than anything, it is for all that have continued to support me through this, so, thank you, dear reader <3

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Rey-Mexico City, Mexico

The humidity was a welcome change, a hot hug that greeted her to a land that had birthed her father. It was all so dry with wet air but as she pulled her bag over her shoulder, she had never felt more at home.

A week had passed since the confrontation with Ben and since then, their relationship had been iron tight, secure and renewed. Little by little, she spoke of her past attack as well as the latest one and he offered quiet reassurances and instilled a sense of strength in her. At night, he would proclaim she was the strongest woman he knew and despite her own reservations about that, she believed he felt it to be true.

For he was a part of her, the furnace that heated her heart and fuelled the inner strength that she found herself stoking and discovering with every passing day.

While Ben was now her confidant and her mother comforted her in any way she could, she knew there was only one person who could truly relate to her experiences.

Therefore, she packed a bag and arranged a spontaneous trip to Mexico.

Her father had been her rock before his departure to care for his mother and so it was only natural that she would go to him, a fellow omega, for advice. She had missed him terribly; he emitted a sense of calmness rarely seen in people. Cassian Andor was a quiet man, one of few words but he listened thoughtfully, always contemplative, so it was unsurprising that his words were meaningful and effectual.

Ben supported her unbidden excursion, which initially startled her. The idea had arose one night; she lay in bed, exhausted but unwilling to end her conversation with Ben. As always, he claimed the spot on the right side of her bed, her laptop perched carefully on a soft pillow, warm from the heat of the device instead of the usual coolness that rubbed her wrong.

It was the day after the news had reached her that Snap Wexley had been found dead and dragged from the cold embrace of The River Thames. Although no one spoke of it at ‘The Rogue,’ there was a general consensus that his end was warranted. It was an odd day; her tormentor had met his grizzly end, apparently beaten beyond recognition if the scarce details were anything to go by. At first, they struggled to identify his corpse, his face no better than a bloated, bloody pulp. In the end, his dental records were pulled with what teeth remained in his skull, which were rumoured as only a few. The Thames had been his temporary resting place and Rey felt herself wrapped up in a
safety net, no longer fearful of his shadow or wicked chase.

Jyn, Baze and Chirrut, along with the night staff, Bodhi and Kaytoo, all avoided her stares for days afterward and soon, she stopped her piercing and interrogative glances. If they had been responsible for his death, they never spoke it aloud. While she felt no remorse, she had not wished any of them to bloody their hands for her. It seemed it was fated, a fatal kind of karma and she could breathe again as her attacker’s breaths came to an end and no longer sounded in the darkness.

Ben had listened and like her, he was unable to hide the fact that the man’s death only brought him satisfaction. The demise was something he confessed would allow him to sleep soundly as he knew that the monster could no longer harm anyone.

Rey then told him that she missed her father and that she wished she could turn to him for support. After she admitted that her father was an omega, a fact that quite obviously stunned him due to the rareness of male omegas in society, he suggested that she visit him. That had woken her from her sleepy stupor. Selfless, Ben was completely altruistic. Since they had laid their dishonesty to rest, buried deep but not forgotten, his longing had become more apparent. All of his tells were familiar to her now but it was his eyes that spoke volumes to her, he had no need to part his lips. His gazes were weighty, wide and full of unblemished hope. Sometimes after a particularly trying day, she witnessed him curling in on himself, his back hunched and body worn and she felt him silently begging for her touch or presence.

Only her fingertips upon his skin would truly end their loneliness, she knew that to be true as she yearned for him to press his palms flat upon her own flesh and feel the heat and pulse that would race between them. One day, she would feel him and piece him together as with their bodies joined as one, they would feel a wholeness and fullness that would repair all.

When he suggested she visit her father and not him, she saw him; she really discerned and witnessed the beautiful white soul behind ebony eyes. This was not a man who would use and abuse her; he held no cruelty or darkness that she had witnessed at the hands and mouths of the men who had tried to take her. No.

This was a man who only wanted to love her and despite the idea of her visiting her father and not him obviously adding some hurt to his soul, he fully supported her and expressed that he hoped that she would find some peace.

Smiling, she thought of him as she made her way through departures, dressed appropriately in short white shorts, sandals and a marl grey tank top. Her wavy tendrils had reacted to the heat almost immediately, curling far more liberally and adding a new volume to her hair that bounced as she went in search of her luggage.

After she had secured her luggage, she traipsed through the bustling crowds, brushing shoulders and weaving past bodies until she saw a familiar figure that cut above all. Her father. Despite his lack of looming height, he stood out, going against the grain. The months away had been beneficial to him, at least in the physical sense. His skin, tan and darker than her own, an ombre like dry soil and burnt umber, glowed. Every part of him was coloured like the shades of Mexican deserts. The sun kissed him just as it did her, with loving care. While his hair, sleek and jet-black, was shorter, it still maintained that effortless brushed back and fluffy look that she had
undoubtedly inherited from him. The shortness was no doubt a way for him to acclimatise to the scorching heat of Mexico after years in the usually cold and rainy weather of London. The coffee eyes that had spoken her down in times of trouble, brightened, the corners of them crinkled as he flashed a bright, white smile at her.

Her hold on her suitcase loosened and she took off running, it was a short dash and when she reached him, she threw herself into his arms. As always, he was there to catch her, hoisting her high as he spun her, all the while smoothing her hair with one hand. Her sunhat, golden straw with a red sash, fell to the ground, her sandals joined it but nothing could stunt their bliss.

“Luna.”

“Papá.”

They remained in their tight embrace, unwilling to break it. Burying her face deep in the crook of his neck, she allowed herself some indulgence. He radiated comfort and warmth. The familiar fragrance of dahlia pinnatas filled her senses; the floral tones were sweet and muted but beseeming of him. Dignity and stability were what his floral scent represented, symbolic of a dahlia, it seeped into the bones of her, and she knew that she was home.

“My brave girl, I have missed you,” Cassian whispered as he finally set her upright and back on her feet.

Reaching out, she cradled his hand in her own and squeezed, grinning up at him.

“I missed you too.”

It was an understatement but it would suffice, there was much she needed discuss with him, his guidance was most coveted.

After she stepped into her sandals, her toenails painted a brilliant lemon yellow, they returned to her suitcase to which her father insisted on pulling along.

The walk through the airport was far from brief, they kept their pace slow and the talk easy, much to the disgruntled travellers who often veered around the pair in need of a swift departure.

It did not matter, as they stepped outside and the high sun basked its lavish rays on her skin, she was at ease.

"Come on, it seems we have much to discuss, Cassian said softly.

The drive back to her grandmother’s home was long but not uncomfortable. Mazita Kanata Andor, lovingly known as ‘Maz’ to all, had enjoyed life in the bustling Mexican capital. It was a densely populated area, brimming with camaraderie and quiet opportunity. The locals banded together through poverty and hardship and made do with what little they possessed; there was always a helping hand or kind face to help the single mother raise her sons. Before she left the city, she owned and ran one of the most popular hotspots in the city, her bar, named ‘The Castle.’ The place offered discreetness and privacy and rarely shut its door on souls, welcoming people from all walks of life despite their past.

Her grandmother was beloved and rightly so.

As Maz aged, she retired into the remote desert areas, far from the sprawling reach of the city despite how much of a contrast it was to the active bar scene. As far as Rey knew, one of her
cousins kept the family bar, a little piece of history, afloat. It still flourished as the legend of Maz’s spirit and tenacity, combined with a rustic décor still lured people inward.

Tired, Rey rested her face against the window and watched entranced at the beauty of her father’s home country. It was all amber, brown and green in the remote parts untouched by the growing industries. Tobacco fields littered the landscape sporadically but a good chunk of the journey was covered in dry soil and the dotting about of tough plants made to withstand the climate. It seemed that rain had long abandoned the land but the humidity that clung heavy in the air more than made up for that.

It was the sky that called to her the most, a heavy mixture of coral pinks and indigo violets. The sun stood tall despite its fall to the night, it crept lower behind the horizon. By the time they had arrived home, it was dark, the sky blotchy and inky with traces of black and scatterings of bright stars.

The traditional Mexican colonial style house was bright orange and true to the modest beginnings of her family from her father’s side. While Jyn had once been an Erso before her marriage and born into extravagant wealth as a descendant of a prominent duke and blue-blooded line, Cassian was born into poverty. Mazita had been widowed at the age of twenty-three, her husband a victim of gang violence and the increasing criminal activity in Mexico. At that point, she had five children, all growing boys who needed more than she could afford to give. Destitute and grief stricken, she powered through and built a life around her sons.

Many underestimated the inspired woman as she conquered the land and made a name for herself. As a young girl, Rey had fawned over the tales of how her grandmother dove into the illegal underworld to begin her trade, she mostly smuggled items and people over the border or into the country. Her rise was fast and short-lived; many famed her as ‘The Smuggler Queen’ who was the best-connected female figure in the entire country. Nothing was solely for herself; any spare wealth she accumulated was spread amongst the poorest in the area until she saved enough to procure a legal business, her bar.

Although she had dipped out of her life of crime as fast as she had dove into it, many of her old acquaintances frequented her business as they felt a sense of security there. Nothing was repeated out of its walls and all respected her enough to support her in the legitimate setting. The stream of loyal customers continued, long after she bowed out and retreated to the home where she been born.

It was a modest abode, built by the hands of Mazita’s father, Rey’s great grandfather, Alberto Kanata. Small lanterns and fairy lights lit up the entrance and garden, a small oasis in its own right. The walls appeared more amber than orange in the dark of the night but it was somber and inviting, encompassing that side of her family beautifully.

Crickets chirped and mosquitos buzzed around as Rey walked the familiar route, her sandals slapped against the stepping-stones as her father wheeled her small suitcase behind him.

Cassian was her grandmother’s youngest son, the only omega in a family of betas, so Mazita had taken to mothering her youngling more than the others. It was why, when she had fallen and broken her hip, he was the first to volunteer to care for her despite living on another continent. The mother and son were close; two kindred souls with the same striking eyes that peered into one’s soul with only a singular glance.

The house was lit up; colours of every shade had their place, a harmonic rainbow of bursting symphony. In the small living room sat her grandmother. The woman beamed, proudly flashing her white teeth.
As she lifted her arms in greeting, the assortment of bracelets and bangles clinked together, all gold and engraved. Her wide eyes, rimmed in thick, black frames with lenses that magnified them, lit up as a smile found its place on her full lips. As per usual, a bright, turquoise headscarf was draped in her raven looks speckled grey, which all complemented the almost orange tinge of her lined skin. Her flowing skirt, all black and covered in floral print, covered the expanse of the wheelchair.

“Cariño!”

Rey quickly closed the distance between the two, kneeling to her level as the small woman, under five foot, wrapped her in a tight embrace that spoke wonders of her spirit.

“Abuela,” Rey murmured, thoroughly enjoying the embrace of a woman who shaped her spirit so deeply, a profound inheritance of fiery strength that rivalled all.

The pungent notes of incense and honey enveloped her grandmother, sweet and musky and her nose brushed against the rosary that took pride of place on her tiny body.

After a while, Rey pulled back and inspected her grandmother more closely, despite everything, she appeared healthy.

“Are you well?”

Maz laughed, her lips painted a purple plum tilted upwards, her nose stud gleamed with the flames of the fireplace.

“Better than well, child. Your father is returning home with you, your uncle Diego is planning to live in the adobe house on the outskirts of my property. While I love your father, dearly, I know his place is in London and with that beautiful mother of yours.”

A watery grin formed then and Cassian took his place by his mother’s side.

“We will visit often, mamá, you will tire of our presence,” he joked and Maz hushed him with a playful nudge to his stomach.

“I expect Jyn with you next time. Now, go dish up some Pozole for my granddaughter.”

Rey giggled, amused over how quickly her father heeded his mother’s demand. His departure was swift as he disappeared behind a beaded curtain that lead to the kitchen. The crackle of firewood and the lush falls of the indoor fountain in the other room came together as a sweet harmony.

Still sat on the floor as a sign of respect for her grandmother, legs crossed and her hand on Maz’s lap, she yawned.

Maz picked up Rey’s hands, hers were calloused like her own, tiny but they radiated a steady warmth that was befitting of the woman.

“You’re glowing, my darling, Rey. I heard of the blessed news that you found your mate. It has made my soul whole, little one. You are no longer alone,” she whispered, a coy grin was shared between them as if only they knew of it, as if it was a hushed secret.

“You’d love him,” Rey confessed, equally as quiet, unable to deter the warm blush that enveloped her body.

Maz was still for a moment, nodding thoughtfully as she gazed into Rey’s eyes. It was almost unnerving how utterly bare she felt before her grandmother, her eyes were ancient orbs that had
seen rebirth, love and a cycle of renewal.

“Just as you love him,” Maz acknowledged, raising her brow.

Stunned, Rey blushed deeper, gazing away.

There was no denying it, she loved him, she loved the bones of him.

She loved Ben.

With her eyes on the flames, she nodded as her grandmother rubbed smooth circles into the palm of her hand.

“I wish you all the happiness.”

The rest of the evening passed by with a hearty serving of Pozole, especially heavy on the onions and garlic, just as she liked. A nice red accompanied the dish, a full-bodied wine that made Rey’s head swim. After a few glasses, she yawned and made her way to bed in one of the guest rooms, the one she always occupied when she visited.

Stripping down to her underwear, she flopped on the bed and dragged the white sheet across her middle.

It had been a few hours since she had messaged Ben so she held the phone high above her and wished him a good night and did not omit the detailed wish that she hoped she dreamed of him.

With that, she slumbered.

The next few days passed in the same routine, during the day, she kept her grandmother company and spoke of Ben often. Much to Maz’s delight, Rey had shown off a picture of him and it was then that Maz proclaimed that if she were ten years younger, she might have snatched Ben up for herself.

On the final day of the impromptu visit, Rey was enlisted to help clean out her grandmother’s wardrobe. In the back, lay a trunk. Curious, she opened it without too much thought of her snooping and found sunflowers. A white dress was folded neatly, decorated in a wealth of printed sunflowers. It reminded her of Ben.

Pulling it out, she unfolded it carefully and held it against her frame.

“Your grandfather bought me that for our first date,” Maz’s eyes twinkled and she was undoubtedly transported to a different place in time where her beloved husband was alive and well.

“It’s beautiful,” Rey admitted, catching a glance of herself in the tall mirror that lined the wardrobe door.

“It belongs to you now, dear.”

Rey swivelled, shaking her head at such a suggestion.

“I couldn’t possibly! It holds so many memories for you.”

“It does. However, it deserves more than to lay idle in a trunk that does not see the light of day. Make it shine, darling and make it shine hot and bright. Breathe some new life into it,” she finished her impassioned speech with a resounding slap of her thigh and a wicked gesture of her pointed
finger.

Unwilling to argue against the valid points, Rey smiled down at her feet.

“Thank you.”

In the evening, long after Maz retired for the night, Cassian and Rey sat in the back garden and watched the sunset together. It was a mostly quiet affair but at some point, she told her father of the attack, to which he proclaimed he already knew and cursed the man who was now buried and choking dead on grave-soil for the rest of eternity.

“I nearly let him ruin what Ben and I have, I made many mistakes.”

Cassian nodded thoughtfully, acknowledging that she was not without blame for her dishonesty to her mate.

“People who have been hurt like you often forget the strength within them. You learned from your mistakes and now it is time to make it right.”

Chewing the inside of her cheek, she clutched her father’s hand.

“How do I do that?”

Cassian turned and placed his hand on top of her own.

“Follow that beautiful heart of yours...always. I think you know what you have to do,” he replied knowingly.

It was something for her to think over. That night, she tossed in bed, sprawled and flushed against white sheets.

She needed to tell Ben that she loved him and that she was ready for him to come to her.

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After a long and teary goodbye, the father and daughter set out on their journey home.

The drive back to the airport was blessedly peaceful. Quiet washed over the car, which suited Rey perfectly. The whir of the decrepit air conditioning and soft instrumental tunes from the radio, turned low, filled the space. With one leg propped up on the seat, she balanced her Kylo Ren paperback on her knee and skimmed through it.

The novel, titled ‘Dark,’ was an extension of herself, a constant companion that had kept her grounded ever since its release six years before. In some odd way, she had convinced herself that the elusive author, an enigma in every sense of the word, had aimed his words at her. Every poem left her breathless and fuelled her own sense of longing. During her loneliest nights, the man had comforted her and offered her his hauntingly beautiful words.

In her dreams, a faceless shadow had whispered them to her under the moonlight. Despite its glow, it did not shine bright on him, only the darkness swallowed him, nothing could touch him. Some of the more heated dreams brought him closer, stalking towards her as she brought herself to climax as she repeated his words that burned hot, reminiscent of her most intimate and scorching flesh.

It was a foolish notion; she scoffed to herself and eyed the book that had long shown its wear. Dog-eared with a crumpled spine, the pages were littered in her notes, all pencil scribbled observations.

“How many times have you read that book?” Cassian asked, clearly amused as he side eyed her, he
adjusted the rearview mirror as they broke the city limits and entered the heavily populated area.

Rey tore her eyes from the words of the poem, ‘Blaze,’ and closed the novel, careful in her movements. It was all so delicate with how she handled it and tucked it in her bag.

There was no real way of telling of the true number, it was something she always carried on her and even if she did not, the words were burned into her irises and mind, long memorised. If it called for it, her recital would stun all with its precision and perfection.

“Thousands,” she teased, although it seemed like an exaggerated estimate, it was undoubtedly sure and very close to that number.

Cassian chuckled, his laugh quiet but genuine, a hearty sound that only brought forward sweet memories from her childhood.

Once they parked up and retrieved their suitcases, it hit Rey then that her father would be coming home with her. Jyn, although she braved through all she fought, including the unavoidable separation from her mate, had obviously withered without him.

Grinning, she thought of her mother’s impending reaction to her father’s reappearance. His return was long overdue and she was sure the pub would come alive and the celebrations would continue long into the night. It was something she allowed herself to look forward to, a safe night of indulgence and intoxication surrounded by her family. It had been too long since she had enjoyed herself in that way.

The father and daughter walked side by side, passing all the checkpoints with ease. Once seated in the lounge, Rey decided upon stretching her legs, mindful of the ten-hour flight ahead. They were early, always better that way and so Cassian chose a place and leaned heavily to the left, attempting to doze for a while. They had opted for first class, as it was not often they treated themselves to such luxury, so the lounge was blessedly empty save for the two of them.

She stood, smoothing the fabric of her new sunflower dress she had chosen to wear. Maz had delighted over how well it fit her. It was light enough and free of constriction for the flight and invasive torridity of the Mexican sun. The soft hem brushed against her knees as it floated, wispy as she traversed through the surprisingly sparse crowds of the usually brimming airport.

After she browsed some of the stores and purchased a tea, piping hot without much milk or sugar, a storefront caught her eye. It was a small bookstore. It had been a while since she had perused new releases so she stepped in, the smell of oak and freshly printed ink at the forefront of her senses.

A small woman, not much older than herself, welcomed her with a warm smile. It was a quaint place, hardly the commercial type expected in an active and often swamped airport. For a while, she ran her fingertips along spines, caressing the ones that interested her until a table display stopped her dead in her tracks. It was empty, save for a single book and a small accompanying information card.

Kylo Ren had released a second novel.

All the air filtered from the small space as she moved forward, entranced as tunnel vision set in. Her heart thundered a raging tune as she lifted the book.

In contrast of his first novel, it was lavishly decorated, a leather bound edition. His debut had been named ‘Dark,’ and his second, ‘Light.’

Catching herself, her breath hitched as she traced the calligraphy that decorated the cover, it was
crimson against charcoal, all looped and stunning, the detailed stitching only enticed her more.

With trembling fingers, she peered inside; the creak of the spine sent a shiver down her own as she took her time to appreciate all the book would undoubtedly offer.

The acknowledgment page greeted her, the place where the author, the mysterious and passionate Kylo Ren declared his muse.

Gasping, she cupped her mouth, sure she had misread. Closing the book, she gazed around and then back to the small book in her hand that now weighed more than its physical weight.

It was a trick of her eyes. Shaking her head, she peeked inside but the words remained as they were, solid and unchanging. It was a twisting of her favourite line from his first novel, a line that had instilled hope, fulfilment and encouragement in difficult times.

‘For Rey, my sunshine, in the dark I searched for you, the wait for you kept my blazing heart true.’

It was him.

Ben was Kylo Ren.

“It’s you,” she whispered in awe.

Chapter End Notes

I have had that chapter ending planned since the beginning...

I hope to get the next chapter out on Saturday! :D
Ben-New York, United States of America

Ben was unsettled.

The lack of routine and the absence of his regime at his physically demanding job had meant that he has grown used to the simple act of sitting still.

The day before had come with the welcome motion of his cast being removed. It was a joyous occasion and long overdue in his eyes. It was odd how much he took the use of his non-dominant hand for granted, it had left him mostly incapacitated and had taken a great deal of time to adjust to such a thing. Now, he was free.

Testing his arm, he flexed, unfurling and clenching his fist. While there was the odd twinge, a deep and quiet reminder of the injury, his arm had healed soundly as if new and stronger than it had been before.

The release of his novel also meant that he lacked something to throw himself into. It had been a success, at least from what he could gather from the initial numbers. The sales had already exceeded all predictions and it still had yet to hit him, it was projected for further advancement as time went on.

Today was one of the final days he planned to spend in New York, at least for the near future. With his bag packed and arrangements made for Callie, he was ready to finally meet Rey face-to-face, heart to heart and never let her go again.

The concept was both thrilling and daunting. The anticipation hummed like the contractions of his heart as it steadily pumped the red life essence around his system and carried the endorphins that flooded him when he thought of her.

Scenarios ran rampant and wild through his mind but none brought him relief. A usually positive man, he found his thinking warped and misconstrued. Instead of thoughts that revolved around the potentially positive repercussions of surprising Rey, he was instead plagued with negative and pessimistic possibilities.

One thing he knew for certain, a rejection was something he could not cope with. It would act like a final nail in a coffin or a stake to the heart, it threatened to undo him and fling his spirit to the ground, flattened and trampled by grave soil until his scarce breaths were no more.

No.

Rey would never willingly hurt him like that.
His mate was no reaper that offered quiet deaths with the cruelest strokes or took delight in harming others.

While the extended separation was her doing, she had offered the length of their continued time apart into his trustworthy hands. All she asked of him was that he loved her and that condition was fulfilled, blessedly so.

A man in love, he knew it to be so, with every passing day, it blossomed more and more and there was no telling how far it would grow. His fingertips brushed clouds; his feet barely touched the ground anymore. It was a full feeling, a contented one where he was sure that his heart would burst if it brimmed further, an overflow of raw passion that promised an uprising.

Sighing, he pressed the heel of his palms into the corner of his eyes and rubbed hard. It was unfair to assume such things of her. The nervousness was a new trait he could not quite quell, heat and flames were easier to squash, but this deep-rooted feeling knotted to the bottom of his stomach like a thorn, it was buried beneath the skin. Alphas feared little but the notion that she could turn him away brought him to ruin, he was not fearless.

Deciding his line of thinking was far too negative, he stood, enjoying the silence of his apartment and the stillness of it all. Without Callie’s presence, it bore very little life. His parents, upon hearing his grand plan, had readily volunteered to care for the feline despite her despising the two of them with a vehemence unbecoming of her endearingly innocent appearance. More than once, Han’s legs had been the victim of her attacks but unbeknownst to her, despite the vicious jabs of her claws, the older man felt nothing. Han laughed, his limbs made a scratch post as he goaded her to do her worst. After a while, she had apparently learned as much and ceased her destructive activities. That had not stopped her hissing and spitting as Han wheeled her out of the penthouse the day before, her carrier rested firmly on his lap. Before she disappeared, she had shot Ben a look that told him that when he returned home, he would need to apologise to his little madam.

Instead of dwelling in an adverse frame of mind, he worked to wash himself in torrents of comforting and pleasant thoughts. The past week had been hugely telling of his relationship with Rey. Every day, they had grown together and progress had been made. With a sense of trust established between the two of them, he found Rey much more agreeable and freely open of her experiences.

In no way was it shallow. Together, they scratched the surface of the other’s psyche and nestled themselves there. Sharing was easier, he had learned just how thoughtful his mate was and how she viewed the world, she believed there was good in everyone despite her past. When the news of her attacker’s death was made known to him, he reacted calmly, worried and concerned for how she would respond.

It was joyous news to Ben but there was a part of him, a wild and untamed being who had attempted to claw its way to the surface as it felt the call for vengeance. The man was lucky that he had perished by another’s hands, as Ben was sure he was capable of making his miserable end far more painful than it was. The suspicion naturally fell upon Jyn and the men Rey considered her uncles. It did not matter; all he was distressed about was Rey.

While he encouraged the trip to Mexico, it was bittersweet. For the first time, the two would walk upon the same continent and they would not stride toward each other. Ben could hardly begrudge her, in times of anguish; he turned to his own parents for support.

The trip had been beneficial to him, every day was filled with beautiful pictures of Rey smiling, as he had never seen her do so before. It was as if she had shook her chains and felt true freedom for the first time. The Mexican sun had coloured her beautifully, a ripe, tawny brown that demanded
his full attention.

Under the firm grip of his fist, he had writhed in the night, spurred on by the expansive golden skin that called to him, he wanted to lavish it with his attention, his mouth would act as the discoverer as he mapped every inch of her under his lips. Every night, he found his release and screamed her name into the darkness and gazed at the full moon she undoubtedly peered at too, it was something they could share. There was solace there, that their eyes would look upon the same moon, perhaps even at the same time and he could pretend they did so together, side by side.

Smiling, Ben stood and decided upon a final trip to the firehouse. It brought ambivalence, while he ventured on his new journey to meet his new family; he left the one forged by blood and fire behind. There was no telling how much time he would spend in London, the visit could be awfully brief or exceedingly stretched but all was reliant on Rey’s reaction.

One time, she had expressed the desire to introduce him to her favourite holiday spot on the English coast, a place where she was free to partake in her favourite kinds of leisure, running until she could not any longer or swimming in the sea. Ben imagined renting a small cottage there and just lapping up the time where they could be one.

Allowing hope to unfold, he told himself that Rey would welcome him with unadulterated love and he would cling to that ideal until she proved him otherwise.

Upon deciding this, he noticed that his steps were lighter and his movements unrestrained by worry, he was like a breeze as he floated around his apartment and gathered his clothes for the day. The penthouse was calescent and for a brief moment, he considered against leaving so he could instead enjoy a day in bed and bask in laziness but he quickly chose against it, knowing his thoughts would overtake him without sufficient distraction.

Having showered the night before, he felt quite fresh and adequately clean, at least appropriately so for a trip to a place that had seen worse dwellers in its walls. No matter how many times they scrubbed the walls, floors and ceilings, the odour of smoke and soot would forever cling to the building.

Dressing casually in some loose fitting jogging bottoms, sneakers and a navy t-shirt that hugged his masculine figure well, tight in all the right places but not too constricting, he slipped his new number two pencil behind his ear. Despite his second novel being published, his mind was racing, inundated and flooded with fresh ideas.

While poetry was something he held dear, a soft and gentle friend he held close to his heart, he wanted to expand his short story writing in an effort to broaden his horizons. During the nights when sleep evaded him, he dreamt up his protagonist, someone he painted closely in his own image. One day he hoped to release the elusive man and make him come alive on pages of white and ink of black.

After locking up his apartment, his moleskin situated in his deep pocket, he traversed the muggy streets of New York City, cataloguing what roused his senses. How would London differ? Both were concrete jungles, impressive displays of grey architecture and steel but they only came alive due to the soaring spirits of their inhabitants.

On a street corner, he passed a hot dog vendor, the smell of onion permeated thick in the air, a smiling man called for people to try his trade. In busier areas, the sounds of cars honking and the scent of freshly brewed coffee filled the air, day or night it was always there. It was a city that never truly slept, a bustling metropolis that offered opportunity to anyone who was willing to fight adversity and grab it. The city lights were a part of him; they made up his soul and warmed the
grey inside of all. It was a constant loop of movement, no one stood still and Ben wondered if he could do so with Rey, just stand with her and forget the world around them.

As he rounded the final corner, he witnessed Chewie juggling a stack of pink boxes as his back propped up the door to his shop. The pile teetered. Ben jogged over, relieving his uncle of his bounty and held them close to his chest, inhaling the sugary goodness of the treats that lay within.

“Thanks, Benny,” Chewie grinned, swivelling as he locked up, pulling shutters and turning keys; he made quick work of his routine.

The two split the boxes and carried them towards the firehouse. They were greeted cheerily; Gwen wheeled her way to them and splayed her palms in expectation. Ben rolled his eyes and transferred one of the boxes over to her to which she licked her lips and set off towards the break room. Both men followed her, finding Han, Leia and Luke in there too.

After the calendar shoot, Luke’s trips to the city increased in frequency to which everyone delighted about. It was beautiful to witness his socialisation and budding emergence back to New York.

In front of him sat a small cardboard box to which he promptly deposited in front of Ben as he was seated.

“A fresh batch just for Rey, the apricot lotion should suit her skin well. I put a few extra samples in there too,” Luke grinned, clearly pleased with his thoughtful gift.

Ben peered inside; surprised with the plethora of goodies and concoctions he had managed to assemble. The aromas were all ripe, natural and refreshing; bursting with goodness and exquisitely put together care. It was obvious that his uncle had spent a great deal of time in his presentation, each bottle and tub was decorated in hand drawn or painted patterns, each an image of what the product was derived from as well as a list of ingredients.

Ben was moved and he hoped that Rey would feel like a core member of his family, just as he had already began to feel settled in with hers, her mother was steady and a second mother figure to him.

“Thank you, I am sure she will love them,” Ben said, delicately handling the box as he closed it.

“She will love anything you give her,” insisted Leia, who patted his knee assuringly.

Han huffed and wrapped his arms around his wife who seated herself on his lap, she was a constant passenger on ‘The Falcon’ as well as him.

Ben’s attention turned to the cinnamon buns before him; his uncle stood and brewed a fresh batch of coffee, well acquainted with the small kitchen after decades of service alongside Han.

He gathered the treat, biting down, an explosion of flavours danced upon his tongue. Lapping up any icing from his lips, he chewed thoughtfully, only half listening to the chatter of his family and friends around him.

Chewie set down a steaming cup of black coffee in front of him, sugarless unlike the treat he snacked upon, a perfect mixture of bitter and sweet that would meet in his stomach.

“How are you feeling son?” Han asked gently, eyeing him from behind his wife, he perched his chin on Leia’s shoulder to which she accommodated him.

They fit together perfectly, all of their movements were synced and complimentary of the other.
Like magnets, they aligned and adjusted to the actions if one, the pull of their mind and bodies like a force that could not be severed.

He wondered if that level of intimacy, synchronicity or chemistry was something Rey and he would one-day share. It was such a simple idea, a quiet wish but the benefits of touch could not be preached or praised enough.

If she took her place on his thighs, her tiny body perched upon him, he would keep her close and whisper sweet nothings into her ear with an audience at their feet but his words were only for her to hear.

A clearing of his throat broke him from his reverie. By then, Chewie had settled between Luke and Han, all eyes were on Ben as Han looked on expectantly, brows raised.

“I’m nervous, what if she does not like to be surprised like this? Perhaps I should tell her,” Ben answered truthfully, pondering aloud as he sipped at his coffee.

“No!” Leia protested, standing.

“You’re mother is right, son. You need to see her and you are putting yourself first for once.”


Chewie nodded in agreement, Gwen rolled beside him and slung her arm around his shoulders.

“Do not overthink this. Mates are the most natural things in the world. She is the other half of you, of course she will be glad to see you.”

Ben nodded, drumming his fingers on the table. Rationally, he knew them all to speak common sense. That connection between mates could not be undermined or doubted. She was a part of him just as he was a part of her.

“Okay.”

The conversation moved on to lighter topics, Gwen demanded he bring her back something stereotypically British. Luke’s request was far simpler, he asked for photos of The Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew. Han and Leia asked for nothing but Rey herself, they desperately wanted to meet their future daughter in law.

After a particularly grilling talk about grandchildren, Ben, coloured crimson from head to toe and flushed at the idea of touching Rey, let alone sharing that kind of intimacy with her, took his leave.

Each hugged him, his father held him the longest.

“Go get her, son, show her the man you are.”

When Ben arrived home, he crawled straight into bed. With Rey in Mexico, the time difference between them was no longer an issue. In fact, he was an hour ahead of her so they messaged back and forth until late in the evening. Ben was thankful that she appeared to be enjoying herself; she had sent him a wealth of photos, spanning from the house her grandmother lived in, to a photo of the three family members together. The resemblance was uncanny, all of them shone and glowed under the sun, their warm smiles the only thing brighter than the horizon at their backs.

It made him want to explore the Mexican culture and understand the roots that shaped her spirit. One day, he hoped she would act as his guide and steal him away from the greys of the concrete
jungle to the amber of sandy landscapes bathed in light.

In the morning, Rey was due to fly back to London and he would follow soon after. It was thrilling despite the nerves that set his system alive like hot live wires. If someone were to touch him, they would not leave unscathed, he would burn all and only one would withstand and rise to meet him. The anticipation was startling.

With a smile upon his face and his heart thumping a wild tune in his chest, he wished Rey a goodnight. She answered with a reply of her own, telling him that she would dream of him. Content, he closed his eyes and willed his mind to calm.

Hopefully, it would be the final time he would sleep alone with a bed not quite whole and the space beside him barren and cold.

Tomorrow, his sixteen-year wait would come to an end.

Ben woke bright and early the next day. The night waned against the light of the morning sky; it was orange and dusky, like honeyed beginnings that would crest golden yellow.

His flight was scheduled for an afternoon take off and he worked to keep any nervousness at bay by thinking of how Rey confessed that she would dream of him. Did he haunt her dreams as she did his own? When he woke, it was like trying to catch smoke as he blindly grasped the images of her beside him. If she wanted his inhabitance in her sleeping mind, surely she ached for his presence in her physical proximity.

It was something to cling to.

As he was prepared, he lounged and then busied himself with menial tasks. After showering twice and repacking his suitcase, he admitted defeat and sat down, writing until he found it a suitable time to leave for the airport. While he had dressed casually the day before, he chose to dress somewhat nicely that morning in form fitting jeans and an olive green dress shirt.

First impressions were difficult and although Rey had seen him bared to her, his body and soul nude and for her devourment, meeting her was a different occasion entirely. The need to impress her consumed him, he aspired to attract her to him even further and allow her to see that he was not the brutish personification of an alpha who ran towards destruction and lived in sweat and soot.

Smoothing down his shirt one final time, he shouldered his carry on and wheeled his suitcase to the door, peering around, as he made sure all was fine and well and ready for his excursion.

With one final glance behind him, he opened the door, fully prepared for the journey he was finally and decisively prepared to brave.

It would be the making of him.

His carry on bag dropped to the floor with a resounding smack, the leather slapped the hardwood flooring as he stumbled backwards, caught entirely off guard and stunned. The breath was torn straight from his lungs as he blinked, gaping at his doorway as he steadied himself flat against the wall.

There, in front of him, stood Rey, a figure hugging dress decorated in bright sunflowers adorned her lithe frame and offered a beautiful display of herself to him. Her soft curves were on offer; she was there, so close that he could touch her and frame her flesh with his own. Her high cheekbones were painted pink, the rise and fall of her chest was sporadic, an unusual and speedy tempo as she
held up two books he recognised well.

The first one was his newest novel; her fingertips squeezed the leather tight, her nails a lemon yellow against the cover as black as the night itself. The other book was his debut, it was well worn, adored and it seemed like a treasure she held so dearly that she rarely kept it closed. Its spine was creased and peppered in thin, white chasms that spoke of how often she had splayed it open before her.

“Rey,” he choked out, so sure it was a dream, a cruel desert visage that would dissipate with the blink of an eye. As if a man possessed, a desperate one in need of sustenance, he stepped forward and willed her image to remain solid and true as he felt her hot, little breaths and the full extent of her scent envelop him. It gripped him tight like an overwhelming fever and it showed no signs of breaking.

He was under the influence of her and heavily so.

Her features broke into a watery grin, her lips a quivery pink and eyes like the earth and trees in an untouched rainforest, bright and brimming full of vivid colour. It was all for him, he would bring about her fall, her timber and all without a word of warning just as she had done to him then.

“The wait for you kept my blazing heart true. Ben…I love you.”

Chapter End Notes

![And here we go!](image)

THE SLOW BURN WAS REAL!

*drops mic*
I was thinking of making the next chapter another Ben one...double Ben anyone?

*hides*

In other news, I received a comment that has instilled some self doubt in my writing, they said it was full of errors, so much so, they could not finish the previous chapter about Mexico. I am thinking of taking a break...I know that it is terrible timing...But I am doubting myself a lot, admittedly, I could not finish editing this chapter as it was difficult as I worried over every line and wondered if it made sense. It has made the idea of writing quite unnerving (I had written this chapter before I received the comment) and I am no longer in the headspace to continue on just now. If my quality has decreased with speedier updates, I will have to take some time and reflect and see what I can do to correct my writing. So, I cannot estimate when the next chapter will be up but hopefully, there will be an improvement when I return :D

Hopefully I will find some confidence again.

Thank you for understanding in advance <3

I will see you soon! Now...let us celebrate that these two are FINALLY together.

EDIT-WOW. I am blown away but everyone’s response to my note and safe to say, I am going to continue on...uhhhh the next chapter is being written RIGHT NOW.

So feel free to ignore my wee rant, I am writing the next one and feeling more inspired than ever! THANK YOU ALL
This is for everyone who reached out to me.

I received over 160 comments on the last chapter, dozens messaged me on tumblr and more advocated for me on facebook.

THANK YOU <3

See the end of the chapter for more notes

**Ben-New York, United States of America**

“Ben…I love you.”

Startled, he peeled himself from the wall, entranced and drawn, he walked towards the light despite how he felt blinded and unequipped but he did it all with the promise of a glorious burn.

The words struck him hard like a bullet to the heart that did no harm, only good. It nestled inwards and sprouted hot residue, symbolic of all she was, it seeped throughout his body and infected him. The shot was the final embrace Ben had longed for, the words he had ached to hear her say. They lodged in the precious organ, filling it and then left him with a feeling of fullness that he had never once come close to replicating.

Although he was stunned and rightfully so, he closed the distance, not realising he had shed tears until Rey’s outstretched hand caressed his cheek and thumbed them away. Shuddering, he closed his eyes briefly and drowned in the sensation as he wet her flesh and expelled his overwhelming...
emotions that flooded freely. Her warm fingertips were soft, her palm welcomed him as he melted into her touch as he encased her hand with his own, he felt how she shook but her eyes were full, firm and sure of her weighty declaration.

It was different to lay his eyes upon hers with his own; the windows to their souls were opened fully for the first time, a welcome reacquaintance as if they had been parted before. Together they had undoubtedly lived through hundreds of lifetimes with the same eyes and same ties to the other. Memorised, he drank in as much details as she would allow, photos had never done her justice, they had dimmed her, in person, she was brighter and alive with brilliant colours and enticing curves.

Unable to stop himself, the stunning desire to feel more of her overcame him and he ever so slowly advanced, moving his free hand to the low collar of her dress and smoothed his finger along it. Responsive to him, her chest heaved upwards, the valley of her breasts glistened with perspiration as he dragged his finger along the groove of her collarbone. Finally, he flattened his palm above her heart. It beat for him. It thumped wildly, its wicked tempo increasing as it pulsed below him and he was sure he had never felt as alive as he had done then in his entire time on earth.

Completion.

Following his lead, Rey brushed away whatever was left of the tears that had nearly dried and fixed her hand above his own heart that hammered just as speedily as her own, a rival or ally, a balance was sought and it had been fulfilled.

“I love you, Rey,” he whispered, although the admission was quiet, his voice barely found its way up and out of his throat, it was all she needed.

Besotted, he scrutinised how her mouth gaped as her tongue wet her lips, swiping across the plush, rosy flesh.

The books dropped the ground with a resounding thud, quite like how their hands fell from the other’s heart, essentially severing the physical connection between the two. It was short lived, the rise and fall of Ben’s chest was manic, his limbs aflame with anticipation as the two stared the other down, a stand off of mammoth proportions.

They moved.

The positive and negative pull between them went unresisted as they clashed, an attraction of two hearts made for one another, the final piece to what made the other.

Rey leapt up and he was there to catch her, he did so with ease, groaning as he held her body close to him. The dress she had chosen, the one liberally decorated with a flower so symbolic of their relationship, rode up and his palms met bare flesh. His fingers sunk into the taut, tight muscles of her thighs and gradually ascended to the softness of her ass as she wrapped her calves around his waist, encasing him, he was ensnared.

Rey was a captor he would not contend or battle.

Hot breaths peppered his face before she pressed her lips to his; she took what was rightfully hers as she stole the breath from him yet again. No words were required; her blunt fingertips grazed his scalp as she sank her teeth into his bottom lip. What they lacked in finesse and skill, they more than compensated for with pure, unadulterated passion and the natural chemistry that existed between them.
It was all teeth and bruising lips, the joining of two halves and tongues tickled pink. Ben could hardly contain himself; she tasted divine, sweeter than anything he had the pleasure of feasting upon prior. Her lips tasted like honey, a thin film of it clung to the skin there, was it from her ritual morning tea or did it come naturally? Was she casually ripe and brimming with life and light just as he had guessed? Rey was sweetness, like a citrus fruit that threatened rot if he consumed too much.

“It’s you, Ben, it has always been you,” she moaned above his lips but he silenced her, swallowing her endearments and breaths as if he was a man starved and only she could save him, the purest and most gratifying form of nourishment.

Hoisting her higher around his middle, he clutched her tighter against him and strode towards the door without sight. She was all he could see, taste, smell, hear and feel, she had conquered all his senses and left him sensitive and vulnerable.

Kicking the door shut, it slammed against the frame, rattling loudly, it resounded through the quiet of the penthouse. Ben turned quickly, pressing Rey’s back against it, more of a shove then a gentle handling as he supported her with one hand. The other found purchase against the door, he splayed his hand and spread his fingers wide and scratched wood, his nails left faint indentions behind but he gave it no mind.

Sandals slipped from her feet to the floor between his own, bare toes and bony heels dug into his lower back before they anchored lower, locking around his posterior. Her nails dipped from his hair with a final tug and into the hard muscles of his shoulders and she cursed the shirt he wore.

Her growl vibrated against the corner of his mouth and he returned it, a low, gruff timber as he sucked and pulled her lip in between his teeth. Her openness, her hot, wet mouth had him spiralling as he sunk his teeth into her, tasting copper and Rey as it spilled above the surface. She rewarded him beautifully, her tongue caressed his own as they found their rhythm and quickened their desperate pace.

It was heaven, nirvana, some other kind of place or ethereal plane.

Tilting his hips, he rubbed his hardened length against the core of her, it was molten heat and despite the mixture of fabrics that separated them, he could feel the inescapable headiness of her longing and want.

She wanted him.

It was inarguable and he flew higher than he had ever done before, driving home as he thrust against her like a wild beast, grunting and sweat laden, he devoured what she offered.

“Ben, please, I need you,” she whimpered, her spine arched against his burning fingertips as her soft breasts brushed against the hard, expansive plain of his chest.

As if he could deny her anything.

“Anything, Rey, I will give you everything,” he whispered feverishly.

Her wide eyes brimmed with fresh tears but there was no sadness there.

“You, all I want is you.”

Wrapping his other arm around her, he made quick work of rushing through the apartment, the light followed them and bathed them in orange as he lowered her down and deposited her onto his bed. Standing tall, he freed himself from his shirt; his fingers trembled so Rey rose up and stood in
front of him. Her nimble fingers replaced his own, she took control and Ben marvelled how effortless it all appeared as she freed him from his fabric prison.

She encapsulated him all with a glance.

The olive green shirt fell to the ground; a breeze tickled him as Rey ran her hand along his bare skin, dragging her nails from his shoulder to his navel.

It was sublime, a lovely burst of sensations that evoked shivers.

“Ben, make love to me.”

He wanted nothing more.

It was all he had ever dreamed about.

Again, she affirmed that she wanted him.

Wholeness.

“I need to tell you something, Rey, before we continue, you need to know what I have done,” he admitted and it pained him to do so.

The glowing smile that had adorned her face crumpled and downturned into a frown. She stepped backwards until the backs of her thighs hit the edge of his bed.

It was horrible, his instincts told him to omit information that could potentially cause her any pain or discomfort but it was unfair to keep her in the dark. It had been something he had shamefully kept from her, as it was essentially only appropriate to admit to in person. It was owed to her, he respected her too much and he was ready to brave the consequences of his previous actions.

Swallowing hard, he rubbed his hands along the sides of his trousers in an effort to dry them. Then he grasped for her hand and despite her own apprehension, she held on.

“Tell me.”

Chewing the inside of his cheek, he mustered his courage.

“I am not like you. I have not gone untouched, I was weak and in my wait, I slept with two women a decade ago. It was all wrong but I was-”

Rey put an end to his rambling with her pointer finger on his lips.

“Ben, I never expected you to be a virgin. You are thirty-four years old. I mean, I expected the number to be higher, just look at you. Obviously it hurts knowing you have experienced it with others but I will be your last lover, I am yours until my dying day and beyond,” she smiled up at him.

It was most unexpected, he was unsure what he had done in life to warrant someone like her but he did not question it.

He dropped to his knees and tethered her hips with his biceps as he nuzzled his face against the warmth of her stomach.

“Thank you,” he murmured, inhaling, as he was privy to her arousal in this position, it permeated through her dress and filled his nostrils.
“It’s just us now.”

It was all the motivation he needed, he rose to his feet no longer weighed down by his past or grief. It was just the two of them, her trust and faith in who he was, inspirited him.

Rey craned her neck and stood on her toes, she stole a chaste kiss before he tugged on his belt and pulled it free, the leather snapped and the belt buckle clattered to the ground, jolting Rey.

It was memorising, they were predator and prey, it was natural like the circle of life but neither would fall, it was an end to their damnation.

Going by the look in her eyes, she had realised that he was ready to consume her. He removed his socks and shoes and gazed at Rey’s bare feet, white stripes draped around her feet where the sun had been obstructed in its tanning efforts. There was no graceful, decorous movements as he dropped his jeans to the floor and stepped out of them, kicking them aside.

Restraint had always been a heavy factor between the two of them but he knew it was no longer required and so he banished his and allowed his instincts to rule.

All the while, Rey looked on as he bared himself to her, his tented boxer shorts were the only thing hugging his skin. He was hard, almost painfully so, his cock wept as Rey’s scent assaulted him. Nostrils flaring, he stalked towards her, a slow swagger that promised the weighted consequences to follow.

As much as he adored her chosen dress, the bright white complimented and accented her golden skin beautifully; he needed his mate nude so he could have his way with her.

Her eyes dropped to his covered cock as his thumb swept along the delicate skin of her wrist, her breaths came out heavy and stunted as if she could scarcely draw in air. The pulse in her neck was evidence of her nervous anticipation; it fluttered like a hummingbird and sang a pretty tune just for him.

Trailing his hand from her wrist to her shoulder, he grinned and then lowered his mouth upon that pulse point that bordered her mating gland. The sound that burst from her rose petal lips was purely harmonious, it moved him as he gripped her hips and secured his hold on her.

He would never let her go.

He could hold her forever and it would never be enough.

Humming, the deep vibrations offered more simulation as he suckled, skimming the gland with his teeth before sucking, hard. One day, he would paint her in cherry blossoms, rich reds and full plums until his lips had tasted every part of her. She writhed beneath him, mewling and panting as if he had brought her to ruin and it thrilled him, as it was only the beginning, the fire just dry embers in the wind.

The taste of her, all ocean salt, daisies and sunshine was all he would ever taste again; she had left him branded and hungry.

“You’re so beautiful, Rey, my divine, little omega, I have burned for you,” he declared and then resumed his ministrations.

Her head fell backwards, her body was limp in his caging arms but he supported her, his hand found the small of her back.
His ability to work her like this astounded him. He catalogued everything; the details became some sacred piece of treasure that only he had the liberty of discovering. He unearthed her want and like a thief, he planned to take it from her and bury it again.

“Please, alpha.”

It was impossible but his cock grew harder, it took on a life of its own as it strained against his boxer shorts. The rush of hot blood had engorged him there and it was all for her.

Yes.

She was his omega, he was her alpha, and he would take care of all her needs. He would tear her apart if she asked and then put her together again with loving hands. Destruction and corruption met creation and honesty.

“What do you need, little one?”

It was not a matter of want that made him ask her to vocalise what was swirling inside her mind, no, it was a matter of need. It was something he coveted, an essential part of him coming undone.

“I need you inside me, Ben. Without you, I have felt so empty. I am hollow, please, make me whole.”

He knew then that this was not a matter for taking his time, of course he would fill her, he would take her, make her his, touch inside of her, and lay his claim.

“I’ve got you,” he crooned and he felt her visibly relax and fall further into his embrace.

After he sucked her gland a final time, it already showed a new colour, he moved his hand downwards and lifted the hem of her dress. It fell away from her thighs as he pulled it upwards; she raised her arms as he tugged it over her head and threw it to the floor.

Ben felt himself slowly losing his mind, she had went without a bra and all she wore was a tiny pair of white panties, reminiscent of the ones that occupied his bedside drawer covered in both of their spend. Her breasts, the perfect size for his hands sat high and firm on her chest, her nipples pebbled and hard. It was pure beauty.

She held her breath as he hooked his thumbs in the waistband of her panties and slowly started to haul them downwards. It only increased the flow of her scent, he was intoxicated and in need of it from source. Without a word, she tossed them away when they hit her ankles and advanced upon him, her fingertips brushed his boxer shorts.

As he had done before, she dropped to her knees and sprung him free. His cock stood proudly, an impressive size and in proportion to the rest of him.

Without warning, Rey swallowed the head; her tongue swirled and gathered his arousal, lapping at it.

“Fuck,” he muttered, he gazed down at the sight that confronted him and he knew that the woman would be the end of him.

Her pretty, pink lips stretched around around his cock and she met his stare.

No, now was not the time for this.
It was her first time and so he would treat it as such and worship her accordingly.

“Sunshine, as much as I love this, I want to taste you. Please…let me have you.”

She considered him carefully, swiping the head a final time before she released him. He bent down and crushed his mouth to hers, tasting him there and he knew that whatever occurred as they moved on, she would always carry him with her.

Without much care, he threw her on the onyx sheets, she landed with a breathy laugh and legs spread.

It was time, he grabbed her ankles and yanked her forward as he propped himself on the bed and situated himself between them.

“Can I taste you?”

Her response was a desperate nod, her face was already coated in a thin layer of perspiration and her skin flushed a bright scarlet.

His heart stopped as he splayed her thighs further, nudging them until he was comfortable and where she needed him the most. Rey accommodated him further, her legs draped over his shoulders, the soles of her feet danced between his shoulder blades.

He had dreamt of the intimidate part of her, he had seen it but nothing could have prepared him for seeing her so open and bare and ready for him to take her. Canting his neck, he leaned forward and pressed a kiss to her mound. A small, neat thatch of carefully trimmed chestnut hair decorated it but her lips were bare, wet and glistening for him.

It was his desert oasis, the sun that that gave as much as it took.

“You cunt is so pretty, Rey, it was made for me, it belongs to me.”

“Yes,” she agreed, her voice a low cry as she jutted her hips upwards, her impatience evident but he allowed it, enjoying how her little movements only brought him closer to her, he was full of her.

Closing his eyes, he mouthed her there, enjoying how her hair encased her scent and smothered himself in it, he dragged his nose along the groove and to her slit. She keened.

“You smell heavenly.”

Allowing himself indulgence, he propped himself up on his elbows and inched downwards, he flatted his tongue and licked her slit, flattening it so he could lavish her entrance and soak himself.

“Fuck,” she howled, her bottom rose from the bed but Ben regained control, easing her down with firm hand on her navel.

There was no escape…for either of them.

“You taste even better.”

He swirled his tongue around in his mouth, drinking in and coating his cheeks with her wetness before he continued.

With his forefinger and thumb, he parted her folds, spreading her gently before he consumed her again. She was obscenely wet, she drenched him with just a touch and his masculine pride flourished. Smiling, he dipped his tongue inside of her, wriggling it past her entrance and into the
wetness. He pushed it in and out, teasing her for a while before he kissed her lips and latched onto her clit without any warning.

She screamed, her fingers clawed into his hair and pushed his face against her. He groaned as she directed him, he sucked softly at first before he flicked at the hard and swollen bud. He released it with a loud, audible pop as he blew against it, another sensation to add to the sensory overload. She quivered and he continued to do so, he pressed his lips together and hollowed his cheeks as he released bursts of cold air directly upon her clit.

“Ben, I’m so close.”

He knew it, he could feel and see it.

Proud, he slipped a finger into her cunt, watching in earnest as she took him with ease; there was no resistance as he filled her until he was knuckle deep. Her smooth, slick walls latched onto him, grasping his thick finger as if denied the pleasure before. Her hips lifted as she swivelled, apparently testing how the new intrusion felt. Ben was an amazed spectator as she fucked herself with abandon on his finger, she was grace but it was shameless as she chased her release, desperate and unhinged.

“More.”

Obeying, he added another and then one more, a total of three but still she accommodated him, clenching hard around his digits. With her movements and his own, he brought his mouth back onto her clit and devoured her; he feasted as if it would be his last source of sustenance. Moaning, he curled his fingers upwards as if beckoning her release forward. He located that special spot inside of her, the rigged flesh that offered unrivalled pleasure. The hold on his hair was vice like, she quivered as she locked his face in place with her thighs, he was caged but a willing prisoner.

The two worked in tandem as he brought his plush lips and tongue to her cunt as she rocked upon his fingers. With a billowing cry, she fluttered around them, weeping as she came and screamed his name.

“Ben!”

It was a delight, even after she climaxed, he continued his assault, swiping and spreading her, he nuzzled his tongue against her in slow, languid strokes.

Rey convulsed, spewing profanities.

“Please, Ben, I need you inside me.”

Thrilled at the prospect, he finally pulled away and rose on his knees, the sight of his flushed mate spurred him on. Her hooded eyes once again trailed lower and he watched her as he gathered some of her spend from his mouth and palmed his cock, wetting it. It was slick; his tight fist encased it, sliding with ease.

“The words were always for you, Rey. Did you read the final poem?” He asked.

She shook her head, no and a part of him rejoiced. He would be the first to share them with her.

“As soon as I saw it, I rushed here. Ben, your words kept me alive, they instilled me with hope,” she admitted.

It was all he had ever wanted.
“I am here now,” he hushed her, he covered her body with his, their flesh melded together perfectly, her soft, firm curves met his hardness.

They kissed, slower then, a gentle sign of affection.

“I love you.”

Gripping his cock, he soaked it more, rubbing the length against her hot heat, she moaned, her eyes fluttered as he finally aligned himself, she was searing.

Pushing himself inside of her was the most natural thing in the world, the physical representation of two becoming one, they were meant for it.

She exhaled hard against his lips as he nudged in further, consciously aware of his size and her virginal status. They both smiled, her hands firmly gripped his biceps, they broke his skin and coated porcelain in vermillion but he would wear the crescent marks with pride.

With a final thrust, he buried himself fully into her cunt, right to the hilt as his hips crowned hers. Her eyes bulged, the breath knocked out of her. A tear or two fell but he was there to kiss them away.

“Are you okay, sunshine? You took me so well. I am so sorry for causing you pain, let me take it away, let me take you away,” he whispered, kissing her cheek.

She shook her head.

“There is no pain, Ben. I just feel whole, so full of you and I never want it to end. I will never stop wanting you, we belong together.”

His heart soared, she was right. Together they were complete, two lonely souls no longer suffering apart.

She encased him, her walls squeezed him and he believed her, he would live like that forever if he could, no barriers between them.

Sighing, she brought her hips up experimentally and Ben nearly fell upon her, it was too much but not enough. He caught himself as she planted her hands on his hips and moved him. He gazed down the length of their bodies and watched as he slowly pulled back before sliding home again, she took him beautifully, with an easy confidence. It was memorising, to watch where they joined, as he was lost in her.

“Fuck,” she gasped and it fired him, set him aflame.

Lowering his mouth, he circled her nipple and covered it with his lips, sucking as he began to thrust, increasing his speed and strokes; she was so wet and gushed around his cock. It was all so loud and lewd; the way their skin slapped together and how they moaned, groaned and cursed in harmony.

The pull and drag of her flesh was otherworldly, he rutted into her like a feral animal but she accepted it, urged him on as her nails scratched his back and undoubtedly marked him. It was a thin line, the border between pleasure and pain and together they walked it. Sinking into her, he pummelled and swivelled his hips, rotating until he hit an angle that coaxed a cry that he knew signalled unblemished bliss.

“You’re taking my cock so well, Rey,” he praised her, knowing it was something that was not
better unsaid.

She keened and captured his lips as he palmed her breasts and flicked her nipple before he tugged, applying pressure there. He snarled as she began to flutter around his cock, she was going to squeeze the life and all his essence from him.

He pressed his lips against hers a final time before he lavished her mating gland and whispered the words he had concocted all for her.

“In the dark I searched for you.”

She clung to him, eyes content and glazed.

She was so tight, so perfectly snug and he hissed, grunting as he felt himself edge closer to his own release.

“Sun, shine, golden yellow glow, the only thing that matters is your strong heart, I see it, I know.”

Her mouth gaped, her tongue peeped. His hands bruised her as he grappled her softness.

“My heart is caught, riddled deeply with rot, for you are too sweet, you can never depart or abandon or leave me alone.”

Her hazel eyes, evergreen, jade and rain painted soil, grew wider.

“The organ is useless, it is yours, rip it from it from my flesh and present it at your altar. Take it, keep it, will you have me, does it past your test? If not, ground it, bury it, lay my imperfect soul in mud and lay it to rest.”

He planted a kiss on her jawline and tasted her tears, cheeks stained pink and teeth purchased in her bottom lip. A marvel, a beauty.

“Booming, thumping, it beats as a reminder that I am me and I am you. A soiled set of bodies; a fire of desire that knows no end, your love will banish my cold blue.”

Her back arched, her breasts dragged against his chest and he was sure that no beings had ever reached the closeness they had achieved. He drove deeper, losing himself in her.

“Bend, break, your mind to take, a celestial goddess that does no harm, you make me wait, you sake and I writhe with deep ache.”

He was impossibly hot, ruled solely by instincts as he zeroed in on her neck. He whispered more into her skin.

“Burn me alive and devour me whole, my sun, I will consume you back, eat, defeat and dine on your soul.”

Rey encouraged him, pushing his mouth to her gland, amongst his sweet nothings she begged him to take her and consummate their mating.

“Touch me, want me and watch me grow. With you, I will, your rays will replenish and keep all in tow. Snatch me, keep me and observe earnestly. Full moons, dark skies, none will blot. Torrid days and green seas, I give you everything, my heart is yours, not borrowed but locked.”

Ben groaned as she came a second time, crying and gasping, she begged him for more, to mark her, to take her and sink another part of himself into her hot flesh. She required his bite for total
fulfilment.

Her cunt clamped around his cock, convulsing wildly and Ben was done for, with his final line upon his tongue, he followed her to new heights.

“In the light, I found you.”

Full, he continued driving into her, content that his words were now embedded in her mind, body and soul.

He came with a strangled and guttural cry, he bellowed, feeling himself swell at the base of his cock. He gave Rey what she asked for, he would give her everything.

Searching her eyes, just as desperate as she, he waited for confirmation, a consent and she whined, begging him again and displayed her neck, shiny with a golden sheen and sweat.

“Do it, please.”

Rearing back, he sunk his teeth into her gland and bit down, hard.

Chapter End Notes

So...

Anyone who knows me, knows smut is the thing I find most difficult to write so go easy on me. It is my kryptonite.
*falls to the ground dramatically*

I know it was more of a ‘making love’ vibe but I promise I will try to heat it up as these two explore one another.

Again, thank you for all the support, it keeps me going <3

Some asked for my Tumblr and if you would like to take a gander at more of my work, here is my other fic, Wolves which I plan to update soon.

Rey chapter next...let us see how she likes the chompening ;)
Reflection

Chapter Summary

Nothing but fluff and the chompening

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Rey-New York, United States of America

*Euphoria.*

Pure, carnal bliss that induced unrivalled pleasure.

*Belonging.*

The kind that offered no room for argument and conjured feelings of fullness.

*Hope.*

A light inside of her knew no end.

The plethora of thick emotions and blissful sensations bordered ecstasy, she was floating high but warm flesh anchored her to the earth.

Incisors pierced into her skin, they sunk into her gland and then they clamped down, securing her to him with one final declaration of the bond and trust between them.

It was all she had ever dreamed of.

His words, the sweet poetry wrenched from his beautiful mind only intensified the experience. Kylo Ren was no longer some faceless man who stalked her dreams, he was hers, he was Ben and all the words she had memorised were sentiments aimed at her. An ocean apart, they were once her only hope.

Her body sparked and came alive, her heart bloomed but she could not form a coherent thought or response, all that swam in the ocean of her mind was Ben and the depths he conquered were unbound, no part of her was left uncharted.

Clenching hard, she found herself climaxing again around his hard cock, his bite, his claim on her was an undoing that demanded attention and as she fluttered, she wept, clinging to his broad shoulders as his hums and groans sounded the quiet space. It was a delicious stretch and she feared the emptiness that was sure to follow when they inevitably separated, a hollowed carving that would ache until they met again.

*Catharsis.*

With his heavy weight upon her, it was as if her body was no longer her own, he seeped into every inch of her being, his sandalwood and sage, his inky tendrils that brushed her face. It was
suffocating but she grasped his back and encouraged his actions, she tensed and he grunted, another stream of hot spend coated her insides.

The sharpness of his teeth had not penetrated or incited pain as she had thought they would, a potent rush of endorphins and the transfer of his pheromones, the male equivalent and identical to her own, meant that any agony was quickly overpowered by natural, superior pleasure.

While his movements had slowed, his hips still rolled as he thrust languidly as far as his knot would allow, she was brimming with him, all parts touched and claimed.

His full lips gave way to his teeth as he refused to relinquish this hold on her; they dug deep into the gland and covered it entirely. It was difficult to discern when he eventually pulled back, unclenched his jaw and removed his teeth. It could have been hours, she was boneless and lost to sensation but it did not matter, for his lips lavished the tender bite in gentle strokes, he pressed kisses there, dipping his tongue into the indentions as his saliva soothed the wound.

It was everything she required, the comfort of her strong mate, in her times of vulnerability or unease; he would instil strength in her or stoke the embers that burned within. Even a mighty alpha could fall and so if he ever found himself in times of trouble, she would balm his soul like he had done so selflessly with her own. It was a partnership, both owned the other but none ruled supreme, they were equals through and through, one balanced soul, two beings made whole.

Dizzied, she carded her slender fingers through his damp hair as a directive and unspoken action that would act as thanks for delivering on his promise to claim her. Despite the dishevelled state of the raven tendrils, they were still the softest thing she had the privilege of feeling against her skin.

Placated, she blinked away tears and slowly regained her senses, Ben was the centre of them all but there was more. The warmth of the afternoon sun bathed them in a honeyed glow, songbirds chirped sweetly and cars honked on the street below. Her flesh was ruined, soiled and wet with their combined perspiration and the taste of him coated her tongue.

Her descent back to earth was glorious; it was all tender loving kisses and lazy, trailing fingertips on her hips. It was a contrast to the final part of their lover’s dance where blood was shed and bruises buried.

“Thank you,” she whispered, a breathy little sigh.

Idly, she had wondered if she would sound different, talk or move the same now that she had found him but while everything had changed, it seemed as if nothing had. All was the same but all was different. A part of him now worked its way through her bloodstream, combining their scents and introduced their biological make up to each other on that level.

“I am the blessed one, my light, thank you for coming to me,” he murmured as he swiped the bite once more, seemingly pleased with the results.

Supporting himself on one elbow, he hovered above her, lips painted burgundy with her blood.

It was oddly gratifying, something that spurred a primal and instinctual being inside of her. She pressed her lips to his own, cleansing him. It was sensual and erotic, Ben remained perfectly still, eyes wide and open and focused solely on her and she had never felt so bold.

Dropping her head back to the pillow, she gasped, remembering how she had confronted him, showing up announced.

“You were leaving, your suitcase,” she trailed off.
It was hard to accept that she had inconvenienced in some way, it was not her intention and she was offered the harsh reminder that she had omitted herself physically from his daily life.

“Yes, sunshine. I was coming to you, I have had my ticket booked for a month,” he smiled as he smoothed his thumb along the seam of her mouth.

“Fate.”

It had been something she had always clung to, for years; she had hoped that it would be the leading force to bring them together. Before the night when she had consumed too much wine and joined the mating service, there had always been that deeply rooted belief that somehow fate would show her the way to him.

In the end, it had.

At the exact same moment in time, the two had dispelled distance and time and went towards the other with love in their hearts; both were ready and prepared for the final and monumental step in their journey.

“Yes, I do believe fate played a part in our tale,” Ben admitted as he threaded his fingers through her hair, treating it like spun silk, so delicate and precious.

The pulse point in his neck, achingly close to his mating gland, discoloured and slighter darker than the rest of his fair skin, caught her attention. Unable to curb the irresistible urge, she tilted and raised her head, burying her face in the crook of his neck. Inhaling deeply, she felt saliva formulating under her tongue and the realisation dawned upon her.

Reciprocation.

Her mind called for a replication and an action consistent with Ben’s bite so the two could complete the primal and instinctual ritual that spanned the length of time.

It was a fluid movement, how she draped her arms tight around his neck, crossed at the wrists and pulled herself upwards. To accommodate her, Ben rose up, still joined, they moved in sync as he fell with his back to the sheets and Rey seated upon his thighs.

“Rey?” He questioned, his cedar wood eyes searched her own for answers but she maintained a façade of calm, rolling onwards with a small grin as she peppered his jawline in chaste kisses.

Groaning, he closed his eyes and his dark lashes tickled her lips.

Humming, she melted further, licked a hot, wet stripe up the length of the column of his neck, and showed extra attention to the indigo veins and thick tendons that strained against the skin like strings pulled taut.

The steady but increasing acceleration of his heart sounded her exploration, it was as if the pounding guided her and disclosed his anticipation for what was to come. It was inevitable, as she knew how he yearned for it, perhaps even more so than herself.

“I need it,” Ben whimpered and Rey was sure she had never felt more powerful than she had then.

An alpha at the mercy of an omega, a righteous reversal of roles.

She had eagerly wanted that role for years.
Breathing hard, she observed the scarlet flush that had gripped his skin, it was like a fever that would only spread and devour him unless she acted first. Splaying her fingers on his shoulders, she secured herself steady and then descended.

There was nothing delicate about how she claimed him, fingertips dyed crimson and teeth gleamed vermillion, she sunk her teeth in. Ben jolted, his cock sliding further into her slick passage and she lost herself in him more.

“Fuck, Rey, yes,” he growled, his fingers wrapped around the delicate, dainty curve of her neck, gripping hard.

It was stunning, to infuse a part of herself inside of him. It was complete, the two were bonded and none could sever the connection shared between them, she doubted death could tear them apart.

It was carnal how she rocked upon him, his cock still hard, ensnared within her and his massive hands coiled around her middle as he hissed like a viper, cursing, and writhed beneath her. They were soon all reduced to desperate pants as she applied more pressure and swirled her tongue around the fresh wound, a crude floret painted cherry red.

Like him, she offered to douse any ebbing or lingering traces of discomfort but Ben seemed entirely at ease, blissful, his body slack and utterly relaxed.

Blood flowed to the surface so she worked to nurture and suckled until none freely trickled. A metallic ambrosia, the substance that powered him on, she keened just as he did.

“It’s like breathing for the first time,” he mused aloud and it came as no surprise to her that he could articulate himself far finer than she ever could.

The swelling at the base of his cock drained and he slipped from her and already she mourned his lack of closeness, that irreplaceable fullness.

Ben rolled them, his front flush against her back, their legs entangled and fingers intertwined.

“I am yours.”

The words offered reassurance despite how she knew them to be true before he had uttered them.

Relaxing into his embrace, she rested her head upon his bicep and closed her eyes; the exhaustion of the day had riddled her heavy.

“And I am yours.”

Even in her sleep, she had felt his eyes upon her and it was difficult to begrudge him of that scarce, quiet moment. Had he thought her a dream? That if he succumbed to sleep, that she would disappear like his consciousness, snatched away in the night like smoke he blindly grasped for.

It was hard to discern the time she woke but the afternoon sun declined in the sky. The spacious bedroom was drenched in tall shadows that stretched far and wide, blotting light. Sometime during sleep, their positions had shifted; she woke with her head upon his chest, right above his heart and the constellation of small, dark beauty marks, reminiscent of her July star sign. It was different, waking draped upon another when all the days in her life prior had been spent alone, a bed for one.

Ben was an incarnated version of elemental fire, he exuded warmth in more ways than one and his passion was untouched by any other.
She allowed herself time to bask in that warmth, her leg lay sprawled over his hips, the bones cushioned by hard flesh. This candid appraisal of him was a delight; tilting her head up she observed him and the peacefulness that decorated his features when he slumbered. He appeared youthful, far younger than his thirty-four years and she hoped she aged just as finely as he had. Amongst it all, white innocence lingered, a light deceiver, as she knew of the fire that hid behind his obsidian eyes.

Untangling herself from him was an arduous task, even in sleep; he refused to release her from his steely grasp. After some wriggling and manoeuvring, she managed and slid out of the bed, nude but uncaring.

Locating the bathroom was easy, an ensuite was attached to his bedroom, she tiptoed across the hardwood flooring, mindful of how he slept and she did not want to rouse him when he was in need of sleep.

Closing the door carefully behind her, she flipped on the light and took in the space in front of her, it was lavishly decorated, walls plum and tiles charcoal. Most of the furnishings were steely and metallic, the countertop grey with a sleek, stylish finish. There was both a bath and shower, a luxury Rey’s tiny bathroom in her flat did not allow.

It was neat, meticulously so, almost too clean for a male living alone. All of his toiletries were neatly arranged in shelves or tucked away in drawers.

She steeled herself on the counter, lemon yellow nails clashed with the cold grey. She stood there in front of the mirror, her lower half cut off from her vision but she imagined how it would appear. Her inner thighs were stained with their combined spend, it was dried but still, a part of her wished it could remain. Losing her virginity was something she had never thought too much about.

At fourteen, she had allowed the attack to shape her mindset and future experiences and so she had mostly shunned any male attention, which, combined with a lack of sexual appetite, left her content in her virginal ways.

Both attacks had left her somewhat ruined and doubtful, a quiet victim who smiled. But she was no victim, no, she was a warrior who refused to succumb, wilt or scream in the dark. She stood tall, it had come from within, and a hearty dose of Ben’s light.

Now, she realised that she had waited for him, no one had lit the desire in her before Ben and she had been wrong when she downplayed how the act could affect her.

It was not submitting to the will of another, it was empowerment. For the first time in her life, she felt in control of her own body. Making love to Ben had been her own conscious decision, it was not some dictated part of biology, no, it was an extension of her love for him, a physical counterpart to balance the crashing and all encompassing weight of love.

She shed the reminders of the past, of the men who had sought out to hurt her and instead tainted and replaced them with images of Ben.

His hands had guided her, his mouth that branded her and coaxed her pleasure. Then he cemented it all and sunk his cock into her and it was venereal delirium.

The reflection offered a viewing of the changes that manifested on her skin. The glow of the Mexican sun had been kind on its daughter, she had shook any remnants of the paleness that came with living in London and resembled her father even more. Her eyes still belonged to her mother though, they took pride and place and shone far brighter than before, they were ignited by Ben.
Littered about were the evidence of the consummation, violet imprints decorated her hips were his fingers had gripped. Nothing was more telling than the bite that embellished the juncture of her neck. It was scarlet, raw and shadowed by rich mulberry dustings of fresh bruises.

Since the endorphins had worn away, she felt the sting of it but welcomed that pain in earnest. It would heal but all would see that she was no longer alone in the world.

Carefully, she draped her hair over one shoulder; the tips brushed the underside of her breasts, curling under the curve. It was tousled, a sign of how thoroughly she had been seen to.

Idly, she trailed her fingertips along the edge of the bite; the motion sent a jolt straight to her core as she envisioned Ben and his mouth between her legs once more.

Tentatively, she dropped her hand and trailed it along the length of her bare torso. Being exposed was out of the norm for her but behind the walls, his walls; her modesty was laid to rest.

Closing her eyes, she allowed herself to revel in the sensations, drown in them, even.

Her blunt, neatly trimmed nails skinned her curves, the pinch of her waist and flair of round hips, the dip of her hipbones and the concavity of her navel.

Flesh and bone, she was her own.

She was her own and she had given herself to him.

Warm hands engulfed her frame, a hulking body pressed snug against her; the sound of his desperate inhales above her bite filled the quiet room.

“I thought you were gone, I thought it had all been a cruel dream,” he confessed.

Opening her eyes, she saw the wideness of his eyes, black bled and frazzled, he appeared lost and shaken.

Reassure him, balm and ease his worries.

“I’m sorry, I was going to bathe and I didn’t want to wake you.”

His forearms bulged around her waist as she swivelled her hips experimentally against his growing hardness.

In the mirror, his eyes flashed to her own, entranced, she watch as he flattened his palm until it was tucked between her legs, his thick, adept fingers parted her folds but she could not look away from the display, not even for a second.

“I knew you were still here, I could smell you, I could practically taste your want,” he whispered as he planted a trail of hot kisses along her shoulder and parted her thighs with a gentle nudge of his knee.

Panting, she melted into his touch as he worked, coating his fingers with a liberal dose of wetness before he slipped them inward.

The sizeable length and width of them were perfect to alleviate any sense of emptiness she felt, they reached depths that she could never dream of touching. He took his time, thrusting casually against her parted cheeks with his cock as he hooked her, knuckle deep, he curled them and she screamed. Slick coated her thighs and he resumed his movements there instead, his cock rolled
between, just below her entrance. It was hot, the veins that decorated the length pulsed as he jutted forward, skimming her folds.

His eyes never left her own, it was as if they were voyeurs to their own intimate moment but it was intoxicating, a perfect blend of his gaze and fingers inside of her was enough to send her spiralling, fast.

“Please,” she begged, shamelessly working herself as she lowered herself on his fingers time and time again.

The added simulation of his cock driving through her folds and the firm tongue flicking against her bite was nearly too much, she had never experienced such bliss. His strokes sped up, he pumped his digits in and out of her, the wet sound of her arousal and his heavy breathing was all she could hear. His other hand snaked its way up her torso and looped around her breasts. Without warning, he pinched her nipple and she careened, moaning as his thumb brushed against her swollen clit.

She came, drenching his fingers as her legs quivered but he offered support, leaning her against him as he slowly extracted his hand and brought it to his lips.

She could not look away, she raised her head and engaged him. The two stared the other down, the reflection showed off his wicked grin as his mouth gaped open and it was enough to bring her to ruin.

He sucked each finger into his mouth, his tongue rolled around them until they were free of her arousal. All the while, he nodded and crooned, praising how she tasted, that there was nothing that could compare to her sweetness.

It was primal and tainted her cheeks a rosy pink, the simple erotica of it all only inspired the aftermath of her orgasm, her insides clenched around nothing as the small convulsions subsided.

“Thank you,” she smiled, her eyes finally fell from their mirrored image and she pulled her bottom lip between her teeth, turning.

“It was my pleasure, now, let me take care of you. How about I draw you a bath?”

It was hard to miss how his cock stood, hard and weeping but he tilted her chin up with his index finger.

“Today is all about you, trust me when I say that I want to take care of you, you can have your way with me tomorrow,” he winked, kissing her cheek before he moved, squeezing her hand reassuringly.

The sway of his hips, the tall swagger and the sure, unabashed movements and confidence, called to her.

Ogling him, she took advantage of the situation, she was utterly transfixed how his muscles worked and moved as he filled the tub with water. Humming a tune, he splashed an assortment of oils and concoctions from the shelf into the warm water before he finished by adding a dash of rose scented bath salts.

It was not long before the mammoth tub was filled, steam rolled and danced across the surface and rose high above them.

Ben extended his hand to her.
“Join me?”

Of course she would.

Without hesitation, she placed her hand in his and he led her in, testing the water with a quick dip of his fingers. Seemingly satisfied, he stepped in and sat, sinking down until only his shoulders peeped out. She followed suit and perched herself between his splayed legs and fell back against his chest, water rolled around her as she settled.

They laid like that for a while, letting the hotness of the water wash away remnants of their joining.

“Your words, Ben, they have helped me through the years more than I can ever express.”

“It was all I ever wanted. I wanted you to know that you were not alone and despite me not knowing if you would ever see them, I allowed myself to hope you would.”

“I did, for six years I have taken comfort in them. I dreamed of you, you would linger on the edges of my dreams and whisper your words. Always faceless but it was you, it was always you.”

Ben’s arms enveloped her breasts and the pad of his thumb pressed a light, feather touch upon the skin encasing her heart.

“Raging fires and wrongly anointed desires would be unable to burn me quite like you do,” he whispered.

The lines were from ‘Blaze,’ a poem that she had read again that morning on the way to the airport.

Fate was a funny thing.

Licking her lips, she continued the poem for him and recited its finishing lines.

“Rolling oceans, wild waves, I drown and hang suspended in wait. Your flesh upon mine will rid me of cold blue, unearth me and sate, I will be full.”

Ben was silent, his hands shook below the water’s surface and his tears wet her hair, she could only imagine how fulfilled he was knowing that despite them being apart, they were never truly unheard and alone.

She had heard his words, a keen and voracious reader of them for years.

“It was always you,” she reminded him, squeezing his hand, he breathed out deeply and smiled into her hair.

After their bath, which ended up spanning over an hour long, they had topped it with fresh, hot water more than once, Rey sat on the bed. Smiling, she threaded her fingers through her damp, wavy tresses; a bright, white towel was secured tight around her frame.

Ben had been thorough in his cleansing, his touches had been liberal and no part of her was untouched. It was something she wanted to experience again, that level of intimacy was sweet, he had left her scrubbed down and tickled pink, she did not have to lift a finger.

“You’re so beautiful.”

Her reverie broken, she grinned up at him, admiring how he was dressed only in boxer shorts.
Before she could reply, there was an opening of a door, a clatter, as familiar voices reverberated around the penthouse.

Ben blanched, gazing at his phone and then at his bedroom door which was thankfully locked.

“"I may have messaged my parents when you were in the bathroom and notified them of my change of plans. I did not expect them to turn up, I am sorry,” he stressed and sighed.

Rey laughed, shaking her head. It came as no surprise that Leia Skywalker Solo has insisted on making an appearance and it was a welcome one.

“"Ben, it is fine, I have wanted to meet them in person for a while.”

“"You better be decent, Ben, we brought pizza, no doubt you will need it after all that-”

“"-Han!” Leia hissed and there was smack of a palm against leather.

Ben groaned and brushed his wet hair away from his hair as Rey continued to laugh, enjoying the antics of his parents.

A scratching at the door ensued.

Ben grinned, his brow arched towards Rey. Amusement flooded his features.

“"And that, my mate, is Callie.”

Rey gulped and gazed once more towards the door as the ferocity of the scratches increased. The feisty feline had made her presence known.

Chapter End Notes

This was a filler but I feel it was needed to show Rey's character development, she has grown.

It seems poetry is everyone's new kink and I am here for it.

I am writing the next one now-just a reminder that I do not have chapters written and ready to go, I write them as I go along and post them whenever I finish them.

I hope to get another one out this week! :D

Again, as always, thank you for supporting me and keeping me going, you all encourage me to write faster and get these updates out for you <3

(I cannot tell you how good it was to write Rey-New York City...these two are together..ahhh)
Chapter Summary

Pizza, a feisty pussy and some added smut.

Chapter Notes

Whispering poetry into her ear counts even if she is asleep, right?

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Ben-New York, United States of America

Scratching the back of his neck, the skin hot and undoubtedly flushed red, he gazed once more at Rey. The gland was sensitive but stunningly so, when she had claimed him, all his thoughts had melted away and were quickly replaced with imaginings of her. It was like breathing new air, a first inhale like a newborn child making their presence known to the world. Already, he felt the changes; there was a present and subtle shift in his scent, a mixture of his and Rey’s, an intoxicating blend that was undoubtedly just for them. Daisies, sandalwood and sage as well as other earthy tones accented sunlight, ocean salt and fire. Then there was his overwhelming attachment to her, it was cemented, concrete and he would be forever bound to her. It transcended all he ever thought possible.

It was why he worried, his brain so finely tuned to her wellbeing.

His own reservations prevailed and pervaded as he thought of how to approach the situation that confronted them. It was a delicate matter. The introduction of his parents could very well make her nervous as he knew how overwhelming they could act and he thought solely of how Rey would cope with their enthusiasm.

On the other hand, while his parents were excitable, they offered love and acceptance and they had been desperate to meet her so he could not begrudge them for appearing in the manner they had, unannounced and bearing food, it was their style.

Rey beamed at him, stars, her coral pink lips stretched into a wide grin and he knew then that she was more than ready to meet them. She seemed perfectly content and prepared, albeit nervous about the minor but seemingly daunting task of meeting Callie whose scratches grew more vicious and tactless by the second. The whole affair was amusing; his tiny feline companion was acting like an apex predator with the increased presence in the penthouse.

Rey’s eyes continued to drift towards the door, her brow crumpled before she quickly composed herself.

“Are you sure she is a house cat? It sounds like there is a lioness out there!” She joked as she stood, her hands were planted on her hips and shoulders squared back like she was ready to meet her maker.
Ben snorted.

Around him, Callie was usually a decent little lady. For years, she had been his constant shadow, a source of light and something he could rely upon whenever he felt at his lowest. Put simply, he adored her but he knew of her temperamental tendencies and aversion to others in their living space. From the first moment they had come across each other, she had clung to him but it was only natural, it had always been just the two of them, it was bound to have happened.

“She is harmless,” Ben shrugged, trying not to grimace or reveal his lack of faith in the statement.

Gwen’s face and his father’s legs, despite them lacking any kind of feeling in them, had both fallen victim to the wicked slash of her claws. The soft part of him hoped she behaved herself and played nicely, at least for his sake.

The hissing increased from outside the door; her little paws appeared under the doorframe, swiping erratically for purchase.

“She is harmless, I am sure,” Rey drawled as she brought her hands to her chest and unravelled the knot, loosening her towel until it dropped.

It pooled at her feet and she carefully stepped around it, the act had left her nude and exposed, dozens of tiny droplets from her damp hair skimmed the length of her body. They fell and trailed from her breasts to her hips and a lucky few managed to crest her thighs near her heated core.

Not much rendered him speechless but Rey did so without much effort, slack jawed, he watched the sway of her round hips as she advanced toward him. Her confidence flourished and his pride in her swelled along with what hung between his legs.

Her hand flattened against his taut navel and then groped lower until she squeezed his growing hardness that tented his boxer shorts. He bit his knuckles in a desperate attempt to restrain the strangled groan that threatened to leave him. A temptress indeed, a wicked gleam lit up her eyes, there was a fire there as if ignited for the first time, wild, blue and hot, he knew what she sought of him.

“We best not keep your parents waiting. My luggage is by the door so I might need to borrow something of yours, my dress will simply not do.”

Ben swallowed hard, unable to think or breathe. It was such a simple notion, clothing her with items of his own but it stirred him, something manifested deeply within him.

He would care for her and provide, shelter and clothe her if need be. It was purely instinctual, something that manifested and spanned long before he was born, an alpha bestowing his omega with everything she needed.

“I might have something for you,” he smirked as his hands cradled her bare waist and he planted a soft kiss into her hair.

Even those soft strands smelled of him, he had used his own shampoo on her, it permeated with the notable scents of coconut and argan oil.

Her hold on his cock wavered, she palmed it a final time and gave it a tug before she unhanded him, he lamented over the loss of her dexterous fingers around him but he knew now was not the time to to engage in their wicked game. Despite how he longed to paint her cheeks pink for her teasings and then worship her afterwards, he knew his parents waited just beyond the door,
expectant and most likely running out of patience.

“We are just coming,” Ben called out.

“I’m sure you are!” Han replied, the squeaks of ‘The Falcon’s’ wheels sounded from the living room.

Another jesting slap to his leather jacket was heard and Rey giggled some more at his mother’s retort, it was a soft sound, a bell like melody that he would never tire of hearing.

Rolling his eyes, Ben traipsed to his wardrobe and opened the doors. Glancing once more at Rey, he worked his lip between his teeth.

Rey was tiny.

Not as small as his mother by any means but in comparison to himself, she was petite, toned and all long limbs with a stunning lithe figure made up of gentle curves. Any clothes he had would likely drown her but it was still a thrilling concept to witness such a sight.

Bending down, he pulled open a drawer and plucked out some of his oldest clothes that he rarely wore, they were all from years ago, some from his teens, where he was hardly built as he was now. A faded ‘Red Hot Chili Peppers’ t-shirt was the first item that he thought to pluck out and a pair of basketball shorts followed, both would need some alteration to fit her.

“I know I know for sure, that life is beautiful around the world,” Rey sang, smiling down at him.

“I know I know it’s you, you say hello and then I say I do,” Ben finished the lyrics, standing and handed her the garments.

“It is my favourite song by them,” Rey added, pulling the top over her head.

Ben helped her with the hem, her arms raised; he tugged it downwards and noted how it skimmed her knees.

It was his favourite song too but even more so with how the lyrics seemed to fit the pair of them.

“Mine too.”

“You have a good music taste then.”

Ben smiled, drawing up the fabric into a side knot; it fit her better that way. The shorts were luckily a better fit although they had to tighten the drawstring and make liberal use of it.

He took her in and swore he had never seen her so beautiful. Decked out in clothes that had once donned his frame, he realised just how perfect she was.

“You’re beautiful.”

A light blush took hold of her tawny skin as her eyes fell to her feet, she was an enigma, at times she stalked and spoke like a woman who knew she was worth more than the world to him but other times, she seemed so small and unsure. It was endearing.

“As are you, but we should get out there before your cat claws her way in,” Rey said lightly, nudging his stomach softly.

It was true; the bottom of his door had taken a beating. Little bits of wood chips decorated the
floor; Callie’s claws had done a number on it.

Perhaps she was a ferocious little beast.

Ben nodded and pulled on some sleeping shorts, thankful his erection was easily hide-able and
shrinking. The waistband of both his boxers and shorts kept it in check and he paired paired them
with an exceptionally baggy t-shirt, a plain one coloured heather grey.

Rey waited by the door, twirling some strands of hair around her index finger as she tapped her
bare soles against the hardwood, shifting her weight from foot to foot.

“Are you ready to face the wolves?” Ben teased, entwining his fingers with hers.

“With you my by side, I could do anything.”

She unlocked the door and pulled it open. In front of them, sat Callie, her tail swung heavily back
and forth as her eyes flickered from Ben and then to Rey. Her head tilted to the side as she regarded
her and then she let out a low hiss aimed at his mate. Ben was stunned as Rey blanched; Callie
walked straight past her and leapt upwards.

It was a blur of black and the dropping of hands as Ben caught the cat, hugging her tight to his
chest.

Rey shook her head but was quickly ambushed by Leia who tugged her into her own embrace.
Despite the height difference between them, his mother seemed to swallow Rey’s small frame and
envelop her completely.

“Oh Rey, it’s so wonderful to meet you in person. Stars, you’re beautiful,” Leia cried out.

Callie nuzzled his neck, her paws kneaded his chest, he patted her, stroking the length of her spine.
Apparently, him sending her away had been forgiven.

It was hard to contain himself as he watched his mother embrace his lover, both held a piece of his
heart and the acceptance of the other was greatly important to him.

Not only that, he wanted to ensure Rey was showered with unconditional love especially by alphas.
While he could not erase her past, he wanted to shape and nourish her new line of thinking in
regards to alphas. Not all were brutes who took what they wanted, no. His mother was selfless,
without Leia Skywalker Solo, omegas around the world would have still lived in relative slavery to
their counterparts and without a voice.

By the looks of it, Leia had already taken Rey under her wing and Rey was a willing participant,
she glowed, her eyes were wide and animated as they shared a moment.

It had been a while since his mother had appeared so radiant, a shining star, always, she shone and
beamed at her new daughter.

“You’re here, the two of you together. I have waited so long to see my son with his mate,” Leia
whispered as she grasped Rey’s hands in her own and smoothed her thumb along her knuckles.

Ben’s loneliness had not only affected him.

Swallowing hard, he balanced Callie in one arm, placed his hands over theirs and squeezed.

“Nothing can tear us apart,” Rey assured Leia as she sent a watery grin upwards, her chin tilted and
towards Ben.

It was all he ever needed to hear.

“Any love for the old man?” Han asked gruffly, his own sharp, hazel eyes were wet but his trademark smirk lit up his lined face.

Leia shooed him, much too wrapped up in Rey so Ben knelt by his side and offered a hug, Callie jumped to the ground but remained faithfully by his side.

Han wasted no time and wrapped Ben up in a bone-crushing hug; it was all heart and soul, leather, mint and toffee, his stubbled cheek scratched against his own.

“You showed her what kind of man you are, I am proud.”

Ben nodded in acknowledgment, his parents knew briefly of the situation with Rey, her story was not his to tell but he divulged bits and pieces, enough for them to understand Rey’s decision not to join the mating service or rush to Ben.

The four of them, followed closely behind by Callie, moved to the living room. Leia and Ben moved to the kitchen to start dishing up the pizza, Ben lifted the lid and groaned, of course.

“How about you two come to the firehouse tomorrow? I have some tools there,” Han said, watching Rey in earnest.

Rey tilted her head to the side, her tongue peeked through her lips as she observed the task in hand, obviously, she was immersed and lost in concentration.

Her fingertips swept across the metal and then to the wheels, prodding them gently.

“That sounds perfect, when I am done with her, she will be as good as new,” Rey promised when she finally surfaced and relaxed into the seat.

Han nodded in approval, catching Ben’s eyes.

‘The Falcon’ was a treasured part of his father’s life and it had served him well but all knew that it was not the well-oiled machine it once was. The sentimental value alone meant that Han never wanted to part with it and so if Rey could extend its life, then it would bring Han a happiness that
knew no end.

“You have a good one here, son,” Han smirked and rested his hand on Rey’s knee for a moment in thanks before he scooted backwards and took his place by Leia.

Rey flushed a deeper pink, tucking her chin into her chest as Ben draped his arm around her shoulder; he wanted her to know he was there.

They fit together perfectly, they were born for one another and it showed. She relaxed and drew her legs up and folded them beneath her.

“We thought you might be hungry, well, hungry for something more than-”

Leia silenced him, with a sharp look in his direction and Rey chuckled, observing how quickly Han ceased his musings and sunk into his seat.

“Han, so help me! Anyway, congratulations on the mating, you two are glowing. Have we thought about grandchildren?”

The couple had been taking a sip of water and both choked, Rey more so than Ben, he rubbed gentle circles into her back as they composed themselves.

Truthfully, it was something he had thought of often. He was not young, at least in the sense of watching children grow. Since he could remember, he wanted many children having experienced the only child familial life. Of course, it was not his parent’s faults, alpha pairings were often sporadic or unpredictable in their ability to reproduce and while Ben had arrived shortly after their nuptials, no other children followed.

At thirty-four, he was aware of the years that had passed him by, Rey was twenty-four, young but both were financially stable and able to provide a loving home for children.

They had never spoke of them though, he did not know if she even wanted to have a child and that scared him. It was something he knew would hurt him if she chose not to but at the end of the day, it was her body and she had the final say.

“And she says I am the inappropriate one,” Han grumbled as he chewed his slice, grease trickled down his chin.

“Well, it is a simple question, Han,” Leia retorted.

Surprisingly, Rey spoke first.

“I want a house full of kids, being an only child was lovely, I was cherished but I had always yearned the companionship of a sibling. I don’t know about Ben though,” she trailed off, unable to meet his eyes.

“I want as many as you can give me,” he blurted out.

Leia squealed, clapping her hands as she leapt onto Han’s lap, who groused about her making him drop his slice, it slapped the hardwood and Callie pounced upon it and dragged it under the couch, hissing when Han tried to retrieve it, she caught him with a swipe of her claws. He cursed her out, spewing profanities as saw to his finger.

Ben’s breath hitched as Rey faced him, her fingertips trailed along the length of his arm as she inched her face closer to his.
“Really?” Her breath fanned across his lips and in that moment, it was just the two of them, nothing else mattered.

“Nothing would give me greater pleasure than to see you ripe and round with our child. Little girls with your eyes and my hair.”

“Little boys who would mirror you,” Rey said dreamily.

“I want it all,” Ben insisted before he kissed her, wrapped up in more than love, it settled deep within his stomach.

The image of her with child was enough to render him senseless and unreachable. Their lips moved in harmony, he would never tire of the taste of her. It was gentle, loving and only interrupted by the clearing of a throat.

“Perhaps you could leave making the grandchildren until we are elsewhere,” Han quipped.

They pulled apart.

“Sorry,” Rey breathed out.

“Don’t apologise, you are both young and in love, trust me, Han and me have done much worse, my poor brother, he is scarred with the things he has caught us doing.”

“Enough of that! How about we get out of your hair. You two be sure to pop by the firehouse tomorrow,” Han hurried the words out, already making his departure.

Leia pouted, clearly not wanting to leave but she pulled on her jacket, the clicks of her heels were quiet as she embraced both Rey and Ben, kissing them both on the cheek as she bid them farewell.

When they were alone, they ate the pizza, mostly in silence. Ben had not realised just how hungry he was until he finished three slices but Rey was something else, she shovelled down five before he finished his second.

He quirked a brow at her, in awe of how she put it away. He poked her stomach in disbelief, how someone her size could consume more than him, he failed to understand.

“What? I like sausage,” she taunted as she moved forward, her hand extended.

Ben choked again; he had underestimated her flair for teasing and humour.

Her thumb brushed the corner of his mouth and then she pulled it back and sucked it clean.

“You had sauce on you.”

Before he could word his reply, Callie, who had obviously watched the whole affair, swiped her paw out and smacked Rey’s drink from the armrest, it tumbled onto her lap, soaking her.

“Oh!” Rey shot up, drenched in cold water.

She glared at the cat.

“Why you little!”

Ben broke out in laughter.
“I will get that hellion back, trust me. I am going to clean up, you finish your food, you will need your energy for later,” Rey threw back as she disappeared back into the bedroom.

Callie, seemingly proud of herself took Rey’s place and even started nibbling on one of her leftover crusts.

“That wasn’t nice, girl,” Ben admonished gently.

The cat peered up at him and purred before she resumed her feeding.

After Ben finished up, he made sure to clean everything away, noting how quiet Rey had been. Walking towards the bedroom, he nudged the door open and found Rey in bed, wrapped in the sheets, fast asleep.

It made his heart swell.

He tiptoed in and undressed, preferring to sleep nude and tried his best not to disturb her too much. Callie was there too, she gazed at Rey’s sleeping form for a long moment and settled in the space between them and faced Ben.

Oh, she was possessive. His long arms meant he could reach Rey and offer his flesh as comfort.

Ben had remained awake far longer than Rey; it seemed as soon as her head hit the pillow, she had succumbed to sleep. There was little logic behind his reasoning, some part of him expected to wake and find the space on his right, cold, barren and lacking whom he yearned for the most.

It was something he could not quite shake, his years alone had inevitably left him scarred and somewhat paranoid, the barbs of loneliness had crippled him and dug deep below the surface. They were lodged in every organ, blackening his insides but he fought their poison, he battled them by holding her close and feeling the warmth that radiated from her skin, it seeped into every part of him.

Was she an apparition come to haunt him?

No.

Life was not that cruel, especially not to the ones that encouraged positivity and goodwill.

Rey was tucked beside him, nestled into the contours of his body, her shallow breaths tickled his bicep and her shapely, toned calves were pinched between his knees. There was no denying that she lay against him, tawny skin and chestnut curls that fell over her face.

Tentatively, he ran his forefinger along the slope of her jaw and brushed the strands away, tucking them behind her ear, she did not stir.

Content, he sighed, brought his lips to the fresh, but healing bite, and kissed it.

He could sleep and peacefully so, she was there with him.

“Entranced and in slumber, you make my wounds take flight, heal and power so none will cumber. With you, my light, I will beat this shadow of doubt, conquer it, slay and drown my sorrows, lay here with me tonight and every last one of my tomorrows.”

Ben awoke to the heady scent of daisies and ocean salt. The ripe fragrances were undoubtedly Rey
but they were intense, magnified and mixed with something else, a musky and underlying essence that could not be ignored or misidentified.

Arousal.

It was then that he felt small, slender fingers trail the length of his thighs and bony elbows rested there too. Blinking, he opened his eyes and found Rey lying flat on her stomach and using his own body for support as she propped herself up and gripped his cock.

The day was still in the stages of its wakening routine, the natural light of the dusky morning sky did very little to light the room but touches of lavender and royal blue bathed Rey’s figure in deep hues, her position was like the ward of the night itself. It teetered on the edge and promised a careening peak of light.

Far from innocent eyes gazed up at him through thick eyelashes.

“Good morning, Ben.”

Before he could word a reply, she encased his cock with more than her fist, her mouth, already wet, trickling with saliva, stretched over the head, swallowing it whole.

Gripping the bedsheets, white knuckling and toes curled, he gasped as she explored him, bold, brazen and audacious.

Although she had never participated in the act before, she was a natural and followed her instincts well. Her enthusiasm and willingness to learn only spurred Ben on; to begin with, his thrusts were gentle as she handled his shaft while the other worked on taking the rest of him into her mouth. It was sinful, of how her tongue curled and flicked against his skin, she worked him well, humming, as she tasted him.

It was hard to peer down at her; it only triggered his impending release as instead of staring at his cock, she kept her eyes solely trained on his face, daring him to look her way. When he did, she rewarded him by clutching his balls and opening her mouth wider as she accommodated more of him.

A strangled groan fell from his parted lips, her saliva dribbled down his cock and she used it to pump him.

“Fuck, Rey.”

Scratching caught his attention, he noticed the door was closed and he gazed back at Rey who released him with a wet pop.

“I had to lock her out; she does not like sharing her daddy.”

Ben groaned, his cock jutted forward against her mouth. The word awoke something within him, to see his little mate between his thighs and having her way with him.

Rey craned her neck; her hair fell to one side as she smirked up at him, lips wet and red, puffy from her movements.

“Did you like that, Ben, being called daddy?”

Exhaling through his nostrils, he gritted his teeth as the pleasure took hold of him.
“Yes,” he admitted, his voice not much more than a croaky whisper, thick and tainted with sleep and want.

Ben was open minded when it came to his sexuality despite his lacking of activity or experience. Some part of him was thrilled to hear the word, it culminated in him fisting her hair, fingertips crazed her scalp. His self-restraint was waning, fast. He wanted to fuck her pretty, little mouth with abandon and test how far she could take him.

“Does daddy want me to suck his cock?”

Ben was done for.

Rey looked on with a faux innocent expression as she waited patiently, offering feather light touches along the length of him, her nail tapped against the more prominent veins, they lit a trail of fire wherever they roamed. She lay her head upon his hipbone, eyes wide and knowing.

“Yes he does, he wants you to take as much as you can manage, sunshine,” he tried to keep his voice calm and assertive but he was thrown and flailing, much too stunned and excitable to form whatever responses she anticipated.

The night gave way to the morning sun, some rays filtered in and took refugee on Rey’s figure, her hair was lit up, he noticed then the natural, blonde highlights that were smattered around in her waves, glistening nicely. The woman was a kaleidoscope of colours and stunning imagery, he wanted to write of every part of her in detail and then do so again as he was sure he could not articulate her beauty without failing to achieve or represent such a standard.

Rocking forward, Rey guided his cock towards her mouth once more. His hold on her hair tightened as he encouraged her and she ran with it and near enough swallowed him whole. Ben’s head fell back onto the pillow as she gagged around him, bobbing and slurping, she hollowed her cheeks and suctioned them, the added pressure was a delight, the noises of her sharp exhales through her nose was just an added sensory stimulation.

It was a marvel of how quickly she accustomed to take him; he thrust in earnest, fucking her welcoming mouth as she bobbed up and down his length. Every prod and berthing of her lips was met by the swirl of her tongue and the vice grip on his shaft as she squeezed him and directed him up and in to her waiting passage.

It was memorising, her breasts bounced against the inside of his thighs, her hardened nipples dragged against him and he could practically taste how ready she was for him. He slipped one hand from her shiny tendrils and dipped it between their heaving bodies bathed in orange and slipped his index finger into her cunt.

Around him, she moaned, the vibrations reverberated around and down his cock.

Stars.

She was wet, far wetter than he had ever anticipated her to be by just giving pleasure to him. She rotated her hips and he gave her clit one rub, a full circle with his thumb before he withdrew it and brought it to his lips. It was lewd how she peered up and watched him lick his fingers clean, the taste of her would forever taint his tongue and ruin all else for him.

The hazel eyes that enraptured him, watered as he hit the back of her throat, each time, she acclimatised herself and worked to relax the muscles and her nails left a scattering of crescent moon indentions upon his stomach. Each movement left his stomach spasming as his climax
neared closer but he did not want this to end.

It was unspoken but he thought of the night before and the promises of dark haired children with forest green eyes with flecks of earthy gold and coffee brown. He wanted to finish inside of her.

“I need to come inside you,” he admittedly roughly, already peeling her off his cock.

Rey grinned up at him, her lips red and swollen but her body was lively and coiled, she rose up on her knees, balancing herself before she leaned to the edge of the bed and retrieved something from the floor.

It was his fire helmet.

It was his old one. He had taken it home and stored it away in his wardrobe after funding allowed for new equipment, he had forgotten all about it, rarely setting his eyes upon the forgotten treasure.

Up until now.

Rey swung her legs over his, straddling him as she adjusted the helmet and placed it upon her head.

“I found it and I could not resist, do you like it on me?”

Ben nodded dumbly, watching as she lowered the visor and shielded her eyes as if she was about to battle fire, perhaps she was, the way he burned for her was enough to set her aflame if the wetness between her legs signalled as much. Together, they laid bare their own inferno, a raging one that consumed them both in its wake and left them victim to their lust and consumption.

Ben gulped, seeing her in his uniform, albeit just his helmet, was almost too much. Her nimble fingers wrapped tightly around his cock, he hissed and thrust upwards off the mattress as she doused it in her slick that rolled freely. It seemed as if her body was always primed and ready for him, responsive and undoubtedly tuned to his needs. It was sinful; something he would never quite understand, of how she opened up like a budding flower and handled his impressive length and girth that went well above average.

Before she took him, she heaved in a deep, shallow breath as the anticipation crackled between the two. Tilting her hips, she rose up before she released her hold on him as she sunk downwards; she engulfed him and slid without resistance as she managed to take him in his entirety.

Tight, she was impossibly tight, her sleek, textured walls gripped him and she slithered, swivelling as she tested him. It was a new position and he rejoiced, groaning with how deep he conquered her insides. Rey gasped as she buried his cock to the hilt and left no part of him untouched by her hot heat.

His hands flew to her waist as she moaned, gaping as the helmet jostled. Although more than half her face was covered, he glimpsed a look and witnessed how her lips curved into a brilliant smile before she bit down on her bottom lip and swiped her tongue along the seam.

She flew forward as he thrusted, they were shallow movements but it seemed as if even the slightest action was enough to rouse her, her palms slapped his chest, the heels of her hands kneaded his pectorals. Seeing her overcome only inspired him and she worked to keep up with speed as she experimentally lifted herself and brought her cunt down time and time again to meet his weeping cock.

It took some readjustment but they managed to find their rhythm, moans and grunts soon filled the room as they reached sweet candescence and touched the stars. His little mate was a speedy
learner, in no time at all, she rocked upon him, hands planted firmly on his knees for support as she arched her back and offered an unshielded view of her bouncing breasts.

It was a glorious sight, how she rode him with no care in the world, she did so with expectation and the demand of pleasure as she took what she wanted from him. Ben keened, he wanted her to feel in control and in charge of her body, she could use him to do so and that was a fine thought.

Like her, he was fast becoming undone.

“You ride me so well, Rey and wearing my helmet too, you look so hot, sunshine,” he praised, his fingers brushed her folds and found her hard, swollen clit.

Her walls began to flutter, the sporadic clenches and release of his cock had his world spinning, he fist ed the bedsheets and raised his hips again, pushing their relentless pace to a new feverish level of dance.

It was hard to keep his eyes solely on her half covered face, the sight of his helmet would push him over the edge but even more tantalising was trailing the length of his body and watching where they were connected.

Seeing her swallow his cock, her cunt coming down to meet it, was sublime.

“Ben, I’m so close,” Rey whined as she shoved the visor back into the helmet and revealed her flushed face.

She need not have spoken, her thighs quivered as they bracketed his, their hold was not as bruising as she rode the waves of pleasure. Like the crashing of waves, she came down on him time and time again and gave no mind to how her body battered against his own.

It was only right, they had marred the other’s bodies in more way than one, a physical manifestation of passionate love that simmered and boiled to the surface.

Ben was deliciously sore as he used muscles that had no laid dormant but Rey was on fire, twisting and rolling upon him, her body was made for it.

Moaning, he felt her clamp around him as he applied pressure on her clit and she howled, a sound he never thought possible of her as she fell forward a final time, climaxing and milking him for all he was worth.

He relieved her of his helmet, let it drop to the floor as he crushed her to his chest, and continued pummelling inside of her, gritting his teeth as he held her in place until he too came and filled her up. He roared as no man should.

His knot kept them joined, it was all heavy breathing and wet skin and he thought once more of how she could one day bear his child.

Carefully, he manoeuvred them onto their sides so they were facing one another.

Her eyes drooped, a clear sign of fatigue.

“Sleep, little one, we have some time before we need to wake.”

Rey smiled and offered him a small, chaste kiss as she wrapped her arms around his neck and settled there. Her breathing evened out and he mimicked it, feeling himself fall under the influence of exhaustion.
There was no denying it now, Rey was there and with that, his dreams would flourish.

Chapter End Notes

You might have noticed I have added three chapters to the chapter count...the story still ends at chapter 32 but I have THREE epilogues planned ;)

This chapter was not my best, for unknown reasons, I found it hard to write but the next one is currently being written and I am already liking how it is turning out... ;)

So the firehouse chapter is next...time for Rey to meet Bazine.

As always, thank you to all who support me, your comments give me the nice shove I need to write more and improve.
Chapter Summary

Suppressant talk, Chewie's sweet hugs, Falcon fixing with Gwen, Goodnight Bazine and fun desk times

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Rey-New York, United States of America

The natural progression of their budding relationship was startling. The two of them moved around each other with relative ease, fleeting quietly but drawn and in tune. It was hard to imagine a time in her life without Ben.

For six years, his words had kept her alive and it was no dramatic hyperbole, while she found joy in her family and surroundings, there was always a part of her, tiny but gnawing, that made her feel small and unfulfilled. The attack that followed her presentation had left her wounded in more ways than one, she questioned her safety almost obsessively and had worked tirelessly to forget how his hands had tainted her, left her tired and bruised and ruined for years to follow.

More than once, she beseeched whoever reigned above and demanded answers and when none was delivered, she cursed them until her throat was raw and her skin burned. The recent attack involving Snap had only buried her further, another nail in her coffin and another sprinkling of grave soil, so dry and cold; she never thought she would surface again.

Ben.

It was he who had changed everything, he had pried the nails and made them splinters, he disregarded her tightly constructed walls and smashed them to pieces then offered her his hand and pulled her from the earth and faced her towards the sun.

Healing with him was a joy she never thought possible but as they stood, side-by-side and smiling as they brushed their teeth, she knew she would never return to that dark place again.

The domestic bliss of it all was a nicety, with one arm wrapped around her middle and the other holding her toothbrush as she scrubbed her teeth clean, it was easy to pretend that it was an act they had done so together thousands of times before.

Ben’s hair was fluffy and flopped over his eyes, he yawned almost continuously and his cheeks were dewy and flushed. They had showered a while before, Ben had insisted on cleaning her again and she could not resist, he was far more efficient with his cleansing, his hands spanned and covered more of her skin and his touches were liberal and thorough. He paid special attention to the insides of her thighs, humming; he lathered them well and smoothed lavender scented soap along the length of her legs, rubbing them softly before he rinsed them under the spray.

At one point, on his knees with wide eyes all hungry and blown, he had splayed her legs as far as they would go and rested her back against the tiles. Gracefully, he had tucked his shoulder beneath
her for support and draped one of her calves over it. Gentle at first, he mouthed her, pressing chaste kisses on her mound before he descended lower and parted her folds with his forefinger and thumb. Then, he devoured her, pumping his thick fingers knuckle deep inside of her as he sucked and flicked her clit until she came all over his face.

Ever the gentleman, he resumed his task afterwards, running his nimble fingers over her sensitive area until she was squeaky clean.

As they went about their morning routine, Rey found herself leaning into his side, still tired and somewhat sore from using muscles that had otherwise lain dormant and unused. Her mate worked her good; it was a delicious ache that she could not wait to replicate and experience repeatedly.

Both snuck glances at the other, peeking up at their reflections. More than once, Rey stuck her tongue out at him, invoking hearty chuckles until his chin was covered in white, minty foam.

They did not rush about, it was nice to stand still and just enjoy the other’s company. Rey learned that Ben brushed his teeth slowly and with care while she was a ferocious scrubber that her dentist often admonished her for. It was also brought to her attention that Ben was an advocate of natural health and hygiene products whenever possible and most of his carefully arranged concoctions were made by his uncle.

In the mornings, he used a simple tea tree and witch hazel face wash, which he gladly offered to her and insisted she try. With him looking on expectantly, she tried it despite her skeptical thoughts. Admittedly, it was refreshing and left her face feeling cleansed and far smoother than her regular, branded facial wash which was without a doubt, pumped full of harsh chemicals.

Ben smiled in acknowledgment, a knowing look flashed upon his face as he crossed his arms over his chest and leaned his hip against the counter.

“Oh, do not think you have converted me to your world of natural products,” she laughed, shaking her finger at him as she tried to appear firm and resolute in her ways.

“We’ll see;” he retorted, raising a brow in challenge.

They resumed their preparation for the day ahead. As promised, they intended to spend their time at the firehouse. Ben had ensured her she would not impose there and maintained he would remain off duty so there was no chance of him leaving her behind and alone in an unknown country and grappling fear.

His line of work would always worry her but she respected his profession, it was noble, selfless, and so becoming of who Ben was. It was no easy route, he worked hard and she admired him for it, he had undoubtedly saved a countless number of lives but a selfish part found it hard to accept. Every time he responded to a call, it brought the real potential that he would not return home.

She shook the thought from her mind.

Instead, she focused on Ben who sat across from her, dressed casually in dark jeans and a white t-shirt. His arms bulged against the fabric, something that made her rub her thighs together inconspicuously as possible. A red plaid shirt hung over the back of his chair and by the look on his face, he knew of her predicament.

Like the shower, Ben insisted upon handling the task of breakfast. It was odd, to be catered for and treated so nicely. There had always been the assumption and old instilled image of the omega resuming the role of caregiver and homemaker, barefoot, pregnant, and reliant on her alpha.
Ben smashed gender roles and societal expectations. Though he made a simple breakfast, eggs and bacon, it was easiest one of the best meals she had ever had. It was bursting with flavour, he used seasoning where she ignored hers back home and just drenched it all in ketchup and wolfed it down before she opened the garage.

Moaning, she chewed thoughtfully and licked the bacon grease from her lips.

“You tease.”

He paired the meal with a tall glass of fresh orange juice. Halfway through her breakfast, she recalled that she had failed to take her medication. She brought her bag onto her lap then rifled through it until she found the small container, and shook it.

Ben dropped his fork, all remnants of his smile vanished as she twisted the cap.

“Are they your suppressants?” He asked quietly.

Not paying too much attention, instead focusing on the task in hand, she pushed the cap and twirled it before piling two, round, pink pills into her open palm.

“Yes.”

From underneath her lashes, she peered over at him, noting the apprehension that clung to his body language. His shoulders were hunched inwards, his fingers twitched against the cool marble of the island below them.

Blinking, she placed the two pills onto the surface between them, so small, so weighted and loaded with voiceless happenings.

Ben’s fingers stretched out as he tapped against the back of her knuckles. The quiet was something unexpected; they remained stagnant for a while, two static beings fleeting between light and dark.

“They’re my prescribed dose, check the bottle if you need to. I stopped taking more than I should have after my heat burned them and flushed them out of my system,” she admitted, tugging her lip between her teeth.

Ben inhaled, his whole demeanour visibly relaxed.

“I don’t need to read the label, I trust you. I just wanted to make sure you were okay; I hated the idea of you numbing yourself to avoid your heat. You must have been so frightened, so desperate and I hope you never feel that way again. I will never pressure you to do something you don’t wish to do.”

Blinking, her throat thick with emotion, she allowed herself some time to compose herself. As always, Ben was incredibly patient and offered unspoken support and comfort.

Clearing her throat, she spoke.

“It was never about avoiding you, it was my heat that I feared the most. I know it was wrong of me to take so many suppressants, I regret it but I will never make that mistake again.”

Sliding her pills back into to her waiting hands, Ben held up her glass, tilting it her way.

“If you ever feel in that position again or uncertain, I will always listen to you. You can trust me, you are no longer alone.”
Rey dropped the pills onto her tongue and gulped some of the juice, swallowing all before she answered, locking her bare feet around his ankles.

“I know and neither are you.”

They strolled to the firehouse, hand in hand. The journey was short, much to Rey’s surprise but it was slowed due to her interest in her new surroundings.

Despite their respective cities sharing a near identical population, New York was a bustling metropolis and giant compared to London. The latter sprawled for miles and offered a mixture of densely and sparsely populated areas that crawled far and wide, right into the countryside. New York differed. It was compact, as if a pair of hands had crowded the land together; every inch was grey infrastructure and seas of bodies that flowed hard and continuously.

Luckily for her, Ben cut above the rest and most swerved from his path so only a few shoulders bumped against her and even less of those apologised for the act. In London, people were loud, brash and mostly welcoming. A conversation could be struck up by almost anyone, you could sigh at a bus stop and someone, likely an older woman or man, would ask to know what troubled you and oddly, it was easy to divulge your secrets to the stranger.

Summer was waning in New York and made way for autumn; a breeze played about with her hair and brushed her bare calves, which was a welcome reprieve from the humidity that clung heavy. It was because of that oppressive climate, she had chosen to wear some denim shorts, ones tried and tested, well worn and discoloured and such revealed plenty of skin. It was hard not to notice how Ben scanned her limbs, his fingers brushed lightly against her toned curves coloured tawny and dotted with freckles. The white vest top made her and Ben a matching pair, even more so when she pulled one of his other plaid shirts from his wardrobe and pulled it on, knotting it around her pinched waist.

Her sandals slapped the hot concrete as the two traipsed the few blocks to the firehouse, the sights were quick flashes in passing, neither stood still and instead walked with the commuters and lost themselves in the riptide.

“That is my uncle Chewie’s bakery, it’s closed up so he is most likely at the firehouse,” Ben pointed at a quaint storefront just across the road from their destination.

The street was all red brick but the shop was an entirely different image, it was softer, a dusty pink sign decorated with stunning calligraphy displayed his name.

“What a beautiful sign,” she mused aloud, she cupped her eyes, shielding them from the sun and peered up once more.

“I made it, well, at least the lettering,” Ben admitted, scratching the back of his neck.

It pieced together almost instantly, the connection was clear, a new kind of clarity.

“Like your novel. Your calligraphy was on the front cover!” Rey beamed up at him, bright and enthusiastic.

It seemed as if his talents knew no end, he was an artist through and through, his words were much more than just planted sentiments, he could bring them to life if he wanted to.

“Yes.”
Together, they walked inside of the firehouse, fingers loosely wrapped around the others’. It was quiet, Rey deduced, almost no sound emitted around the brick walls, no one was in sight.

“Top Gun is gone, that is our main fire engine, most people will be out on call,” Ben informed her as he steered her towards a door painted red, inside, voices could be heard.

There was some nervousness about what faced her, these people were not just friends to Ben, they were family.

“Don’t be nervous, sunshine,” Ben whispered and she realised then that her palm was slick with sweat.

Willing her heart to calm, she inhaled deeply and sought his hand again after rubbing hers against denim to dry. Without hesitation, he tightened his hold and opened the door.

The aroma of fresh coffee and baked goods greeted her; two were seated at a small, rectangle table, both giants in their own right despite their positions. The man, hairy, tattooed and with a piercing lodged in his eyebrow stood, smiled wide and revealed a shiny gold tooth in his lower jaw.

“You must be Rey,” he sounded so utterly taken with her, his positive energy was infectious and she found that any dread or nervousness quickly slipped away.

Before she could word a reply, he swept her off her feet, curling his hands under her armpits as he lifted her, hugging her tight.

It knocked the breath out of her, the man was taller than Ben but she returned the hug, regardless and patted his back as she chuckled. He spun her before setting her down, steadying her with a firm hand on her shoulder.

“I’m Chewie, another uncle for you. Welcome to the family,” he winked as he appraised Ben.

Her mate was rolling his eyes, clearly taken aback by the forward introduction but all his fussing was ended when Chewie hugged him and even managed to lift Ben with relative ease.

“Oh, okay, you can put me down,” Ben quipped half-heartedly; his uncle listened and released his hold on him.

He ruffled his hair in jest, his fingers were decorated in thick bands of silver and gold, all sported a colourful gem or deep, intricate engravings.

Rey approached the woman who she knew to be Gwen as she was still confined to the wheelchair, a result of the fire as her leg lay propped up horizontally.

Ben had spoke often of his closest friend, an alpha like him who he had known his entire life and so Rey hoped they could bridge a connection as it was obvious the shared a mutual point of interest.

The corner of Gwen’s mouth tugged into a smile, her lips were painted ruby red, her skin like porcelain but it was her eyes, a piercing but an enchanting azure blue that invited her further. They were filled with a genuine kind of gleam, a telling attribute of a woman who apparently spoke her mind and felt no qualms about that.

“Oh he did a number on that slender neck of yours, he can be a brute when he sees fit,” she smirked, flipping some of her platinum hair from her eyes before she tucked it securely behind her ear.
It was forward but honest and she valued honesty above all. Despite this, she felt her cheeks blossom ripe pink as Gwen patted the plastic seat to her right; her chipped crimson nails tapped it.

Accepting the offering, Rey sat beside her and crossed her legs.

“It was nothing I didn’t ask for,” Rey added, smiling.

Gwen quirked her brow, looking between Rey and Ben, twisting her neck to inspect the bite that Rey had bestowed upon him.

“It seems you two are matched well. Han and Leia were called away but he left ‘The Falcon,’ in his office if you want to have a look at it.”

“Of course, I’ll just get Ben to show me the way.”

“That’s not necessary, I’ll show you. Perhaps I could watch and see if I can learn something new.”

Rey nodded, alone time with her was apparently necessary and she could not deny the want to know more of the woman who had played such an instrumental part in Ben’s life.

It was odd, she had expected to feel jealous or dwell in the reality that Ben had chosen to stay with Gwen and die alongside her. It was telling of his character, like him, she would struggle to leave anyone behind even with the promise of death lurking at the fringe or sidelines. It was because of that, she was stupefied and confused that she harboured no ill feelings towards Gwen.

Gwen wheeled herself from the break room, telling Ben and Chewie of their reasonings as she passed. Rey followed her to the office; it was nestled in the back portion of the station, a small cubbyhole of a room.

It was neat enough, an oak desk took pride of place in the middle of the space and file cabinets lined the red brick wall. In the corner, sat ‘The Falcon,’ primed and ready, the metal shiny and sleek like Han had spent some time polishing it ahead of its tune up. It obviously meant a great deal to him so she hoped she could restore it to its best capacity.

Kneeling, she brushed her finger along the curve of the wheel, once again, noting how it lopsided. It was well worn too; replacements would be needed in the near future to prevent any further problems and to optimise performance. She wondered if he had any spares.

“I think there are a few wheels in the closet, he has never changed them though,” Gwen informed her, clearly, she was observant or possessed a niche in reading people, quite like Ben.

“Thanks.”

Rey stood and padded over to the closet, scooping up a bag of tools left on the desk as she did so. Hugging them close, she flicked the switch and managed to retrieve two, pristine wheels from the back of the enclosed space.

Happy with her finds, she set everything down near the wheelchair and began her work. This is where she shone, taking things apart and making them new. It was one of the few things in life that made sense to her. The sound of gears working in tandem, the ringing of metal against metal or the twisting of bolts as they held everything together, it all soothed her mind.

Surprisingly, it was a fast job, very little time was spent replacing the wheels, she needed no instruction, ‘The Falcon’ spoke for itself.
“I told him to go,” Gwen said quietly.

The spanner she had been using dropped to the concrete floor with an almighty clatter.

Rey peeked a glance up at Gwen, imploring her to speak more.

The woman did not keep her waiting.

“In the fire, I told him to leave me. I knew he loved you and I wanted him to go to you instead of facing down the flames with me but he wouldn’t. I tried-”

“-Despite his love for me, I know the size of his heart. Both of you are so brave, courageous in your profession and I can’t imagine the challenges and sights you face. I’m proud of him. I just wish he had told me at the time. I don’t blame you,” Rey stood and placed her hand over Gwen’s and smoothed her fingertips in small circles.

Rey wondered how the night plagued her, of how the near death experienced shaped her and Ben but there was no resentment, there never had been. It was a bitter pill to to swallow, that each time either of them responded to a call, it could be their last but clearly, it was something that impassioned them both. Rey would never ask Ben to leave his career so she would need to cope with her own anxiety about it in a healthy and productive fashion.

Gwen’s eyes shone as she wiped away tears that threatened to fall, she swallowed hard, visibly overcome with emotion but she handled herself well and took Rey’s hand in her own.

“You make him so happy; the future is bright for you two.”

“Thank you.”

The pair shared a knowing look, any nervousness or worry was put to rest.

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Rey finished ‘The Falcon’s’ maintenance and tune up with Gwen chattering away. It was nice; Gwen spoke fondly of Ben and revealed some childhood tales. Knowing more about him, she found herself falling further.

With a final once over and check, she proclaimed ‘The Falcon’ ready for take off. Gwen helped her clear the tools away as Rey rolled it back into the corner.

“Oh it looks like some of the others are back,” Gwen commented before she wheeled herself out of the office.

Wiping her brow, Rey instead set off to the restroom, her hands were in need of a wash and a rinse of her face would not go a miss. Signs were littered about the place so she followed them and found the woman’s toilet. Opening the door, she walked straight to the sink and lathered her hands, paying special attention to her nail beds. Once she was satisfied and doused her face in cold water before patting it dry, she moved to the door and heard voices just beyond it.

“Look at you, all marked up. Do you think that will stop me? I was your first, you gave me your virginity and you will never be able to change that, Ben.”

Rey stilled, bringing her hand to cover her mouth. It shook and her throat burned with the heady scent that filtered under the door. The woman was aroused; she could smell it on her. It enraged her.
“How many times have I told you to leave me alone? That was over a decade ago, Bazine. You don’t compare to Rey, you never will,” Ben retorted.

She had never heard him so maddened and frustrated except when they had screamed at each other when their combined omits were discovered. It was still sore, to know that the woman had been the first to have Ben but she knew that she would be his last. She bore his mark, his scent had become one with hers and he had claimed every piece of her.

He was hers.

“You even smell like her,” Bazine growled out.

“Of course I do, I mated with her, Bazine. We consummated our mating, I bit her and she did the same to me. Now, stop deluding yourself into thinking anything will ever happen between us. You are trying my patience,” he bit out.

The woman laughed and Rey listened to the sound of footsteps as they neared closer.

“What are you going to do, alpha?”

That was enough, a fire lit in Rey’s belly and raged upwards as she yanked the door open to find Bazine with her hand planted on Ben’s chest, the other was in his wrist as he tried to keep her away from him.

“Well, look at the little omega that has you all flustered,” Bazine taunted as she stalked towards Rey.

Ben’s hand shot out and grabbed her wrist.

“Stay away from her,” he warned, a low timber, much more resembling a growl.

Bazine rolled her eyes and shook him off, advancing upon Rey. The olive skinned woman, all sharp features with menacing chartreuse eyes and hair as black as her heart grinned at Rey. Her smile only faltered when she happened upon the bite that decorated Rey’s neck.

Ben’s bite.

Her features warped into a scowl, a murderous glare and shadowed eyes.

“You don’t deserve him.”

Rey analysed the situation carefully. She grew up with a feisty, headstrong alpha for a mother who had taken up amateur boxing as a teen. She had thrown out drunks twice her size from the pub. Cassian was also skilled in martial arts, he adored the art of jujitsu, a famously non-aggressive art but it offered incapacitation when necessary. Rey had grown up with more uncles than she could count, there were biological ones in Mexico but also the men close to her parents and each had instilled the art of protecting herself. None was more apparent after her attack at fourteen, they doubled their efforts then, it was likely due to their perseverance, and those extra lessons that helped her fight off Snap.

Bazine was easy to read.

Her body language was telling, limbs coiled ready to strike and with teeth bared, she appeared more like a wild animal than a woman. It was like what omegas had to resort to in the past, to fight for their alpha as alphas had done for them if the pickings were sparse.
This was a different story entirely. Ben was a claimed alpha and she was his. The evidence was as clear as day, the purple bloom on her neck only cemented the case.

“Whether I deserve him or not is none of your business. He does not want you, he is mine,” Rey whispered calmly, her fingers fleeted across the bite.

Bazine’s eyes flashed and honed in on the small movement.

Ben stood close by, working his lip between his teeth. Bazine was not the only one who appeared ready to strike; his fists were curled at his sides.

“Enough,” he said.

The statement seemingly went unheard and fell on deaf ears, at least with Bazine.

“Yours? Did he feel like yours when I was the first one to feel his cock? Did you take him in your mouth? How did I taste?”

It stung; Rey recoiled as if slapped, unable to maintain her façade of calm any longer.

“I thought so. You are just someone a service has told him to mate with and you kept him waiting, how dare you?” She hissed, nearing Rey.

Rey bit her tongue and tasted copper, Ben’s eyes shifted into her direction.

“I said enough!” Ben shouted, stepping between the two.

“He chose me,” Rey whispered.

It happened all so fast, Bazine shoved Ben, he backed into the wall and she managed to land a good hit, slapping Rey across the cheek. It stung, hot and heavy.

The blow knocked her for a moment, the sound cut across the silence and she crumpled inwards before Bazine tugged her hair and kneed her middle, she dropped to her knee as Ben rounded upon them but she knew how to power through. Despite the pain riddling her gut, she inhaled and brought her knee up, dealing a similar blow. The hold on her hair wavered and she used that time to wrap her arms around Bazine’s waist and plant her ankle behind her so they fell.

They landed together.

Rey was lucky and kept top position to which she moved to incapacitate Bazine who was screeching, screaming bloody murder as she clawed at Rey’s wrists. Grunting, Rey locked her legs, squeezing them over Bazine’s thighs and then caught her wrists to stop any further attacks.

“It’s over,” Rey warned, feeling her pent up feelings rise to the surface.

Her veins were alive, a simmer that was approaching boiling point.

Large hands wrapped around her middle, pulling her from the raven-haired banshee and she did not fight them, an altercation was the furthest thing from her mind but she had defended herself and she was well within her right to do so.

Huffing, heaving in deep breaths as she flattened her palm across her stomach, she tasted the familiar metallic tang of blood and brought her free hand up to her lip, realising the slap had split it.
Ben’s hands were fast upon her, patting her down, she winced when he came upon the tender spot along her navel and he choked, glaring at the ground.

“I’m sorry; I shouldn’t have let her near you.”

“What happened?” Chewie demanded, he appeared in the hallway, peering at the scene in front of him.

Ben stood straight, shaking his head.

Rey saw Bazine move first, she rolled onto her stomach and darted towards them, ready to go through Ben it seemed.

She would not let her lay a finger on him, she stepped aside, shaking off his wandering hands and met her, striding forward without fear. What she lacked in natural brute strength, she made up for in precision, she knew where to hit.

“He is mine,” Rey grunted a final time, just as Bazine closed the distance.

Bracing herself, she stood firm and reared her arm back, before throwing her fist with a heavy forward momentum. Her knuckles cracked and connected with Bazine’s jaw and almost immediately, the woman dropped.

Chewie was quick and there to catch her, her eyes rolled into the back of her head momentarily as she briefly lost consciousness but she recovered quickly, blinking up at the ceiling.

“If you ever touch her again, I will not be responsible for my actions,” Ben muttered lowly as he pointed at Bazine, his eyes livid and lips trembling.

Gwen, who had rolled in behind Chewie shook her head.

“About time someone taught her a lesson, Hux, get an icepack; she will be sporting a pretty bruise tomorrow.”

Dropping her hand and unfurling her fingers, Rey realised the full extent of what had transpired. Violence was never the first option but she felt as if her arm had been twisted, she had been forced to put her down.

Gazing away, her thoughts were quickly interrupted by a bruising hold on her wrist as Ben dragged her along the hallway to the back office.

The lights were dim, some flickering and he appeared wild, not like the man she had come to know. Had she crossed the line and embarrassed him? Was he angry? She did not know but she willed her legs to follow him and was ready for the consequences of her actions.

As soon as they stepped into the office, he slammed the door and was upon her, shoving her against the wood. His touches were not gentle; he gripped her hips and slammed his weight against her.

“Rey, do you have any idea how fucking hot that was? My omega, defending me, fighting someone off. Fuck, you are heaven,” Ben growled out, as he dipped his head and began his assault on her neck.

Her cunt throbbed with the spillage of his words. Yes, she had defended her alpha and fought off a rival. It was basic instincts but they had manifested so violently.
His own enthusiasm only spurred her on; she sucked her lip between her teeth, pulling and sucking the blood that had been shed. It was a token of how she would fight for him, always, a well-earned battle wound that was evidence of her sacrifice.

“Of course I did, she put her hands on you, she wanted to take what was mine,” Rey hissed, canting her hips forward, aware of how wet she was, it was torture.

It was a new sensation, she had never felt so overcome by her instincts before but in the heat of the moment, she basked in them and poked the sleeping beast who lay dormant within.

“Fuck, yes. I am yours, you were so good, little one, your alpha is pleased,” he hummed, suckling her gland.

It was still so fresh, angry and bruised but with his lips upon it, it was pure ecstasy. It was lewd and loud how she moaned, acutely aware of the audience not far beyond the door, but in that moment, she could not spare a single care or thought.

It was all about them.

The only thing that mattered was their wants and desire.

Rey cupped his growing cock over his jeans.

“This belongs to me,” she said, asserting dominance over him.

“Yes.”

She trailed her hand upwards before landing on the flesh above his heart.

“This is mine.”

“Always, it was never anyone else’s,” he groaned, capturing her lips with his own.

It was fierce, a wild dance and clashing of teeth, sporadic nips and sucking and panting, it was messy but she had never felt so wanted, so entirely his.

“Then show me,” she challenged when they momentarily separated.

The eyes that pierced her own were unlike the ones she had been used to seeing, obsidian and shadowed, they took on a new flavour. They promised ground breaking passion.

Ben dipped and threw her over his shoulder; she was taken aback but enjoyed the flight, bobbing, her limbs useless before he set her down, muttering to himself.

“I’m going to fuck you on this desk, I am going to show how hot you made me and I want everyone to hear that you are mine.”

Rey whimpered as he bent her over, his palm lay flat against her spine as he ushered her down. Her hands curled around the edge of the desk as her cheek rest against the wood. Breathing harshly, she waited in anticipation as Ben leaned over, lowering his mouth to her ear, brushing her hair over her shoulder to reveal her neck.

“Does that sound okay, Rey, do you want me to show you how you made me feel out there?”

The words shot straight to her cunt, she squeezed her thighs together and rolled her hips, aching for friction.
“Yes,” was her weighty reply.

Ben hummed in approval, kissing a hot trail along her bite mark and then down her spine, shedding the plaid shirt from her.

She clung to the desk and tried to control her breathing as her heart beat a bruising tune. The anticipation was otherworldly; she wanted him to have his way with her, to take what was rightfully his and not worry about her fragility. They were equals, strong beings who would not break, not by the other’s hands.

Closing her eyes, she listened to the metallic clunk of his belt and the snapping of leather as he dropped his belt to the ground, it was a warning, a sound to alert her that he was coming for her. His fingertips danced along the grooves of her spine, the fabric of her vest top was thin enough for him to do so and he left a trail of hot fire there with just a passing touch.

The sound of his zipper followed and then he dipped his fingers underneath her, freeing the button that secured them with a quick flick of his forefinger and thumb. It was skilful of how quickly he performed the act but he left her no time to think, he grasped the back of her denim shorts and yanked hard, tugging them down without grace but an odd finesse. Cold air welcomed her bare skin but it was quickly replaced with Ben’s warmth as he rubbed his cock between her cheeks.

“Jesus fucking Christ, no panties,” he groaned as he gave her ass a quick slap and dug his fingers into her flesh.

She moaned, forgetting that she had went commando that morning; it was something she did often, enjoying the feel of denim against her bare skin.

“You little tease,” he whispered as his fingers delved through her folds before he sunk his middle finger into her and curled it upwards.

Rey whined, squeezing the digit as she yearned and begged for more.

“So wet.”

She mumbled an incoherent reply as he withdrew the finger and sucked on it, loudly and she was ready to curse him out, mournful and indignant about the loss of it before he clamped his hands on her hipbones.

She felt his cockhead nudge forward, ready to skewer her. Not another moment passed before he snapped his hips and entered her from behind, a swift motion that knocked the breath from her lungs.

“Fuck,” they cried out in unison.

The sound bounced off the walls, it was a hollow, guttural tune of two lovers ready to capitulate to their own desires without a care.

She was sure she would never acclimatise herself to the feeling of utter fullness she felt when he buried himself completely inside of her but it was divine, she clenched around him as he began to withdraw, almost leaving her completely before he slammed back in.

“You’re so tight, so fucking tight,” he spewed his profanities but she wanted more, she scratched the wood and began moving herself along his length, her ass smacked against him but the slapping of their flesh was an added catalyst for her to increase her activity.
Gasping, he fastened his pace, pounding into her in earnest, fervent and diligent in his movements to please her. It was hard to match him, it was unlike the previous times they had been together, this was a desperate chase for release, which would hardly last.

“Do you like that; do you like me being rough with you? I want to hear you scream, I want them all to hear that I am yours and you are mine,” he grunted, he changed positions and leaned over her, planting a wet kiss on the nape of her neck.

It was hard to formulate words, he snatched them right from her so she nodded, panting as his hands found purchase in her hair. Wrapping a chunk of her tendrils in his fist, he pulled and she gulped, trembling as he held her in place. The burning in her scalp flamed her.

“Let me hear you, Rey, let them all hear you,” he growled out as he gripped her ankle and brought it to rest upon the desk.

The shift in angle splayed her further, she was open to him and he sunk deeper, reaching a spot she never thought possible.

Just as he wished, she screamed, a long wail that that had no business coming from a woman. It was carnal and drawn out and Ben groaned in delighted, tugging her hair again.

No part of her was untouched, again and again; he groped, flicked and drove his cock into her like a man on a mission, one who yearned to bring a downfall so he could erect her again.

“You take me so well; your cunt is always so wet for me. Do you like my cock, omega?”

“Yes.

“Yes, what?” He retorted, he unfurled his fist and brought it under her arms to her breasts; he found her nipples, hard and strained again the cotton fabric.

“Yes, alpha, yes daddy,” Rey yelled, her brow was slick with sweat but nothing compared to the wetness that gathered between her legs and wet Ben’s cock.

“Fuck, yes. Say it again.”

“Daddy,” she moaned, tensing as she began to convulse around his cock, it had caught her by surprise, she was coiled tight and then boneless, limp and useless as she came, shrieking.

“Oh I am going go to-”

Ben did not finish his sentence, instead, he pushed forward and thrust a final time before he collapsed on top of her, breathing hard.

No knot swelled inside her, instead, he withdrew completely before they were connected and slapped his cock on her lower back, pumping himself before spilling all over her skin in quick, hot bursts.

“Rey,” he mewed as he covered her in spend, languidly thrusting over her wet skin.

Blinking, she came down, feeling the last of the flutters from her cunt, she was empty but fulfilled with his weight upon her.

“So good,” Ben whispered as he stepped back a fraction and gathered up some of his cum.

Rey watched over her shoulder as he slipped his fingers inside of her, pushing what he could back
in and thrusted them shallow and then deep.

She was so sensitive, so open and he was met with no resistance.

It went on for a while until she was sure her back was clean and free of any evidence of their joining. When he was finished, he helped her to her feet after pulling her shorts up from around her ankles and to their rightful place.

Rey turned and faced him, admiring how wide he grinned. She brought her arms around her neck, securing herself to him as she claimed his lips, gentle and contrasting of how they were only minutes before.

Pulling back, Ben trailed his thumb over the split in her lip, it was a delicate affair.

“I will not let anyone lay another hand on you,” he promised and she nodded, despite knowing the fault did not lie with him.

“Do you think they heard?” She blushed, her cheeks hot, a bright blush was rising.

Ben smiled, nuzzling against her.

“I’m sure they did.”

“We all did!” Gwen shouted from another room and the pair broke out in laughter, spent, fulfilled and blissful.

Later that evening, the two settled down for the night. As Rey finished off her nightly routine, raving about how wonderful Luke’s lotion was and covering herself with liberal amounts of the apricot laden concoction, Ben sat, propped up in bed. His laptop was perched on his knees, the hazy white glow lit up his face.

She crept in beside him, observing his workings and gasped when she realised what he was up to.

“Are we going?” She asked breathlessly, withholding a squeal as her fingers curled around his bicep.

The confirmation popped up.

“Yes, sunshine, we’re going to London, best repack your bag,” he smiled, curling his arm around her shoulders as he placed a kiss on her forehead.

She was going home and this time, she would not be alone.

Chapter End Notes

Off to London in the next one.

As always, your comments motivate me to open up word and write faster, they are like cinnamon buns
Ben-London, England

For years, a short plane journey had separated the lovers; the Atlantic Ocean had once played the role of a watery chasm, a salt laden cavity that distanced two souls destined to gravitate toward the other.

Eight hours.

A mere eight hours meant the difference between two continents that he had yearned to conquer since first contact.

It startled him just how quickly the miles faded and blended below like a watercolour painting in muted hues of cerulean blue, emerald fields of green and the expansive blur of granite grey.

It was quiet affair despite their excitement, thirty thousand feet in the air had proven tedious for Rey who had quietly explained her animosity about flying just before they were due to take off. It was something that she struggled with and opted to take a prescribed sedative to which she apologised profusely but Ben was quick to assure her that he did not judge her form of coping method. Whenever he flew with his father, Han would near enough clear out the airport lounge of their finest liquor before he was brave enough to set foot on a plane.

Wanting to treat Rey, he afforded first class tickets and it was blessedly empty save for another couple who were seated in the front area. The privacy and relative silence was greatly appreciated; the clinks of champagne glasses and the soft voices of the flight attendant and other passengers were minimal.

Soon after take off, to which Rey gripped Ben’s hand with a white knuckled grip until his fingers were squeezed of all blood and feeling, mid sentence, she sighed and her head came to rest upon his shoulder. Her rhythmic breathing soon shallowed and levelled, her chestnut waves tumbled across his chest and her tiny hands slackened their hold on his own and lap as she leaned further into him.

Worried, despite knowing that she slept soundly and free of worry or anxiety, Ben managed to wrap his arm around her shoulder and bend, whispering quiet assurances into her hair. It did not matter that she could not hear him, her consciousness long gone; he hoped that it offered her some relaxation.

It was endearing, all of his life he had yearned to feel wanted, whether it was a masculine trait or one of an alpha. He had never felt so centred or fulfilled as he did when Rey clung to him in the throes of passion or times of fear as if he was the anchor that kept her secure and grounded. In turn,
she was the cavern in the core of his heart where a passion burned, hot and molten, it seeped outwards, always and forever hers.

It warmed him, he trailed his fingertips along the curve of her waist for the duration of the flight, and his other hand balanced a paperback version of Stephen King’s ‘Carrie.’ Rey had been his inspiration to broaden his taste in literature. It was her copy, worn and dog-eared, not to the extent of his own first novel but obviously well read.

Voraciously, he read and finished it just as they prepared for landing. Rey began to stir. Eyes still closed, she groped his arm and nuzzled her face into his chest, a soft sigh passed her rosy lips as she regained her senses.

“Time to wake up, sunshine, you’re home,” Ben murmured, her cheeks were flushed and ripe, a muted and dusky pink from sleep, he trailed his thumb along her cheekbone before tucking an errant strand of hair behind her ear.

“I’m always home when I’m with you,” she whispered as she opened those wide eyes of hers, bright golden specks in forest green and rain soaked soil.

Yawning, she blinked the sleep away and Ben’s stomach flipped, every moment with her was a blessing and just when he thought he had seen her beauty at its finest, she continually stunned him with her effortless ability to incite new feelings of awe and admiration. Even dishevelled and half-asleep, she was the most beautiful woman he had ever laid his eyes upon.

Rey was still bleary eyed as they made their way through the airport and leaned heavily into his side, which he welcomed. He would support her anyway he could and he took comfort in the notion that it was a two way street.

Before the flight, she had enlisted the help of her closest friends, Finn and Poe. While they knew of the couple’s impending arrival in London, no one else was privy to the information as Rey had insisted on surprising her parents to which Ben readily agreed, more than eager to meet Jyn.

In the last couple of weeks, he had grown close to the formidable woman whose strength and bashfulness rivalled his mother’s. It was easy to feel drawn to a fellow alpha, he found comfort that she could relate to him on a biological level, the need to love and protect Rey rose above all and he knew such deep feelings could manifest in questionable ways.

One way is how upon hearing his mate’s closest friends were male; he had tugged her to him and claimed her lips, his fingertips brushed over her bite, a reminder to himself that she wanted him and no other man.

Rey was quick to dismiss his own misguided jealousy and it had brought a sense of foolishness in him when he learned that the two men were in fact a mated couple, an alpha and omega, quite like themselves.

Despite her tiredness through customs and security and her subdued energy as they retrieved their luggage, it all dissipated when she set eyes upon her friends. One moment she was clutching his hand and the next, she took off, initially unnerving Ben but then he saw her lock into an embrace and a wide smile graced her features as a tall man squeezed her.

It was odd to see but he quelled any instinctual tendencies and lumbered over, setting the luggage on the ground.

As he neared them, his heart swelled with just how loved she was, it was obvious they cared
deeply about her and for that, he was thankful. The shorter of the two, an olive skinned man, unmarred and youthful looking, smiled at him, his wide, coffee coloured eyes crinkled at the corners as he grinned, beaming straight at Ben.

“Finn, Poe, this is Ben, my mate,” Rey grinned as as she introduced them, breathless and wide-awake, she tucked herself under Ben’s arm and splayed her hand across his middle.

It was the reassurance he needed.

Smiling, Finn offered his hand, he was the taller of the two but most obviously an omega, to which Ben grasped it and shook, before doing the same with Poe who offered a healthy kind of grip, one befitting of his alpha status. Looking back and forth between them, he realised how they complimented the other, gravitated in some respect. Finn especially emitted a warmth toward his mate, his deep ebony skin lit up with a muted blush whenever he looked upon Rey. It was telling of his rich heritage and Ben admired the contrast of her tawny skin against his own.

“It is a pleasure to meet you,” Ben said, enjoying how Rey almost vibrated with excitement, lodged firmly into his side.

“The pleasure is all mine, I mean, we have all been excited to meet you, did you by chance bring any of your uniform?” Poe began but Finn quickly elbowed him in his side, essentially ending his line of conversation.

“None of that, what he meant to say was that we have heard a lot about you and we are thrilled for the both of you, Peanut has never appeared so happy.”

“Peanut?”

“Another nickname,” Rey laughed, gathering herself up on her tiptoes as she planted a chaste kiss on the corner of his mouth.

“Does anyone call you by your given name?” Ben chuckled, it seemed that she left a bright impression on everyone she met, so much so, that they all had to rename her and make her familiar to themselves.

Rey scratched her chin, deep in thought for a moment.

“No.”

The four of them navigated through the airport, dodging bustling bodies and excited travellers, all either going forward to the promise of sun, sea and sand or returning home to the English capital. When passing a storefront, Rey abruptly came to a stop and hauled Ben to the window, pointing her finger against the class.

Ben followed her line of sight and blushed at the display. His novel had sold out, apparently snatched up in earnest by eager readers who craved his written words. Sales had exceeded all expectations and Rose, his long time editor and friend, had relayed the information that a second printing was in the works to supply the increasing demand.

“it was the same in Mexico City, I bought the last copy. People love your words,” Rey peered up at him.

Ben thought for a moment.

“The words were always for you.”
“I know and I feel loved whenever I read or hear them but it brings me joy to know that you incite hope in other people who might have otherwise felt unloved.”

Of course, he felt the same way but she was selfless and willing to share his affections for her with the world.

Leaning down, he wrapped his hands around her waist and drew her near, a tender kiss followed to which Poe and Finn cheered.

“I love you.”

“I love you, Ben.”

The ride to her apartment was eventful. Finn and Poe owned a vintage mini cooper painted cherry red, it was a cramped, tiny vehicle that had no right harbouring Ben in its walls, even in the front seat, he was restricted and reduced to a folded in version of himself.

The windows were rolled down, despite the chill outside, it suited him well but it did not change how he tugged at the sleeves of his hoodie. It felt considerably colder in London but no one else seemed fazed, all were acclimatised to the biting winds. In the back, Rey sat excited, her wispy hair billowing about and catching the sun as she pointed out landmarks, rattling off stories and memories that came about. It was surreal to him, seeing her animated like that and brimming with life.

They shared long glances in the rearview mirror, too much effort was needed for Ben to turn in the seat and he already felt the effects of his confinement, his knees drawn up into his middle. His elbows dug into his thighs and Poe sent him sympathetic glances from his right. The whole driving on the left was confusing enough and kept him occupied.

“I’m sorry, I never expected you to be so big.”

From the back seat, Rey and Finn burst out in laughter to which Ben promptly followed suit.

“Not like that! I mean, sure, you must be big all over but I meant about fitting into the car, I didn’t realise it would be such a tight squeeze!” Poe hurried out, except his words only incited more giggles.

“I’m sure he manages to fit himself into smaller spaces, isn’t that right, Rey?”

Ben blanched, coughing loudly as Rey proceeded to jokingly hit Finn’s leg, her face a bright shade of crimson to match his own as she berated him but did not deny or answer his claim. Poe kept his eyes trained on the road but the tips of ears were bright pink, poking through wavy, onyx locks.

Once, Ben caught Rey’s heated gaze in the mirror, her teeth finding purchase in her bottom lip, she knew the affect it had on him but she was brazen and obviously thinking of the times they had come together. For the rest of the journey, he kept his eyes on his lap and willed himself not to show his want in front of the others.

By the time they pulled up in front of her building, it was late afternoon and the quiet London street was void of most people. Ben was quick to excavate himself from the front seat, stretching his arms high above him.

“He really is Big Ben,” Finn joked as he shifted in his seat which allowed Rey to squeeze by him, Ben offered her his hand to which she gladly accepted.
She shot him a look, eyes narrowed and the corners of her lips curled up into a wicked grin.

“Yes and he’s mine.”

Ben flourished over the declaration as Rey pulled him down to her level, her fingers curled into the hair at the nape of his neck as she had her way with him, claiming his lips time and time again before she pulled back, eyes bright and breaths like little gasps.

Poe retrieved their luggage and set it on the sidewalk before sliding into the driver’s seat. He leaned out of his window and flashed them a grin.

“Don’t do anything I wouldn’t do,” he winked.

“Well, that doesn’t leave much,” Finn quipped.

Ben’s stomach ached from laughing so hard, already he enjoyed the company of her closest friends. Poe turned as if the man had betrayed him and started the engine, waving once before he sped off.

Despite Rey’s insistence about helping carry their bags and suitcases, Ben managed to juggle them all and shoulder the rest. She let him into the flat and opened the door wide.

“It isn’t much but it’s home.”

Ben took in the surroundings, absorbing whatever details he could, no matter how small. All of the walls were painted varying shades of blue, he guessed in homage of her love of the ocean. It was all quaint, shelves lined her walls, covered in seashells and photos were scattered on nearly every surface, of a life well lived.

It did not matter that it was small, she had made it her own, it was a home in every sense, and quite the contrary to Ben’s sparsely decorated and minimal penthouse, which he only saw for a few hours a day.

“It’s perfect.”

Closing the door behind him, he followed her to the bedroom, which like the rest of the space was painted blue, but this was far darker, a deep azure and oddly soothing like the calm before or after the storm.

Her furniture and bed were all solid wood, painted white and accented with a bold, gold trimming. The room was surprisingly neat considering Rey was a self-confessed clutter bug, everything had a place and all seemed to be in a rightful order, a tasteful mix of decadent arrangement and casual charm.

A wind chime tinkled in the corner by the tall, wide window, which allowed for the natural light of the sun, albeit waning, bathing the room in a delicate dousing of golden yellow. Fragrant bursts of her potent ocean salt and daisy scent wafted around the room, he was intoxicated by it all and deeply so, a man with a hunger, left dizzied and in need of more.

Looking upon him, she wrung her hands out in front of her, as if nervous of what he thought of her intimate space. Extending his hand, he stepped forward, entwined their fingers, and put an end to her fidgeting.

Leaving featherlight touches in his wake, he cupped her face and gazed into her eyes, enamoured by the beauty he held so delicately.
Below him, her chest heaved, the race of her pulse a noticeable flicker against her skin, he lowered his mouth and suckled a pretty blossom against the healing bite mark, still so sensitive and responsive to even the slightest stimulation.

“Thank you for inviting me into your heart and home, I promise, I will care for them both,” he swiped the gland a final time, she shivered against him.

“I know you will, now, take me to bed.”

As if he could deny her, he swept her up and deposited her upon the bed, hovering above her body, he was ready to lay claim to her once again and lose himself in her hot heat.

Later, Ben sat upon the couch, something she had upholstered herself, unwilling to see the frame go to waste after she came upon it on the street. It was teal and most complimentary to the style Rey adhered to, all reflective of the element she found solace in.

It was a contrast to the raging fire that Ben conquered, undeterred by the promise of flames against his skin.

It was nearing seven, after they christened her bed more than once; they had showered, separately, due to the size of the small power shower. Ben did not miss that when Rey had traipsed into the bathroom, she did so with the box of gifts from his uncle tucked securely under her arm and a pout upon her lips as she proclaimed that she was still not a natural products convert.

It was endearing to see her in her natural territory, she fleeted about with an air of confidence and grace as she readied herself for the night ahead as Ben observed.

“My mother already loves you so it means she has already fought your case to my father,” Rey mused as she popped in some stud earrings, head leaned to the side.

“I can’t wait to meet him,” Ben responded truthfully, rising to meet her as she pulled on her ankle boots, paired with her sleek, black leggings and one of his plaid shirts, a royal blue, tied off at the bottom.

After gathering her purse and keys, they locked up and began traversing towards ‘The Rogue.’ While Rey assured him it was a short journey, they dawdled, quite unlike how they moved around in New York. Despite the similarities, London was a progressive city and an impressive concrete jungle, it was hugely historic with history lining nearly every inch of space. The streets were a fine mixture of old and new, of a rich past and hopeful future. Ben took in the sights, awed when he came across especially old buildings that had undoubtedly catered generations of families through life, death and industry. Blood, sweat and tears were the foundation of London.

Some of the cobbled streets were winding but Rey moved through them with ease. None quite demonstrated such a notion of family life like ‘The Rogue.’ The outdoor furnishings were dated, the brick walls quite obviously old and unchanging with time.

“It has stood for over one hundred years; my mother’s family descend from a prominent duke and a great wealth of nobles. One, my great great grandfather, decided aristocratic life was not for him and so he ventured into a life of handwork and trade, unbefitting of a man of his status. It was his passion,” she sighed happily, running her nail along the doorframe, painted a bright orange.

Like the gentleman he was, he gripped the polished, brass handle and opened the door for her, ushering her inside.
“My mother converted the downstairs into a coffee shop when I was a child and kept the upstairs as the heart of the establishment, a real English pub,” Rey informed him, patting his chest before she led him through the surprisingly crowded room.

The tables were packed with troves of customers, all nursed their brewed concoctions and the rich aroma of coffee beans and vanilla hung heavy in the air. Together, they navigated towards a mahogany staircase, varnished and polished, shining bright under the muted amber lights of the quiet coffeehouse.

As they ascended, music filtered along the staircase from beyond another door. Bracing herself, she turned to face him for a brief moment.

“I hope you’re prepared, oh and don’t try beat my mother in a drinking competition.”

Before he could word a reply, or inform her that his alcohol tolerance was high, she opened the door and pulled him in after her.

Queen were playing on the old jukebox, the top of which was accented with a curved light box that displayed a rainbow of alternating colours. The bass thumped, reverberating through the wooden floorboards and bounced off the walls as chatter rose and drinks were poured.

It was dimly lit and notes of lemon lingered in the air as he noted the contrast in comparison to the quiet space below.

“Ben Solo!”

All patrons and regulars ceased their private discussions and looked towards the bar where Jyn Andor stood proudly, yellow cloth in hand as she laid her eyes upon the couple.

Jyn stood behind the bar for a moment longer before she hurried around the side and closed the distance between them all. Rey stepped aside, confusing Ben but a second later, he was wrapped up into a tight hug, one that rivalled Chewie’s bone crushing ones. What she lacked in great height, she more than made up for in spirit and strength, as she rested her head upon his shoulder and patted his back.

“I can’t believe you’re both here,” Jyn breathed out, quite obviously stunned and shaken by their appearance.

Ben smiled as she released him and then promptly greeted her daughter with the same enthusiasm, the women were mirror images of the other, the same hazel eyes lit up both of their faces.

Out of the corner of his eye, he spotted a man approach the scene, everyone else had since settled back into their conversations and the guzzling down of their drinks, the new arrivals apparently long forgotten or of little interest to them.

There was no denying it was Rey’s father, they shared the same tawny glow and full, gentle smile. For a moment, the man appraised him before shaking Ben’s hand and squeezing.

“I have heard so much about the man who captured my daughter’s heart. You can imagine my surprise that you happened to be her favourite author too. I’m Cassian Andor,” he greeted warmly.

Ben flushed at the praise but held his gaze steady and his grip firm as the man in the olive green shirt looked on at his wife and daughter.

“Ben Solo. I’ll take care of her, I promise.”
Tilting his head to the side, Cassian nodded his expression serious for a fleeting moment.

“I know you will.”

It was almost startling to observe the differences between Jyn and Cassian. Jyn was brash and bold but the man in front of him was calm, collected and quite reserved. His deep-set eyes were telling, they spoke true of the man who seemed much wiser than his years, a spirit who had seen countless lifetimes pass him by.

Ben nodded and once Jyn relinquished her hold on Rey, they were quickly shown to a booth in the corner of the room beside the jukebox. It offered the most privacy.

Rey slid in first, the emerald leather squeaked below her as she shimmed in, patting the spot next to her. Ben quickly followed, settling in and rejoiced that the booth afforded enough legroom.

Cassian sat across from them but Jyn leaned over the mahogany table, drumming her slender fingers against it.

“I say a drink or two is in order. It will be nice to have another alpha to keep up with me,” she grinned, eyes falling over Ben.

Remembering Rey’s words, he nodded, not entirely worried as he knew from experience and too many nights out with his fellow firefighters and growing taste for whiskey that his tolerance was sound.

Ben nodded.

Jyn appraised him for a moment, levelling her gaze as she lost herself to her thoughts. After a moment, she grinned.

“Whisky, neat,” she guessed.

Raising his brow, he sat dumbfounded for a moment. How had she guessed his favourite drink?

“Yes.”

“We have a nice bottle of Johnnie Walker Blue Label, the two hundredth anniversary one that will do nicely. It is about time I opened it,” Jyn quipped before moving back towards the bar.

Cassian chuckled to himself, which Rey mirrored her father.

“What?” Ben asked, feeling slightly apprehensive but otherwise amused.

“That is a three thousand pound bottle of whisky. Mother intends to get you drunk,” Rey whispered, leaning in close, so much so, that he could smell the sweet scent of apricots that clung heavy to her skin, she was making good use of his uncle Luke’s lotion.

“Three thousand pounds! She doesn’t have to give me that,” Ben exclaimed, shocked but it was too late, Jyn approached the table with a tray stacked full of drinks.

A corona was slid across to Cassian, that much he could discern, it was nice enough to give him a buzz but it was in no way heavy. Cassian offered him a small smile as he took a sip.

“A double vodka and cranberry for my stardust,” Jyn announced as she placed a wide glass in front of Rey. Loose cranberries bobbed about amongst large chunks of ice.
“I’m usually a Pimm’s kind of woman but I will drink what my future son in law is having,” Jyn declared as she sat, Cassian drew her closer and she welcomed the contact, resting her head on his shoulder. The man kissed her forehead and whispered something that only Jyn was allowed to hear.

Two whiskies sat on the middle of the table so he retrieved one and brought it to his lips, inhaling as he took in the earthy and rich tones.

To begin with, he sipped it, coating his cheeks and tongue with the luxurious beverage. Powerful flavours simmered through including dried fruit, dark chocolate and a rich spice that tickled his flesh and warmed his insides.

Looking over, he noticed that Jyn had finished her drink and was already pouring herself another; she smacked her lips and offered Ben the bottle.

“Try to keep up, Ben.”

Rey smoothed her hand along the denim covering his thigh, curling her palm and fingers just above his knee.

“Yes, do try to keep up,” she teased as she inched higher, dragging her digits around his hardening length.

The woman was an enigma, a tease, one who invoked passion but at times, she curled in on herself, as if she did not know of her innate beauty that reflected on the outside.

Draining his glass, he found his liquid courage as the smooth burn carved a delightful path from his throat to his belly. Jyn poured him another, clearly delighted with her drinking partner whereas Rey and Cassian both started easy, sipping their respective beverages.

They were sensible, cautious, but as the time passed and the alphas gulped down more drinks, they too picked up the pace but they seemed much more aware of their tolerances. As the evening progressed, Ben felt himself becoming increasingly intoxicated yet the woman in front of him, over a foot shorter and thinner than even Rey, held steady, brow raised and eyes anything but glazed.

Rey excused herself to go to the bathroom and when Ben stood, he stumbled, surprising himself as he saw that the bottle was near enough empty.

“Easy,” Rey breathed out as she steadied him.

He sat and palmed the back of his neck, realising he was quite drunk.

“When’s the wedding?” Jyn quipped as she poured the last of the bottle into their two glasses.

“Give the two of them time, mi sol.”

It was not the first time the thought had crossed Ben’s mind, since the first time he saw her, he envisioned her in white, the glow of her sun kissed skin made glorious and brighter as she walked towards him.

While she had given herself to him in deeper and meaningful ways, his teeth had laid claim to her flesh and her hold on his heart was firm and true, he could not deny the want to call her his wife.

Feeling his face heat at the idea, he lowered his gaze to the glass in front of him.
“I’m just trying to think of the best time to ask her, admittedly, I wanted to ask you both for your blessing.”

Jyn squealed, kissing her husband’s cheek.

“Of course we give it! Isn’t that right, Cassian?”

Ben was aware that Rey’s father was the level headed of the two but even he nodded, the tips of his moustache rose upwards.

“I’ve heard so much of the man who wades through flames and lays his heart and words on pages. With you, Luna has never shone brighter. Of course I give you my blessing,” he said as patted the back of Ben’s hand.

It was overwhelming, Ben gulped, hard as he reigned his emotions in but a tear escaped, to which he quickly brushed away.

“Thank you, I love your daughter more than I can express.”

“We know,” they replied in unison, looking off towards the bar, Rey leaned against it, shimming her hips along to the beat of the song.

“Excuse me.”

Ben rose up and made quick work of closing the distance between him and his mate. An idea had sprung up, one that revolved around fate. While he knew one of the reasons why Rey never joined the service was because of her past, he also knew that she had wanted to meet him in a natural way.

Sauntering up to the bar, he leaned heavily against it, supporting himself.

“Do you come here often?” He asked, not bothering to look at her but instead at the shelves lined with a healthy variety of drinks.

From the corner of his eye, he saw Rey peer up at him curiously.

“I guess you could say that.”

She was playing along.

“Can I buy you a drink?”

Ben positioned himself so he could see her, despite the dim glow of the cosy pub; she was bright, all wide eyes and flushed cheeks.

“I shouldn’t, my mate wouldn’t want me accepting a drink from a stranger.”

His pride took over.

“I’m Ben,” he offered his hand; she curled her fingers around his.

“Rey.”

“No longer strangers. How about a dance?” He asked casually, standing straighter as he kept a hold of her hand.

“I don’t think my mate would like that. He wouldn’t want anyone touching what was his,” she
added in a low voice, stepping closer to him.

“I won’t tell,” he promised, feigning innocence and discretion, his heart hammered away as a new song began to play on the jukebox.

“How can I resist?” She asked, bringing her hand up to cup his jaw.

“You can’t,” he whispered, feeling the intensity of her eyes on him as she led him to the clear space, a dance floor.

Many bobbed about; all stumbled and lost themselves to the beat of the music. Ben pulled Rey taut against him from behind, loving how the curves of her body slotted against him.

Her firm ass was pressed against his crotch as she danced in time with the beat; her hips performed brilliant rotations and were slow and hard when she rubbed against his growing cock.

He bent low, his head dipped into the crook of her neck. He nosed her chestnut tresses as his hands came upon hers, sliding down the length of her arms. Flashes of red and blue coloured them, the dated disco light only added to their impassioned movements.

Despite his state, he managed to keep up with Rey, catching her as she spun and pressed her body flush against his own, her breasts dragged against his middle.

They continued on that way for a while, dancing and losing themselves, enjoying the time they could spend wrapped up in one another’s arms.

Ben felt himself tiring quickly, a combination of exhaustion and alcohol and so she brought him down for a kiss.

“Let’s get you home.”

The walk home was a blur. The crisp night air only fuelled his inebriation, he wobbled and stumbled, bouncing along the pavement, almost skipping as he willed the concrete below him to still. The streets were surprisingly vacant with only the odd person dotted about.

Rey’s arm was looped in and around his own, how she managed to not only outdrink him but also maintain an impressive level of sobriety was beyond his comprehension. Her tight, taut body was hot against his, he perhaps leaned upon her too heavily in his stupor but she showed no signs of discomfort, in fact, she encouraged him to lean into her after he tripped and almost fell.

Swallowing hard, his throat still warm, tingling and coated in traces of the top shelf whisky, he grinned to himself, peeking glances at Rey.

“Not much longer now, I thought you had a high tolerance,” Rey joked, almost grunting as he caught the toe of his shoe and she again, had to dip low and bear the brunt of his weight.

The two stumbled, veering to the left, Ben tried to regain his footing but in the end, they slammed against the brick wall, a mass of entangled limbs and low chuckles.

Blinking, he peered down at Rey, her cheeks pink and her lips curved up into a breathless and easy smile. She readied him, planting her palm flat against his chest.

“What am I going to do with you?” She tutted, shaking her head but all the while, she maintained her brilliant grin and held him in place, cementing him to the spot.
Ben shrugged, his head drooped forward, any other time, he would have felt embarrassed by his current state but in that moment, he was light, free of stress or worry and with the girl of his dreams beside him.

Overhead, the muted notes of a familiar song began to drift downward from an open window, recognising it, he was unable to stop himself from singing along as he realised the lyrics were befitting of their situation and time apart.

Amused, Rey looked on.

“I pick up the phone, I’m dialling your number while I pray you’re at home, at home and alone cause I can’t function on my own and I’ll never stop believing,” he dragged it out, tumbling over the words but she gazed at him with an intensity and bemusement that willed him onward.

“Are you trying to serenade me with Roxette?”

Nodding dumbly, he continued as his confidence soared despite his flaws and lack of natural gift in the area of vocalising such a ballad.

“The reaping is done, you are the one, the radio is on but the sound is all gone and I wanna walk out in the sun but lately that’s been very hard to do.”

Waggling his brows, he tilted her chin with his forefinger as he leaned downward, brushing his lips against her own.

“I’ve got a thing about you and I don’t really know what to do cause I’ve got a thing about you, hey you.”

“Hey you,” she repeated as she brought herself upwards, balancing on the balls of her feet.

With his coordination shot, she kept him pressed against the brick wall as she kissed him, it was surprisingly gentle as Ben hummed, relishing the tart taste of cranberry on her tongue. There was a sweetness there that he was sure he would lose himself to, a taste that was unmistakably her and he wanted to consume it all, leave no part of her untouched by his kisses.

Guiding him, she carded her fingertips through his raven tendrils and grazed his scalp, he groaned at the new sensation, obscenely, so much so, that the guttural sound heated her cheeks and brought fresh colour and life to them. Closing his eyes, his world swaying, he felt her press a final, brief kiss to his lips before pulling back and releasing her hold on him.

“Come on, you need to get to bed.”

Tugging his hand, they once again resumed their slow stroll home, it was quite difficult for Ben as his exhaustion quickly took over and that, in combination with the alcohol, did him no favours.

Rey steered him in the right direction and kept him upright and one moment he was staring at cobbles and the next, he was falling back onto the bed.

Gathering himself up, he attempted to sit but she stopped him, urging him back on his back.

“I’ll take care of you,” she laughed as she undressed him, beginning with untying his shoes. She placed them on the floor, removing his socks before she worked off his belt and pulled his jeans down, folding them after she freed his legs.

It was a relief, a light breeze from the window ajar to his left offered some reprieve too as his
world spun, only Rey’s touches kept him aware that he was safe and still.

Climbing upon him, she straddled his hips, her small weight was a delicious form torture against his crotch but she did not put herself in such a position for pleasure, she did so with the intention to ease himself out of his shirt.

That was no sexual advances on her part but he enjoyed feeling her through his boxers, her warm core rested against his cock as he languidly thrust, his movements messy and lacklustre.

“You’ll be the death of me,” she admonished as he felt the tip of his cock brush along her panties, they were white and cotton, simple but so sexy, they set off the golden glow of her skin.

Pure.

“Mhmm,” he slurred, cracking his eyes open as she hovered above him, her fingers curled around the hem of his shirt.

Carefully, she peeled it upwards until she reached his arms.

“Lift your arms up.”

Yawning, he did as he was told and she made quick work of lifting it over his head and disposing of it on the ground. Left only in his boxers, he claimed her hips and dug the heels of his palms into the flesh there. His fingertips groped for purchase as she descended, the tips of her hair brushed against his face.

“I love you, Ben Solo.”

Ben grinned to himself and splayed his hand across her stomach, just above the waistline of her panties. He rubbed soothing circles there until his consciousness was lost to him.

The last coherent thought that crossed his mind was that the wait for Rey was worth it because in her presence, he had never felt so loved.

Chapter End Notes

Off to the coast for a little holiday for these two in the next chapter.

5 main chapters and 3 epilogues to go.

Ben singing Roxette to Rey was totally me just indulging myself...

As always, I love to hear your thoughts so be sure to leave a comment. Your support means so much to me <3
Chapter Summary

On the coast, Rey reflects, Ben hates sand, smut and a...hm well, read and find out ;)

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Rey- Outskirts of St Ives, England

It was still dark out, but barely so.

The night clung to the last shreds of time as black waned into purple and orange dotted through in the form of tiny flickering specks, telling beacons of an impending arising.

It did not matter of the lack of light; she sat on the sand and scanned the horizon as far as her eyes could see. Not long after, the sun began its glorious upward ascent. Hunched over, knees brought up, tucked close and chin resting upon them, she shivered, inhaling deeply. The fresh, salty air clung to her and she welcomed it, curling her bare feet into the sand as she shivered. Clad only in a thin pair of leggings and an oversized hoodie, the autumn coolness and sharp, biting winds from the sea had leaked into her bones but it was refreshing, a welcome change from the summer heat that had plagued the lands for months.

A new season had begun, the ocean acted as a reminder of rebirth, symbolic of washing away the old and embracing the new and life itself.

After spending some time in London, Rey had decided that a holiday on the coast would strengthen her relationship with Ben. Her grandfather had lived in the remote village during his final years, opting against the noise and crowds of London. Rey had spent all of her summers there, the cottage much more like a second home and so when he died; it came as no surprise that he had left it to her. The inheritance meant very little to her in terms of materialistic possessions and ownership but it allowed her to grieve in a place whose walls and lands held memories of the times past to which she clung to fondly.

The peace that came with such quietness was ethereal, the beach was private, a part of the vast land owned in her name. In her times of trouble, she had always been drawn there; nothing soothed her soul like the crashing of waves or the grains of sand between her toes.

That morning, she had awoken especially early and settled on a run to start her day. It had been difficult to tear herself away from Ben who slept quite soundly, like a furnace, he ran hot and for a while, she rested beside him, clinging to his bare flesh and basking in that heat, knowing of the coldness that would greet her beyond the door.

Still, she managed to excavate herself, mindful not to wake him and left, tip toeing quietly across the hardwood flooring.

Running made her feel free but sitting still and watching the day light up was something else, a privilege of sorts, it made her thankful that she saw another and hoped that many tomorrows were
in her future.

The sloshing tide curled in around her, wetting her toes, the frigid contact broke her reverie. Once again, her eyes fell towards the waves, seagulls flew overhead, cawing as they swooped about and the ocean spray peppered her feet.

Standing, she embraced the new morning with open arms as she tugged her hoodie over her head, the same one she procured from Ben and refused to return. Folding it neatly, she took a few steps back, feet dipping further into the sand and set it down, far from the reach of the water’s flowing grasp.

Shedding her leggings, she repeated the process, leaving her bare save for her underwear, a flimsy, white bralette and matching panties. Both pieces were sheer, covered in intricate lace patterns and carefully stitched roses. Reaching up, she released her hair from the loose bun at the nape of her neck and shook it free.

Bracing herself, she traipsed forward, the rush of water came to her ankles, she pursed her lips and continued on, ignoring the nipping of the languid current as she immersed herself further. Shaking, she extended her arms and laid her palms flat along the surface, her fingertips dipped below before she allowed herself to fall backwards. On her back, she floated with her limbs splayed wide and limp as she lost herself to sensation, undulating as if one with the current.

The water jostled her body but the sea was calm, she rocked in a rhythm most gentle as she finally became accustomed to the cold, a perfect end to a heated run. Her sore muscles keened with the relief and for a while, she remained that way, observing the sky above as the sun rose and brought blue with it, signalling the birth of a new day, bright and brimming with possibility.

Once or twice, she tasted salt, pulled under by an errant wave but she did not fear it, she found her footing each time. Soaked, she rose up, finding herself still close to the shore and flipped her heavy hair back, blinking in an effort to clear her vision.

“Good morning, I knew I’d find you out here,” Ben hummed; his splayed hands encircled her pinched waist as he pulled her to him and planted a soft kiss upon her lips.

They had been on the coast for over two weeks and each morning, he found her her in the sea. It was hardly a surprise anymore but he had admitted his apprehension when he found her the first time, fearful that one mighty wave would sweep her away and drag her under. Understanding his worry, she compromised her routine and promised to stay close to the shoreline where her footing was still privy to her.

Smiling, she clung to him and draped her arms over his wide shoulders, wrung deep with muscle and still warm despite their choice of setting. Hooking his palms on the underside of her thighs, he hoisted her upwards and out of the water and cupped her ass. She manoeuvred her lower half against him, locking the inside of her thighs around his thick waist and secured the hold by crossing her ankles and digging her heels into expansive plain of his lower back.

Satisfied, she wet him further by carding her fingers through his hair, it was still messy with sleep and further tousled by the wind but she loved it, in fact, she preferred it that way. Even with him all ragged and eyes narrowed with tiredness, she still burned hot for him.

Like her, he was topless and his biceps bulged around her torso as he spun her, his cedar wood eyes contrasted with the element and sights surrounding them, a warm anomaly in a sea of cool jade and teal.
Heaving in a deep breath, slightly dizzied, she captured his lips once again, eager and hungry for more. His nails dug into her flesh, his breaths quick and raspy as he navigated in the water and brought them to land, berthing them to the sand as she begged for entrance.

Her tongue ran along the seam of his mouth and he rewarded her, heaving her further up the length of his body and opened his mouth, ready to meet her in that hedonic way again. Like the waves behind them, they crashed, a clashing of wet, warm flesh and the nipping of teeth. Wrapped around him, racing heart against racing heart, she reasoned that her feet would never touch the ground again, not while he brought her higher and enveloped her with an all-consuming bliss.

Despite the devouring kind of carnality in their kisses, the curving and caresses of tongues each lavishing the other, he pressed her quite gently to the sand and followed her down.

The ache between her legs pulsed, throbbing, she felt more than needy for some relief that only Ben could offer and quell.

“I can smell you, Rey, I can practically taste how much you want me,” Ben exclaimed, more like a low rumble with his gruff timber, a remnant of sleep.

“Please, I need you,” she whispered, shivering despite the heat that took hold of her flesh.

Ben shuddered, mouthing the sheer fabric above her hardened nipples. The lace inched upwards and brushed against them, making her swallow hard and clench nothing, her insides empty.

“I know, I will give you everything,” he said reverently as he settled between her thighs.

Then, all movement stilled, he grunted and Rey was unsure of the cause.

“Are you okay?”

Ben shrugged, unable to meet her eyes.

“Tell me,” she begged, pawing at his chest.

With a brilliant blush cloaking his high cheekbones, he gazed at her.

“I don’t like sand. It’s all coarse, and rough, and irritating. And it gets everywhere.”

For a second, she wondered if he was serious but his pout was unmoving, set firmly in place. Resembling the picture of offended; he dusted his hand off, glaring at the grains that had accumulated there.

Unable to contain herself, amused and too far gone about the interruption, a bubble of laughter escaped the lips she had pressed together, her effort had been useless.

Ben laughed with her, his fingertips danced over her ribcage.

“I don’t mind where I have you. Take us home,” Rey said, noting the wind had picked up and despite her longing, she knew that tucked inside behind the sturdy, stone walls of the cottage would be best place to enjoy Ben fully.

“As you wish.”

He slithered down the length of her body, kissing the spots that were free of sand and brushed all he could from her. Then, he stood and without warning, pulled her up so she sat and then bent low before hoisting her over his shoulder in one graceful movement.
She screamed, giggling as he jogged towards the cottage at break neck speed, she jostled upon him, arms swinging wildly, she was a willing captor.

Once inside, he made quick work of setting her upon the bed. She spread her legs wide as he stood at the end of it and then slipped her hand between them as she inclined inwards with her index finger, beckoning him towards her.

“Come here.”

Ben obeyed, like a moth to a flame, he swarmed her, the desire to meet her came with the possibility of burning alive but he moved with confidence and grasped her, ready to set the two of them aflame. His knees sunk into the mattress on either side of her hips as he straddled her.

He pinned her hands against the headboard, less than a white-knuckle grip, both loose and firm. It thrilled her, that unmistakable knowledge that she was completely at his mercy, panting in wanton ways as she presented herself to him.

“What do you need, baby girl?”

The term of endearment, his new form of addressal, coated her thighs with a new rush of wetness, the affect strong and heady, no doubt exactly what he had intended.

“You,” she mumbled, sure that the fire between her legs would spread and consume her entirely unless he relieved the ache. Slick dripped freely like liquid embers straight from her core, she was ready, more than eager for him to fill her.

“You have me; perhaps you meant a specific part of me?”

It was a cruel scheme, a reminder that when around him, he valued strict honesty on her part and vocalisation was key, he preferred the line of communication that way. Some part of him must have thrived with her forwardness; the lewd words escaping her invoked the instinctual part of him into making an appearance.

Choosing to tease him, as he did her, she nodded a quiet affirmation that quite noticeably riled him, his lip curled up and revealed a flash of white, teeth that had once pierced her skin and claimed her as his own.

Holding her breath, she squirmed below him, voiceless again as she begged for release, unabashed and without shame as she jutted against him but he offered no reprieve as his blazed eyes consumed her, as he waited for her to speak and to admit her want plainly.

Grunting, he shifted higher up her body and rested midway, his own hands and knees bore much of his weight as he settled, his bare legs caged her making her body a willing and most compliant prisoner.

He was hard, blissfully so, she swallowed hard and watched in earnest, gulping as he palmed himself over the boxers that strained to contain him. Seemingly pleased with her attentions or wanting to coax more reactions from her, he slipped his fingers past the waistband and freed it, fisting it right before her.

Ben was so close, yet so far away, he inched closer and dragged the tip of it along her lips, she poked her tongue out, unable to resist the urge to taste him.

“Do you want my cock, little one?”
“Yes.”

“Then take it, take all of it.”

The room was silent save for her breathy whimpers as she adjusted positions, wrists still in the iron curling of Ben’s deft fingers. The anticipation had reached a fever pitch as she locked eyes with him, they were wide and blown, like a captivating hex, they bewitched her and persuaded her to continue. Giving in to lust and temptation, she parted her lips and curled her tongue outwards, the allure of it all was almost too much. Breathing hard through her nose, she swiped the head, delicate at first before she swallowed it completely, trapping it in her hot, little mouth, wet with rivulets of saliva that ensured pleasure.

Reacting just how she wanted, Ben gasped and his fingers flew into her hair, clutching a fistful as he began to thrust shallowly as Rey acclimatised herself to his length.

“Fuck, Rey, your mouth is heaven,” he grunted as he watched her, the stretch of her lips around him was her own kind of nirvana; he tasted like the ocean he had pulled her from, salty and earthy, masculine and entirely him.

Relaxing her jaw, she hummed, knowing the vibrations were a coveted sensation that enhanced his experience and it came with a reward, his hold on her wrists slackened and then ceased completely as he barrelled forward, catching himself against the headboard. Biting into his fist, he attempted to contain his moans as she bobbed along the length of him and hollowed her cheeks, sucking hard.

His whole body shook but nothing more so than his legs on either side of her body as he trembled, his abdominal muscles spasmed as she slurped and tugged the base of his cock with her newly freed hands. While their time together had been brief, she knew exactly how to work him and deliver him towards the edge; her hold on him was a practiced and favoured squeeze, the kind that caused him to spew profanities and curse while praising her for being such a blessing. Usually mindful to keep her teeth in check, she chose to gaze up towards him with watery eyes and her mouth full of him as she grazed the sensitive skin with her incisors, dragging them around the head.

Ben sputtered, hissing as no man should before he grabbed his cock and withdrew as she gaped, mouthing him a final time with her lips.

“You’re too good at taking my cock like that, omega. It would be a waste for me to finish there,” he crooned and dragged his knuckles over her cheekbone.

“Please, alpha, fuck me,” she whined, thrilled at the prospect of feeling him fill her and relieve her sense of emptiness that had plagued her for the duration since they had last both joined as one.

“I can’t deny you anything,” Ben whispered honestly, bending low to kiss the lips that had just been upon him.

That did not dissuade him, in fact, he swivelled his tongue around hers as if he relished the combined taste. Panting, he manoeuvred down the length of her body, cupping her curves until he sat back on the balls of his feet between her splayed thighs.

Without warning, he dipped his middle finger into her cunt and curled it upwards; no resistance met him as she was soaking for him, so open and ripe, ready for what was to come.

“Always so wet for me,” Ben delighted aloud.

It was true, she needed very little in terms of foreplay, despite this, Ben usually insisted upon it, but
she wanted him, desperately so, she needed to feel him inside of her so she groped his thighs. Her blunt nails broke his skin, drawing crimson and painted his milky skin in shallow pools that spilled from crescent moon indentations.

He growled, eyes black as he beheld the sight.

“I need it.”

It was a dare, a lascivious challenge and he rose to meet her, exceeding all of her expectations. He grappled her hips and swiftly turned her so she was pressed face down into the mattress. It knocked the breath out of her but Ben did not leave her unattended for a second and crawled over her, melding his sweat-laden flesh against her back. Firm palms urged her hips upwards as he tilted her and lay mounted behind her, resting against the delicate arch of her spine.

“Fuck,” Rey moaned into the pillow, grasping the sides as she prepared for him.

His cockhead brushed against her entrance, he wet it with her arousal before he entered her in one smooth, rapid movement. Empty no longer, she gasped, keening like a woman lost to her basic instincts as he ruled behind her and pummelled her into the mattress. Unable to formulate coherent thoughts or words, she dug her nails into the pillow and pulled at the fabric as her delirium took over. The slaps of their flesh coming together was her harmony and Ben’s moans were the climatic chorus that brought her to a startling crescendo.

It was where he was supposed to be, deep inside of her and dragging his cock along her walls. He launched forward, moving the hair from over her ear and replaced it with his mouth.

“Look at you, you take me so well, you were made for me,” he panted.

He was a hulking mass of hard muscle as he loomed over her like the temptation of the night itself. He was her shadow, something that would forever follow her and she adopted the role of the sun, his light. The weight of him was welcome, he balanced himself well on his elbows but she could still feel the sure weight of all he was and it offered nothing but security and reassurance. It was what incited her to gather her senses and meet him, pushing back time and time again against his cock until she found herself nearing release.

“Let go, Rey, I want to feel you come around my cock,” he growled, the rumble left her breathless and she did, he brought one of his hands around her middle and lower still until he reached the opening of her thighs and tapped her clit with the fleshy heel of his palm.

Screaming, she begged him for more and he obliged, flattening his fingers over the swollen bud as he continued his punishing pace, plunging deep inside of her as he hit a delicious spot that provoked the guttural shrieks that forced their way from her ravaged throat.

Ben sucked her earlobe into his own needy mouth before nibbling it, again, she was lost, the pressure on her clit increased, and she crashed, convulsing around his cock, fluttering sporadically as she milked him. Ben followed soon after, a long drawn out roar and the final frantic thrusts were delicious, she waited for him to join her in the bewildered, content haze that followed. She could feel his spend coat her insides, eager for purchase and bounty and she hummed, satisfied as he rolled them to their sides and hugged her from behind.

They remained in the position for a while; locked together but neither complained, more than happy to be joined as Ben continued to pulse inside of her.

It was the perfect way to spend their morning.
The rumble of her stomach churning vibrated against his palm.

The rough pads of his fingers tickled the spot just above her belly button, abrasive and grainy like the sand that still coated them but it only brought sweet comforts; He traced his thumb along her hipbone, dipping into the shallow curve.

“Well, how about I make my mate some breakfast?”

Feeling coy, she shifted her hips and rubbed against him.

“You do know how to fill me up.”

Sucking his lip between his teeth, Ben groaned and hid his face in the crook of her neck.

“You’re wicked.”

“And I’m yours.”

Together, they walked hand in hand towards the village. Market stalls lined the expanse of the trail. Bundled up in a heavy jacket and scarf, one Ben had knitted himself during the time they had spent at the cottage, Rey felt lighter. Nuzzling against the wool, she gripped his hand, pointing out various items as they stood and thought out their options.

Despite the town’s small population and compact living style, each day, inhabitants roved the streets and presented their trade. Friendly chatter and wide smiles followed them, the town knew of Rey and her family well, her grandfather had funded most of the local activities and invested in many small businesses in the area, bringing a great deal of prosperity to all that walked the streets.

The art scene played a huge role in the community and was often accounted as the foundation of the town. There was more than one studio, each rotated between modern and vintage art but they encouraged all forms, sculptures were strewn about as well as watercolour masterpieces of the surrounding scenery, the land was captured in striking detail. They stepped into the studio, too enamoured to resist the call of all the works hidden and shining within. A gift shop was nestled in the corner, something that piqued her interest.

The walls were bright and white and she left Ben observing the watercolour, his thumb scratched his chin and his mouth gaped a fraction as his tongue peeked through, a common tell of his concentration that roped him inwards to the riptide of his thoughts.

The wind outside battered the shop front, rattling the glass in its frame, it leaked inwards, a high and dragging whistle. Yawning, suddenly overcome by a sinking exhaustion, Rey cupped her mouth as she slipped over to the gift booth and eyed the wonders in front of her. A great array of items were hung about, jewellery a plenty, post cards, art supplies and magnets. The jewellery caught her attention; little notes dotted around informed her that all the pieces were homemade and done so by hand by a local artist who used supplies from the beach.

Curious, she plucked the bracelet that most tickled her fancy; it was composed entirely of seashells and sea glass, all white with flickers and specks of burnt umber, mustard yellow or charcoal grey. The shells had been sanded down into smooth, circular shapes, each hollowed in the middle so the foundational silver chain could skewer them. All were packed tightly against one another offering a neat and compact design.

Rey loved it.
She thumbed the smooth surface of the sea glass and delighted over the feel of it under her fingers.

“Can I buy it for you?” Ben asked from her side, she had heard his approach on the tiled floor.

Normally, Rey would have refused such a request. Growing up, independence and reliance on herself before all had been instilled by her father. Omegas were submissive by nature, beings who had always relied on alphas from the beginning of time but Cassian made her believe she was capable of providing for herself if she worked for it. It is why she had drove so diligently in her teens to finish her schooling and master her trade; the profession was hers for the taking. All the things she owned came from her own labour despite the fortune that lingered from her mother’s side of the family. She was the two sides of a coin; one was the side that displayed the wealth and face of grandeur through the Ersos. The second was the humble and impoverished beginnings of the Kanatas and Andors whose nails were still stained and dirtied with mud and blood from generations full of hardship.

The way that Ben had asked though, it resonated with her, the hopeful gleam in his eyes and the beginning of a smile that tugged at the corners of his plush, full lips. He did not throw his own wealth or position in her face, permission was sought and so with a grin, she placed the bracelet into his hand.

“Yes please.”

After the purchase was complete and the bracelet around her wrist, they wrapped up their time in town, replenishing their supplies at the local green grocer, bakery and butcher shop.

All the while, she fawned over the bracelet, sneaking downward glances at it.

Arms full of groceries, Ben guided them home, Rey insisted on helping him to which he relented; allowing her to carry a small blue bag, full of freshly baked bread and other sugary treats.

When they arrived back at the cottage, noses red and fingers cold, they both worked to put their purchases away but Rey, still tired and overcome with a weakness unbecoming of her, yawned.

“Go to bed, sunshine. I’ll wake you when dinner is ready,” Ben whispered as he palmed her cheek and brushed his thumb under her eye.

Unable to keep her eyes open, she closed them and leaned into his touch, basking in the sandalwood and sage scent of him, it was comforting, more so than usual.

“I was supposed to make dinner as you made breakfast,” she protested weakly, her voice quiet but firm.

“You can do it tomorrow; you’re dead on your feet. Let me take care of you.”

Thinking it over and knowing how his instincts boiled deep in his heart and urged him to love, protect and provide, she nodded.

Without a word, Ben bent low and tucked his arms underneath her, picking her up bridal style. Content, she picked at his cable knit sweater as he strode towards the bedroom, mindful to keep her close to him.

Soon after, he placed her down on the bed and drew the curtains closed before he retrieved an extra blanket for her from the ornate chest at the foot of the bed.

Warm, she nestled deeper under the sheets as Ben layered the bedding and tucked her in, stroking
her hair. Whispering sweet nothings, he placed a gentle kiss on the forehead, his hot breath fanned across her skin and then he stood up.

“Sleep, my love.”

Nodding, she felt herself careen off the cliff edge as her body relaxed, limp and docile.

She slept.

Rain pebbled the glass, the fat streaks acted like shadows as Ben stoked the fire, kneeling as he tugged his sleeves upwards and rubbed his hands by the flames. An auburn glow took hold of his skin, lighting it and casting the rest in shadow, his hair meant her viewing of him was incomplete, it draped one half of his face in darkness.

Seemingly undeterred by the heat of the fire, he inched closer, the snaps and crackles of the log like a siren’s tune, as he remained rooted there, seemingly entranced by the orange dance.

Their meal had been a roast beef dinner, complete with homemade Yorkshire puddings and all the trimmings. Apparently, Ben had found an old cookbook in the kitchen a few nights before and had decided on that particular recipe. It was a traditional British meal and it only further surprised her that it tasted quite like the ones she enjoyed on a Sunday growing up but he had trumped whatever her mother had fed her. It was delicious and she ate more than she thought capable of herself, finding herself ravenous with a hunger that gnawed deep.

Absentmindedly, she cradled her stomach, patting it down as the feeling of fullness took hold. Not one to back down from a challenge, she had sampled all he had to offer, even the heavy ice cream desert.

She sat perched on her grandfather’s armchair, the fire warmed the green leather and she rested against the tall back and brought her bare legs underneath her. In front of her, she balanced her copy of Ben’s first novel on the armrest, losing herself in his passionate declarations and the despair of his loneliness.

It had not been difficult to accept that Ben Solo and Kylo Ren were one of the same, one soul and one faux name.

Looking up, she caught him staring, his brow quirked up in question.

“Have you read my second novel yet…with your own eyes?”

Rey blushed, her eyes found the pages once again. No, she had not. Ben had been more than willing to share the words in person; he was her very own personal narrator of his works.

Between the sheets, he had whispered the words, the ones unfamiliar to her, new declarations of fullness and hope, riddled deep with the all-encompassing presence of fresh love. All his darkness, despair and loneliness that left him black and rotting from the inwards out, had been banished by her light.

When he came inside of her, he would kiss her eyelids as if he had burned the words into her retinas and he was all she could see, all that would ruin her vision for any other.

“You know I haven’t,” she retorted as he moved and retrieved his hardback from the mantle.

Resuming his position, he kneeled and offered it to her.
“Do you want to read it?” He asked, those wide eyes seemed to widen more with a vulnerability typically unseen in his features.

Sitting up, she straightened her spine, closing the paperback and replaced it with his new one.

“Of course,” she admonished lightly, toes curling into the cushions.

With his eyes upon her, she carefully opened the front cover, handling the pristine copy as if it were a piece of Ben’s heart.

Gaping, she saw that a small, neat square had been cut into the pages, leaving it hollow and ruined but in the middle, sat nestled a ring, surrounded by black velvet. It was composed of two metals, the band silver and the sunflower in gold. One diamond sat in the middle of the flower whereas the band was dusted in a small cluster of tiny ones, all glistening bright.

Below it, in stunning calligraphy scripted by Ben himself, were the words he repeated aloud when she tore her eyes from the book.

Still kneeling, he took her hand.

“Rey, I love you more than I ever thought possible, you have stolen my heart and I will you mine. The greatest happiness is knowing you are mine and I am yours and if you would allow it, I would like to call you my wife.”

Swallowing hard, unable to believe that her senses were true to her, she reached out and placed her hand above his racing heart in an effort to discern she was not dreaming and that the man in front of her was made of flesh and bone.

“What do you say, sunshine, will you marry me?”

Gaping, eyes brimming with fresh tears, she placed the book in his upturned palm.

“Yes,” she said, her voice croaky, a faint whisper snatched straight from her heart.

Beaming, Ben’s nervousness was seemingly lost to him but still, his fingers trembled as he slid the sentimental ring onto her finger. The cool metal felt right against her blazing skin.

As soon as he did so, she stood on the armchair and launched herself into his arms, like always; he caught her, clutching her tight to his chest.

They spun, bathed in the amber light, a mixture of breathless kisses and laughter filled the room as fresh hope bloomed for their future, a man and woman rejoiced in unconditional love.

Chapter End Notes

WELL...Rey's engagement ring will be in the next moodboard on my tumblr.

Back to New York in the next where things will get HEATed in more ways than one.

Alba, was there a reason you focused so much on water...the sea and the
rain...YES...SYMBOLISM. What does water/sea represent? *looks away innocently but eyes chapter title*

4 main chapters and 3 epilogues left...these last four chapters of the main story will be...EVENTFUL to the say the least.

I know the story is winding down, but I would still like to hear from you. Your comments spur me on and I appreciate them more than I can express.
Heat

Chapter Summary

Nothing but heat smut here, I am sorry...my daddy kink slipped out too...choke me, daddy, AM I RIGHT?

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Ben-New York, United States of America

They had remained on the coast for nearly two months. Wrapped up in the quiet and simple existence, basking in the light of their engagement, they felt no need to leave or part from the salt carved land. A curious sort of serenity followed them and waking up every day to the sounds of lulling waves and seagulls outside was a comfort, especially when he woke with the love of his life beside him, his lover, his mate, his omega and his fiancé.

After a fireside discussion, the two decided that for the foreseeable future, they would settle in New York. It was a difficult conclusion to reach; many restless nights were spent in indecision as each fought the case for their respective cities.

One option was out of the question, they could not part again and continue their relationship long distance. Both were resolute in their stance regarding that matter. It was Rey who compromised in the end, her place of employment was her own and therefore she found herself in a better position and one that come with leeway. They would live in New York for a year with Ben continuing his career at the firehouse and Rey would temporarily close her garage and dabble with finding work in New York.

Mating laws meant that no visa was required and as long as they filed their mating status, she was free to live and work in America. Ben had stressed that with their combined savings and family fortunes, Rey would not need to work but she was staunch in her stance and refused such a notion. It was out of the question to her, her eyes had flamed fiercer than the flames that flickered at her back, she wanted to earn her keep and occupy herself, idleness was something she firmly disregarded and reminded him that all her life, she had worked and would continue to do so, no move would compromise that.

It humbled him, her calloused hands were a reminder of how she laboured and busied herself with tough vocation. Each night before bed, he massaged her palms and slender fingers, dousing them with liberal doses of Luke’s famous hand concoctions, rosy in fragrance and light in texture.

In those precious moments of quiet, she told him of her family and how while her mother was technically nobility, her father had grown from nothing, one of too many mouths to feed in a land that had long withered. It was further testament to her strength, she fought for her independence and he respected her tenacity. It surprised him at first, how she surrendered the will to stay in London despite her roots running deep.

 Apparently, she saw sense in it. All of her life, she had saved and accumulated a hefty amount in her savings account, skimming with expenses of daily living when she could, forever picky and
frugal with her income. Reasoning she would live on that and contribute towards living costs while moving into Ben’s penthouse, she warmed to the idea of immersing herself in his world further.

Before they left the bliss of the coast, sheepish and arms cradled tightly across her chest as she kicked dirt, Rey relayed that she wanted to see Ben thrive in his home environment and begin the process of knowing his family and friends more.

He had picked her up and spun her, unable to hide the joy that overcame him. While he was willing to follow Rey anywhere, a selfish part of him hoped that New York would become their home, at least for a while. A homebody through and through, he had missed his parents, desperately so and his extended family at the firehouse.

After a brief visit to London where they shared the news of their engagement, met with sheer excitement by Jyn and Cassian and with their promise of keeping the news quiet until they told Ben’s parents in person, they boarded their flight to New York.

Like before, Rey had clung to him, distressed and apprehensive but unlike the first time; she had needed no medication to sedate her. As Ben secured his seatbelt, her head lolled to the side and he accommodated her, slouching so he could pillow her with his shoulder.

Odd.

Only moments before, she had been shaking, almost violently so as her breaths became gasps but all the while, he had held her to him as they found their seats. Over the last couple of months, he had noticed the changes in Rey’s vibrancy, over the course of a day; life seemed to drain from her despite how much she slept. When he brought it up with her, he was met with her explanation. Her suppressants would often manifest with adverse side effects. Since she had messed with her dosage, she presumed that it was her body acclimatising itself to the medication once again.

Unsatisfied with her answer, not entirely convinced but otherwise clueless about suppressants, Ben had urged Rey to seek medical attention and she had promised to see a doctor in America once they settled down which alleviated some of Ben’s incessant worry.

Throughout the flight, his fingers curled around hers and he smoothed his thumb along the delicate grooves of her knuckles before settling against the ring that would bind her to him in another way. The design was easy to choose, sunflowers had played a significant part of their relationship and it represented loyalty, adoration and most importantly, longevity. It was symbolic of how he wanted to spend the rest of his days with her and how he would remain true and adore her beyond his time on earth.

A ravishing woman in white, he could hardly wait to call her his wife.

Under the cover of night, they landed. Despite the late hour, the city was still crawling with people, noise aplenty so when they finally made it back to the penthouse, they stripped their clothes and collapsed into bed. Both succumbed to the dark promise of sleep, curled up around the other.

Ben woke with a start, startled from a dream that quickly eluded him. Chest heaving, he stirred, willing his heart to calm but as he blinked, staring into darkness, he sensed something was not quite right. He could scarcely breathe, a remnant of an unconscious thought snatched from him as he tore himself back into the aches of reality.

Pain, he was riddled with it, an explosive mixture of burrowing aches and feverish convulsions.
Sweat dribbled from his brow in free falling torrid torrents and drenched his flesh, he was coated in it, his bare skin flooded and no part of him was free from the embrace or hurt.

It coiled deep within him, a familiar kind of agony that gnawed away at his insides and threatened to splinter or tear him apart unless he relented to his instincts and brought himself relief. If it had gripped him so tightly, it could only mean one thing.

Grunting, he groped blindly and sent his fingers on a journey to his left until he found purchase. Rey’s austral skin was a mirror image of his own, she was hot to the touch, almost scorching and deluged with a heavy layer of sweat.

Both were in the fiery hold of a frenzied, unresting passion, both were urged to comply, their bodies demanded a union of the flesh.

The realisation was startling and shook him from his reverie, forcing him to confront what awaited them both. There was no denying their situation.

Rey was in heat and with that, she triggered his rut.

Fully overwhelmed with a tirade of thought and sensation, he gulped hard, willing himself to breathe through a dry mouth and chapped lips. Every breath was a form of sweet torture; each inhale meant an ambush of her heady scent, overruled by her arousal. A cramp riddled through his gut and he quieted his moan by biting his fist, ivory met hard knuckles. Sighing, exhaling harshly through his nose, he curled in on himself, unbalanced and shaking.

Such movements lead to a fall; he teetered over the edge of the bed and collapsed to the hardwood below, a hulking mass of strewn limbs. It shocked him but he recovered quickly, rolling to his knees as his damp palms found possession.

The space between them did very little to quell his urges, it was a haze that consumed him to mate but he was not completely blind and without control. On his hands and knees, he crawled to the bathroom, an urgent kind of pursuit to respect and leave Rey without fear.

The tempting allure of biological persuasion was crushing.

His hands shook and his body trembled, he chewed on the inside of his cheek as he recalled the fear that came along with Rey’s first heat. Back then, she had suffered alone, undesiring of his help and although things had changed since then, he was still unsure if she wanted to spend her heat with him. Until she consented, he would stay away and work through his own aches and pains.

Finally, he passed the threshold and closed the door behind him, mindful to lock it before he was thrown to the tiles as another spasm tore through his lower half. Clutching his stomach, he willed the waves to pass but he knew that such an outcome was not in his future. There were only two options, to ride out the intense stages of his rut that would last for at least three days or eradicate his suffering with the help of Rey. When she woke, he knew she would feel the pangs of what ailed him but rather differently as her own body succumbed and burned from the inside out.

He clambered to his feet, unsteady and marginally swaying until he leaned forward and supported himself on the counter. Gazing at his reflection, he was unsurprised at the sight that greeted him, his hair was a mess, wet with sweat so it stuck to his face and any other part of him exposed to it. His gland was swollen, a rich blossom of cherry red that stood out amongst the expanse of his paleness everywhere else. Other than that, he appeared normal despite him being the furthest thing from it.
Clad only in boxers, he found himself hard, almost painfully so. Unable to stop himself from partaking in indulgence, he lowered the waistband and fisted his cock, squeezing it. The relief was instantaneous, a rare delight seen in the mist of it all and he whimpered, turning the tap with his free hand as he began to work himself, fingers braced and curled tight around his length. Between tugging on his cock and watering himself with cupfuls of water, dousing his skin in the frigid cold, he decided that coping alone was manageable if it came to that. He had done so many times before and he could do so again, it was a painful process but achievable. Some part of him hoped it would not come to that but he would follow Rey’s lead with it all regardless.

Bent at the middle, he groaned as he shifted his way of moving and focused on the head where he was most sensitive. His toes curled into the plum coloured bathmat below his feet, a click accompanied the motion. Unhinged, he brought his palm to his tongue and licked it, saliva had pooled in response to his situation and he brought it back down, coating his entire length before he resumed the act. Needing more stimulation, he hummed as he clamped his hand around his pulsing gland and rubbed it in time with his cock. The action provoked a moan from him that tumbled outwards and echoed, bouncing off the walls as a loud rumble that could wake the sleeping form outside of the confined space.

Feeling close, he watched in rapt fascination as the veins bulged in his forearms as his ministrations raced towards an almost punishing pace as he desperately chased his finish. Gritting his teeth, he neared the edge until a cry caused him to cease all movements and still for the first time since waking.

“Fuck,” he breathed, eyes wandering towards the door.

The blood rushed to his ears, a great thunder of plasmic sound. It was as if an ocean of icy water had temporarily diffused the heat in his bones and cleared him of the crackling longing that flamed him.

Beyond it, Rey called his name, her nails dragged against the door, a muffled scratch.

“Ben.”

Swallowing hard, a low hiss escaped him as he tucked his cock away and stumbled towards the door. It hurt him to know she was in need of him and he was a coward behind a locked door. He could smell her despite the barrier between them and his nostrils flared in response as he drank in her essence. He pressed himself flush against the wood and gripped the frame in an effort to remain still.

“Rey.”

He strained and listened for any movement but heard none, only the quiet reply she offered filtered inwards.

“Ben, I woke up and you were gone. I need you, I am in…”

She did not finish her sentence, the abrupt end to her confession was telling of her thoughts.

“I know, sunshine, I know what you’re going through. Your heat triggered my rut so I came in here, I didn’t want to influence your decision.”

Silenced followed.

Would she have him? Would she want him in this state?
“I triggered your rut, I’m sorry, Ben. Please, I’ve made my decision. I want you to see me through this and show me that it can feel good. I trust you, I love you.”

He rested his forehead against the door, the relief had brought his body to a simmer and the acknowledgment was all he needed.

“Are you sure you want this, Rey?”

“Yes! I want my future husband to take care of me. I know what I want and that’s you, you’re all I need. Please, don’t make me beg.”

Unwilling to degrade her in such a fashion, he curled his fingers around the door-handle and turned the lock, opening the door in one swift movement. It cracked against the wall but he could not find himself to care, not when true beauty was there to greet him.

It was an eclipse of epic proportions; he was the source that shadowed her light, his sun. In front of him, she stood, arms carved and looped around her middle, bare save for a dusky rose camisole and white panties that clung tantalising tight to her soft curves and left nothing to his wicked imagination. Despite such an epic vulnerability displayed, there was a flicker of fire in her blown eyes, hazel had been swallowed by the blackness of her pupils and left little colour behind.

It was maddening how her scent enveloped him, groping him without the need of physical touch. Rey startled him the most with her defiant lift of her chin and the fall of her arms as she stalked towards him. Whilst dominant in many aspects, including sexual, he felt little as it became apparent that the person in control, the one who would direct their meeting, was not him. No, the woman all flushed and nearing closer was the one who would make him kneel before her as she had her way with him and he was the most willing servant who would pleasure her.

“You’re mine,” she said lowly, she tilted her neck and revealed her gland to him; her sweat laden tresses curled around her shoulder and swooped under her breasts.

The gland was perhaps more swollen and colourful than his own, a heat surpassed a rut in all aspects, it leaked into her being, her soul, he could see it then as clear as he had seen himself only moments before.

“Yes.”

Her eyes were wild and her hair dishevelled but she approached him with her shoulders set back and without any physical hints of what irked her. Blunt fingernails met the wide expanse of his chest. They grazed the plains of firm muscle and trailed around his nipples. The feather light touches were enough to move him and soon enough, his back flattened against the wall behind them as Rey gazed upwards, a faux image of innocence and debauchery combined. Drunk on her, his palms met her hipbones as her hot, desperate breaths peppered his chest and made him dewy.

“I need this, Ben. I want you to take me like I’m unbreakable, a woman of flesh and bone and not one of glass,” she whispered and he gulped, her nails trailed lower, sparking more uncontrollable movements of his hips.

“Whatever you need, Rey,” he offered in reply.

Humming, she pressed herself taut against him, flattening her tongue along the meaty contour of his pectoral and drew his nipple into his mouth. Gasping, his hold on her hips increased to bruising proportions, he was numb to it and willed the violet blossoms to take root, so long after the moment passed, a reminder would remain and tell of their intense lustful carnality.
The wall and her touches were the only thing that kept him upright, he grunted and peeked glances
down at her as she lavished his nipple with rough sucks and kisses before she introduced the use of
her teeth. Expecting a drag, a sweeping current of bone against flesh, he spat profanities when she
bit it and tugged it, far from gentle.

“Fuck!”

Rey moaned, apparently spurred on by his vocal reaction and pulled back as she tugged his boxers
down and took a hold of his cock with an equally punishing grip. He pulsed in her palm, twitching
as his body realised that a glorious finish was on his horizon, one with a mate who had claimed
him.

“Fuck me, Ben, I need it,” she growled out as she dragged him towards the bed.

There was no doubt about it, she was the leading force of empowerment and charge, the true awing
composer of the sensual tune that hummed between their bodies despite how she would bow to the
actions she called for.

He spun her, a movement so swift that it stole the air right from her lungs and cradled her from
behind as he thrust against the small of her back. His fingers found her throat and caressed it as he
asserted his dominance and willingness to please. The other hand snaked down the front of her
body and wormed its way into her panties. Panting, he fingered the damp fabric, ruined by her
seemingly endless flow of slick. Appreciative but impatient, he bunched the cotton and tore it from
her body. Before dropping the useless shreds to the floor beneath them, he brought it up to his nose
and inhaled, mouthing what he could.

She gasped, pressing her ass against his bare crotch but he held her still, his hand around her throat
ensured her stillness. Her lower half squirmed as he applied more pressure around the rapid current
of her pulse point but she enjoyed it, she lived for it.

“More, please, choke me, daddy.”

He was done for, those words evoked something within him and he wanted to ruin his girl and
make her forever his.

Mindful not to disrupt her breathing, he compressed the arteries in her neck with a firm but gentle
hold but still, his whole hand encompassed her dainty column. He was familiar with the practice
and enjoyed the feeling of power that came with it. From behind, he expelled great control and
parted her folds as her hands clung to the one wrapped around her throat. It was dizzying, feeling
her pliant and yielding before him. Her toes brushed against his own as she opened herself up
further and allowed him entrance.

Stars, she was wetter than he had ever felt her before. He nearly choked when she gushed against
his palm, he could not stop himself from tearing his hand upwards and sucking his fingers into his
mouth, lapping at her juices with a low moan and curling of his tongue. It was all her, ocean salt,
daisies, sweetness and that tang of arousal that kept him intoxicated and in want of her. Willing to
share his treasured bounty, he rewarded Rey and swiped along the seam of her gaping mouth and
pressed his finger inwards. Like always, she accommodated him and latched on, sucking the digit
clean.

“Such a good girl, omega, do you want daddy to fuck you?”

Rey nodded frantically, still hindered by the curling vice of his hand.
Alternating, he chose to slacken the hold as he fingered her folds a final time before slipping them into her tight, wet cunt. Immediately, she crooned as she clamped around them, she was eager for more and he was ready to give. No resistance met him as he inserted all four of his fingers and jutted them upwards and set a delicious pace as he plunged them in time and time again. Slick pooled and painted her thighs as her body responded to his attentions.

Gnashing his teeth, he dipped his head low and dragged his tongue along the slope of her cheekbone. Her wide eyes bulged to a degree as he enveloped her with all he was; his flesh tainted every part of her.

“Use your words, Rey, tell me what you need, baby girl,” he ordered, redoubling his efforts with his expertly fingers as he brought his thumb to her clit and applied a slight, precise pressure.

She bucked upwards so he brought her back to him, grasping her throat and fucked her cunt with a new fervour until she nipped at his hips and heaved hurried breaths out of her parted lips.

It was a mercy when he paid special attention to her clit, she instructed him and eventually joined their hands, entwining nimble fingers as they both brought her to release.

Her inner walls, smooth but textured came down on his fingers a final time before fluttering as she found her climax with a hoarse scream which Ben quickly swallowed as he turned her and brought his lips to her own. It was bliss, she quivered and shook but he kept her static and standing.

Her camisole was drenched with perspiration so he lifted the hem, pulling it upwards and then threw it to the ground. Both were completely bare to the each other, the natural order of things.

Her rosy lips pressed together in a pout as she traced his collarbone.

“I need more, Ben.”

He chuckled, free from the aches that had woken him. They had levelled out since he had scented her and coated his tongue in her arousal but they both needed more.

“What do you need?” He was playing coy, teasing her until she vocalised her desires.

Her eyes narrowed in the darkness of the room, lit only by the hazy shard of light that filtered in from the bathroom door. The honey specks in her chestnut waves were lit up but the rest of her was bathed in shadow.

“Your cock. I want you to fuck me,” she said, brazen and unabashed.

It was his undoing; he would bend to her will or please her in any capacity. His cock twitched as he closed the distance and worked to fulfil her wish.

She met him with an equal passion; her fingers looped around his wrists and pulled him onto the bed as their mouths met. They fell to the mattress as a writhing beast with two backs, porcelain and tawny combined and flushed, heaving and uttering their praises and cravings.

Ben launched himself above her and splayed her knees with a forceful nudge of his knees as his appetite roared on and clenched heavy in his groin as he neared relief and fulfilment. Below him, Rey was equitably frantic as her nails found purchase on his waist; she clawed at him, urging him closer without words.

He eyed her as he settled between her legs, her calves looped around his back and her heels dug into his ass which brought him closer to her still, her neediness was apparent but so was his. The
veins in his body were live wires, all pulsing and flushed hot with the pumping throb with unwavering arousal.

Breathing hard, he dropped his gaze to his cock and fisted it, grunting with the relief of touch. Shifting closer, he dragged it along her folds, wetting and coating it entirely with the scorching river of arousal that flowed freely from her. It ran from the tip to his shaft in rivulets and he did so out of courtesy but he knew such an act was unnecessary as she was open to him and would take his impressive length with no struggle.

“I’ve never been with an omega in heat,” he admitted gruffly as he lined himself up at her entrance and nudged forward.

“I’m your first,” Rey declared breathlessly, her cheeks were scarlet and her full lips curled up into a grin.

“Yes, you are my last as well, little one,” Ben promised, still wallowing in the fact he had relented to his urges in his younger years.

The thought was quickly torn from his mind as Rey lifted her hips and rubbed herself against him, her impatience spurred him on, the blazing heat from her hot cunt allowed him to succumb to instinctual movements.

There was nothing graceful about how he entered her, it was one precise movement, a quick snap of his hips to crown hers and he was buried to the hilt. They cried out in unison, it echoed alongside the rain that peppered the windows, it was a downfall, the New York streets were washed in torrents of it as it washed away the old and welcomed the new.

Despite it all, the rain and fall of her wetness like a sacred spring; she retained a tightness, so divine that he could barely draw a breath. He noticed the difference though; her heat had saturated him and invited him to experience more until he was fully sated.

Underneath him, Rey chose to cling to him as if he was the only thing that anchored her to the earth and he made her do so extra tightly as he plunged inside of her like a man undone.

Their eyes met and they held that gaze, entranced by what they saw, a naked kind of vulnerability and unquestionable feeling of utter wholeness as both of their aches were torn and ebbed away.

Like a man possessed, he increased his speed and angled himself just right so he could hit that sweet spot inside of her that evoked unstoppable cries and breathy sighs.

He wanted to remain this way forever, locked in the arms of his true lover, the act had never felt so right, every part of her was made for him and the way she swallowed his cock was only further evidence of that. The pull and drag of her walls and the clenching with every stroke had him reeling, he stuttered when she slapped his ass and groped him there.

Groaning, he finally tore his gaze away from the rainy fields that were her expressive, doe eyes awash and backlit by fire. His settled on her chest, the bounce of her breasts entranced him. He latched on to one of her hardened nipples and he felt the affect it had on her, she shivered and rotated her hips as he drove into her. One of her hands found his hair and she tugged until his roots ached but it was what he wanted, the line between pleasure and pain was blurred and he enjoyed the sensation of delving into both realms.

He slithered a wandering hand between their bodies and found her clit, he felt his own release nearing as the familiar tightness in his abdomen revealed itself. Grunting, he worked two fingers
there and continued swivelling his hips as his cock found home in her heat. Her eyes rolled into the back of her head as she blindly grasped his flesh and mumbled an incoherent slew of curses.

When she climaxed, her eyes were wide open and glazed, she milked him for all that he was worth and he followed her, white knuckling the sheets as ropes of his spend coated her convulsing walls. He collapsed upon her and felt them lock together as he pulsed again, filling her up.

Boneless, he lay his head above her hummingbird heart and imagined his spend taking root in her ripe and bountiful womb and wanting her belly to swell with their child. It was the most erotic thing he could think of, a life made of her and him nestled safely inside of her as it developed.

Perhaps it was his alpha instincts manifesting but he was dizzied with the thought as he rolled them into a comfortable position. He planted his splayed hand upon her stomach and willed it to come to fruition and bulge with life.

Spent, they lapsed into relaxing silence as they came down from their highs. Ben cradled her from behind and worked to control his breathing.

“I never knew it could be like that. It was intense and all consuming…I felt loved. Thank you,” she whispered.

It made his heart swell. Her altered and warped visions of alphas had seemingly been healed with his own hands and actions, it meant everything to him.

“You are loved,” he murmured, holding her tighter as they gazed at the downfall beyond the window and waited for the emergence of their respective needs to flare up again.

In that moment, all that mattered was that she was by his side and with an open heart.

A progress most beautiful had been made.

Chapter End Notes

Just for uhhhh science purposes...*coughs* heats during pregnancy can be a thing. Asongforjonsa came up with that concept and I fully believe in that all consuming sexual cravings *coughs*

3 main chapters and 3 epilogues left.

The end of the next chapter...strap in.

Here is Rey's engagement ring as I forgot to post it in the moodboard.
We might be close to the end but I still want to hear from you!! Your comments are like Chewie's cinnamon buns <3
Rey-New York, United States of America

Her heat had lasted a week.

The preconceived notions of the experience had been misconstrued and warped, tainted by heavy hands and unwanted attentions in the past. Ben was no wicked man who craved her fear nor did he experience delight in her vulnerability.

No, he empowered her and encouraged her need for control and assertion as soon as her heat had overcome her. An avid listener and willing lover, he accommodated her in every way that was essential to her peace of mind. No requirement was belittled, when she needed to sit atop of him and affirm her willing participance, he did so without question and allowed her that comfort. When she rocked upon him and lowered herself onto his cock, she was a mistress of their combined pleasure. When he took her from behind with bruising grip on her hips and her face buried into the mattress, she maintained that title despite the submissive position.

It was blissful, the days had melted into the other as they were joined as one, their need for the other outweighed all else and it was easy to fall into the embrace of natural carnality and rightness that suited them so well.

Biological cycles, their heat and rut, were not some curse that rendered them incapable of all rationality and conscious decision. She understood what they meant. Yes, primarily they were deeply ingrained in a biological directive that willed two mates to reproduce but it was much more than that.

It was an extension of the existing love that swaddled them both and she desired it, mewling against his mouth time and time again as he professed such love in both a physical and vocal manner.

By the end of it, she was deliciously sore and worked within an inch of her life; no surface in the penthouse was left without a pressing and kiss of their flesh.

One the seventh day, her heat ebbed away as quickly as it had taken her but she felt lethargic and wanted nothing more than to curl up and sleep. Therefore, she did just that, burrowing in the bed until she was comfortable with the positions of the pillows and blankets.

Ben was due to return to work and he had vocalised his reluctance and offered to stay home with her for a few more days but she brushed him off and nested deeper into the warmth of the bed which still carried traces of the heat where his body had lain. There was no need for him to increase
his absence from the firehouse for her. Earlier that morning, Callie had returned home and so
Despite the feline’s obvious wariness and disdain for her, she would not be completely alone and
without company.

Ben watched from his spot in front of the wardrobe, unwilling to look away for too long. Callie
fleeted between his parted feet, her long tail draped around his calves as she wandered about,
purring loudly as she nudged her face against denim.

Nausea plagued Rey and the tiredness seemed never ending. They had arranged a doctor’s
appointment for later in the week. Their mating status was filed at city hall the day before, which
meant she was free to claim residency and work as she pleased and reap from any benefits on offer.
It was easy to add her on to Ben’s health insurance, something that admittedly baffled her as back
home, healthcare was free to all residents alongside people often being exempt in paying for their
prescriptions fees.

From her position in bed, she watched Ben as he dressed himself in jeans and his usual plaid, he
had chosen a green shirt and paired it with a white, form-hugging shirt beneath. At the station, he
would change into clothes that were more appropriate and sport his gear.

“Phone me if you need anything, if I’m not on call, I’ll answer, sunshine,” Ben said, buttoning up
his shirt as he walked towards her.

Each step was taken with care as the raven feline refused to give him space to navigate. Chuckling,
he bent low and scooped her up, stroking her as he sat on the bed.

He worked his fingers and rubbed behind her ears.

“You’ll look after Rey for me, wont you, girl?”

Rey mustered a smile and rolled over, arm outstretched towards him. His warm fingers caressed
her own and rubbed soothing circles there. Callie appraised Rey, unmoving on Ben’s lap. Her
chartreuse eyes were narrowed a fraction, no purrs were to be heard but after a moment of
contemplation, she stepped across the mattress with purpose and settled beside Rey.

Ben’s brows raised and the beginning of a smile graced his features.

“I think she could be warming to you.”

Rey guffawed and tentatively ran her hand along the length of Callie’s spine, she expected an issue
or sign of her ill temperament, a hiss or wicked slash of her claws but there was nothing of the sort.
To her surprise, Callie melted into her touch and nestled beside her, kneading the blankets.

“I guess she is.”

Yawning, Rey shifted and settled back on her elbows and beckoned Ben towards her with a quick
curling of her forefinger.

Ben leaned forward, hovering above her before capturing her lips with his own. His breath was
minty, fresh from that morning’s grooming and she hummed, pecking him a few times before
pulling back.

He would only be gone twelve hours, half of his usual shift time but she realised that the
separation, albeit short, was the first time they would be parted since they had met. She hooked her
hand around his neck, drew him to her a final time and rested her forehead against his.
She sighed, closing her eyes, tiredness and nausea, long forgotten. She would miss him despite how little time he would be gone and it seemed he felt the same, neither willing to release the other.

Begrudgingly, Ben stood up and eyed the door; the bedside clock flashed quarter to eight in bright LED lights, a shock of red in the darkness. It was time for him to leave. He levelled downwards and pressed a final goodbye kiss to her forehead before shouldering his bag pack.

“I love you, remember, don’t hesitate to call if you need me, okay?”

“I miss you already,” Rey admitted as she gazed at his retreating form.

“Try sleep some more, the hours will fly by.” Ben smiled, edging towards the door. He waved goodbye and left, the door clicked shut and Rey was left alone.

The cat beside her buried herself under the blankets and pawed at Rey’s stomach. Curious, she peeled the assortment of blankets and comforters away and watched in rapt fascination as Callie snuggled against her navel. It was odd. The change in the cat’s behaviour was startling but not unwanted; she enjoyed the affection bestowed upon her.

Callie’s purrs sounded and vibrated against her belly button, a sweet little tickle. Rey palmed her stomach and then brushed her fingers against the cat’s fur before pulling the blankets back over them both and shrouding them in warmth.

It seemed that their short-lived rivalry had ended.

Content, she drifted back to sleep and cuddled the feline close to her.

Rey woke up a few hours later, wrenched from sleep by an unstoppable need. She threw the blankets from her and narrowly missed rolling over onto Callie. She cupped her mouth and dashed to the bathroom, falling to her knees on the tiled floor as she frantically lifted the lid and drooped forward.

She expelled her meagre stomach contents, a sharp, acidic mixture of bile and the toast she had eaten that morning. Heaving, she gripped the side of the toilet and knotted her hair as not to mess it. The nausea subsided soon after but only after the torrid pools had shot from her throat and sunk into the water.

Gasping, arms shaking and knees weak, she sat there for a while, not quite trusting her body. She feared that if she stood, she would find herself overcome with the urge to throw up again. Soft fur brushed against her calves and she snuck a downward glance, somewhat grateful that the cat had followed. She locked gazes with her and wondered if Callie had somehow known she would fall ill this way, it would explain why she had taken such interest in her abdomen.

Blinking, she flushed the toilet and stood, mindful not to move too quickly as a dizziness had taken hold of her. She felt weak but better than she had before. She wiped her mouth with the back of her hand then moved to the sink, turning on the tap as she lathered her hands in cucumber soap. By the look of the packaging, it was another one of Luke’s creations.

After that, she brushed her teeth, twice, in an effort to remove the sharp tang of bile that coated the insides of her cheeks and clung to her tongue. It was after storing her toothbrush away that she noticed that she had missed taking her suppressants for the last few days, the motion had apparently slipped her mind. Grumbling, she shook the pill bottle and surmised that missing doses could have resulted in such sickness, withdrawal symptoms were usually uncomfortable.
Despite coming to that conclusion, she was still glad that they made a doctor’s appointment. Perhaps it was time for a change; she did not see the point of maintaining her usage of such medication when she was mated and fully appreciative of her heats. There was no reason for her to limit herself in that way any longer. Resolute, she tucked the pill bottle away in the medicine cabinet and embraced her new regime.

Padding through the penthouse, she tied her hair back into a low bun that sat at the nape of her neck. It was late afternoon and Ben would return home in the evening so she wanted to welcome him home after a long day at work. Her own job search had not begun yet but it would soon, sitting still was not an option for her.

The kitchen was modern, all sleek metallic surfaces and modern appliances, a far cry from her own one back in London. Ben’s love for cooking was apparent, their time in England had proven as much and cookbooks lined nearly every surface. It was obvious that despite the abundance of different devices, all were used and essential for whatever he chose to make.

Although there were still a few hours before his return home, as she scoured the shelves, fridge and pantry, she recalled his grandmother’s spaghetti recipe and chose to make it for dinner. She was still a novice but after watching Ben cook for the last couple of months, she had noticed some tricks and she wanted to treat him.

All the necessary ingredients were present so it made her life easier but there was no need to begin her preparation just yet. Smiling, she set the table to save her the trouble later and all the while, Callie followed her like a shadow.

It was nice, that sense of companionship and she finally understood why Ben was so taken with the pet. Rey hummed a quiet tune as she went about the task and found some candles. Wanting to create a warm ambience, she lit them and placed them around the space before resting on the couch.

She sat back, content and surmised she would begin cooking in an hour. The couch was comfortable so she spread out as another yawn escaped her. Unable to stop herself, she closed her eyes and told herself she was just resting them. The pitter-patter of rain pebbled the windows and lulled her.

Soon, she succumbed to the welcoming caress of deep sleep.

Behind her, Callie made her way across the dining table, tail swinging back and forth. A candle was knocked to the ground.

The flames began to spread.

Chapter End Notes

TWO MAIN CHAPTERS LEFT.

This was always going to happen...I am sorry, it needs to.

I promise a happy ending, the final main chapter (Chapter 32) and the 3 epilogues will be filled with goodness and fluff, I promise.
“I love you, remember, don’t hesitate to call if you need me, okay?”...

“Rey, please blow out the candles,” he pleaded softly; she was somewhat intoxicated and he did not want her to become another statistic.

...the foreshadowing was there, all the way back in chapter 11

Thank you for reading <3
Ben-New York, United States of America

A storm was imminent. Ben could feel it.

It was so telling that he could practically taste it as that potent energy sunk heavy into the bones of him and promised a hardy tempest.

Around him, a deluge of rain fell from the bulky charcoal clouds above. It battered all those unfortunate to find themselves caught in the barrage and drenching of such a wild elemental show of natural power.

Every step on the sidewalk offered a trip in a puddle, alternating between deep and shallow. Cracked concrete and overflowing drains washed the streets in a steady accumulative flow of water, he side stepped more than once to avoid an unnecessary soak.

The downpour did not deter the citizens of New York, they were still out in troves and marching towards their destinations, nothing could slow them. Ben fit into that category, rain had never bothered him and so he plodded along, a handful of brown bags tucked tight against his chest and secured with a tilt of his chin. Hunching over a fraction, he shielded them with his body sufficiently enough. They kept his hands warm and the scents that emanated and wafted outwards was enough to make his stomach rumble. A beef on rye was waiting for him nestled in the confines so he hastened forward and willed his long legs to carry him faster.

It was mid afternoon and many at the firehouse chose to settle down with a meal at that time so he had readily volunteered to brave the weather and collect some much-needed sustenance to energise them for the final push of their shift. He chose a small diner a few blocks away where the owner, an Italian called Joey, was well versed in the orders of the firefighters.

The cold attempted to take hold of him through his thin, waterproof jacket but he exuded with a warmth that would not leave him. Still, he preferred the comfort of the break room where the old heater rattled on and the coffee maker produced batch after batch of liquid gold.

Finally, he made it back, noticing that neither of their company’s firetrucks were absent meaning none was on call. From the rumbustious laughter and increasing chatter as he traipsed inwards, it seemed most had congregated in the break room, a welcome change.

All eyes lit up as he entered, Gwen was quick to stand, finally free from the confines of the wheelchair and unloaded the bags for him.

“It’s really coming down, isn’t it?” Han mused aloud as Ben shrugged off his jacket, shaking it dry before he hung it up.
Despite his efforts, some of his hair was dampened so he pushed it back out of his face and took his seat by Han, right beside the heater. Everyone was much too occupied with their food to converse. Gwen was especially ravenous, devouring her hamburger in three, giant bites and then set her sights on the mountain of onion rings that sat before her.

Hux eyed them and Ben watched on in amusement, it was never advised to mess with Gwen’s food but he seemed bold enough to do so. Whilst she sucked her fingers clean, laden in grease and goodness, Hux casually inched his hand forward, his own burger apparently forgotten.

Gwen’s hand came down on his with a sharp smack; he jumped back and reclined into his seat, grumbling to himself. His usually pale skin lit up in a scarlet blush. There was a hint of defiance behind his beady eyes but it was all in jest.

“Hands off,” Gwen stared him down, eyes narrowed and thin brows raised. A hint of a smile tugged at her lips as she reprimanded him, the two were in love but he should have known better than to interfere with Gwen’s food. Ben had learned that lesson long ago, as kids; she had ‘accidentally’ broke his finger after his attempted pilfering of one of her Twinkies. It never healed right and was still crooked to that day.

All laughed, Mitaka and Thanisson were red in the face as they attempted to contain themselves, they enjoyed the couple’s spats and exchanges, both found entertainment in them as did most of the firehouse. Ben shook his head, grinning down at his own sandwich.

“It’s good to have you back, son, we missed you,” Han said, patting his back as he ate. He felt the sincerity of the words and he mirrored them, time away with Rey had been otherworldly, a joy he had never thought possible for him but he had missed everyone back home, his parents especially.

Smiling, he looked at his father who had showcased ‘The Falcon’ and sang Rey’s praises for repairing it. It ran better than ever and he sat with a new kind of confidence, a pride in his beloved chair. It no longer creaked and threatened to collapse below him, feeling jovial; Han even demonstrated some tricks that morning like new life had been breathed into them all.

“It’s good to be back.”

Han dug in his pocket and offered one of his toffees to him, something he had always done since Ben could remember and he was quick to take it, popping it in his mouth after he finished his sandwich. It was like home, the sugary treat was a familiar accompaniment of his father. Humming, he sucked gently and relaxed into his seat, feeling the warm of the heater at his side.

“Yes, it has been quiet, especially since Bazine’s transfer,” Gwen quipped, taking a sip from her coffee. The two friends made eye contact and held it, her gaze drifted towards Han as she shrugged her shoulders.

Ben tongued the toffee in his mouth thoughtfully, admittedly stunned by the news, Han cleared his throat from beside him so he tilted his head and eyed him, waiting for an explanation.

“She has been getting away with harassing you for years. There was never much evidence but with what she did to Rey, hitting her and attempting to hurt you, it was the last straw. It was caught on camera. I suggested she filed for a transfer or I’d dismiss her,” Han shrugged as if the act meant little when it meant everything.

Ben blinked, eyes sailing towards the ground as the information sunk in. For years, the woman had pursued him and harassed him in a sexual manner. It was one of the few instances where he had felt helpless and without a voice, he feared people would not take him seriously considering he
was a male and an alpha. They were the strongest in society, privileged in nearly every sense so he had coped with her advances in a hushed manner. Gwen knew of it, she witnessed it on a daily basis but he never knew his father had taken such an interest or even acknowledged that the woman made his life difficult.

Feeling choked up, he swallowed hard as Han’s hand settled on his knee and offered a reassuring squeeze, a tell that he was there and that he knew more than he had ever admitted to.

Gwen steered the conversation and busied the others so the attention was not on the father and son, she shared her onion rings freely so that kept everyone occupied. Mitaka argued for the use of ketchup whereas Hux insisted that onion rings needed a liberal dose of ranch but Gwen was quick to proclaim that onion rings needed no condiment to enhance their goodness. The debated continued.

“I’m sorry I couldn’t make her leave sooner,” Han said softly, his own meal cold and forgotten.

Bewildered, Ben sat up straighter, feeling lighter than he had ever felt before in his place of work.

“It’s in the past now, thank you. I was meaning to ask if you’d like to come over sometime this week, Rey and me have something to tell you and mom.”

Han’s eyes bulged, his lips curled into a knowing smile.

“No!” Ben was quick to deny it despite his want for it.

“You should’ve seen your mother when she was pregnant with you; she could barely lift a finger and would fall asleep on me mid sentence. Sure though, we’ll come over whenever you want,” the older man chuckled.

The penny dropped.

Could she be pregnant? He sat back, deep in thought as he recalled all of her symptoms. Rey’s waning energy was something that worried him, she ate more than she had when she first met him and only the day before, she began to feel nauseous. They had never used protection; each were both ready to begin a family but he never thought it could happen so soon. They had met in person a little over two months ago and had been more than eager when using their time to explore each other physically.

Their child could be growing inside of the woman he loved, it was a dream and something he never thought possible for himself until she appeared in his life like the sun after rain, bright and most welcome. It was what he wanted, what they both wanted and he could hardly contain himself.

A small part of him allowed himself to hope but he quickly arranged his features back into a cool façade of calm. The other kicked himself for not noticing the signs earlier.

“How does Friday night sound?”

Friday was the day of Rey’s doctor appointment; perhaps everything could be confirmed then. He ran through countless scenarios, all of which involved Rey smiling at his side and his hopes were affirmed. Under his hands, her stomach would grow with new life and cement their love forever.

“Sounds like a plan.”
The shrill sound of the alarm broke them from their conversation, the space flashed with light as all jumped to their feet and raced to the locker room, the movements practiced and tuned to a brilliant efficiency.

Han wheeled himself to the maps and radio.

As they usually did, Gwen and Ben urged the other on with some friendly competition to complete gearing up in a timely manner. Bunker gear was heavy but each shouldered it as if it weighed little and did so with a practiced finesse. Both completed the act in half a minute, pulling on their masks as they dashed from the room and towards ‘Top Gun.’

To save time, they would connect their breathing apparatus on the way to their location. Han was barking orders but listening intently as information was relayed from dispatch.

“22 Johnson Street, the penthouse apartment.”

Ben froze, Han’s grip on the radio faltered and it clattered to the ground with a resounding metallic smack. Staggering, Ben leaned against the brick wall, not quite trusting his balance as he found his knees weak and useless; his heart hammered faster than it had ever done so before.

It was his address, the place he had left that morning after he tucked Rey securely into bed; she had been warm and safe, waiting for his return.

No.

**Denial.**

They dispatcher had made a mistake with the address, any moment now; they would correct that and apologise for their error.

“They’re wrong, father, Rey…she is at home, I left her in bed, she is okay. Tell them they are wrong!” Ben whispered, begging as he had never done before but he could scarcely breathe let alone find his voice.

Time slowed to a standstill as Han gazed up at him, his hands were shaking and his mouth gaped as he retrieved the fallen radio and asked for a confirmation about the location. He sounded different, his voice little more than a croak and Ben waited, he paced like a caged animal driven mad by words or the jeer of such an abysmal prospect.

When it was confirmed, Ben lost a part of himself. It was as if someone had hollowed out a piece of his heart, ripping into it without thought. Darkness lingered at the fringes of his psyche.

**Anger.**

Chest heaving, he rushed towards ‘Top Gun’ and threw open the door, Han chased him the best he could, shouting his name but it fell on deaf ears. Fury, in the form of molten lava filled his veins and burned him from the inside out. Nothing could stop him, now was not the time to stand idle and waste precious seconds.

Han caught his arm but Ben shook it off, he was not someone who could be tamed, not now. It was a vicious gesture and everyone around stood still, observing the pair.

“You can’t go in there,” Han said, it was an attempt of reasoning, his father was desperate as they both knew how emotions could influence decisions. It was a risk but one he was willing to take.
Ben did not look back as he climbed into his seat and shouldered his breathing apparatus, counting how much time had been lost already.

“Try and stop me.”

Gwen sat at his side and the others slid in, each wary in their stares and movements. Mitaka was up front in the driver’s seat and glanced down at Han. They shared a look and Ben beat his fist on thigh.

“Move!” Ben boomed, his knee was jerking out of control, bouncing up and down as his anxiety flowed into physical symptoms.

It was difficult to think, it hurt too much.

Han offered a stiff nod and they flew out of the firehouse, the siren was loud and blared for all to hear but he was hardly present, only acutely aware of his surroundings as his mind raced with thoughts that lingered in darkness like the smoke carving its way into his home.

Travelling the three blocks to his building were the slowest of his life. No one spoke, as no words would erase his torment. Gwen place her hand on his jostling knee but he could not summon the strength to cast a look in her direction.

**Bargaining.**

It was simple, he would find Rey and she would be okay. He knew very little of the situation, his penthouse was equipped with modern smoke detectors, some of the best on the market. It was likely the incessant ringing of it had alerted her and she was far from the flames that no doubt devoured his home. None of it mattered, material possessions held very little value to him, his only concern was for the woman he loved the most. He would make it better; he would do anything to rectify this plague.

**Depression.**

What if that was not the case? Rey had been overcome with exhaustion and from experience; she was a deep sleeper and barely stirred. Ben choked, dropping his face into his hands. What if she was pregnant? The idea of his pregnant lover being lost to the element he had always battled but respected was too much for him to bear. There was a chance that more than one life was at stake and it both split his spirit to the bone and incited him to take action. He could not break, no, not whilst she depended on him. For him to succeed, he would need to release himself from the crippling doubt and imaginings, shake the terror that gnawed at his insides and focus. A great deal of concentration was required, emotion would rule him, there was no doubt about it but he needed to gather his strength and build himself up high.

**Acceptance.**

Heaving a deep breath, he sat straight, noticing the shift in scenery. They were fast approaching his home.

Rey was in there, he felt it and despite the rain that fell from above, the fire would rage and rise above it all.

As soon as the truck stopped, Ben was out. He shoved his door open, swung his legs out and took off running inside. The door attendant, Jeffrey was there, face ashen and eyes wide as he appraised him.
Ben was frantic in his search, the lobby was filled with other residents but there was no flash of chestnut or hazel to greet him. No golden skin or the white camisole she had chosen to wear that day was to be found in the crowd no matter how much he wished them to appear.

For a moment, he stumbled and nearly fell, the weight of it all crashed into him and he was nearly blind to his surroundings. No longer was he a man made whole by the discovery of his mate, he was splintering, a chaotic crumbling of all he was as he realised that he might lose the woman he loved the most and find himself alone and in misery.

His recovery was quick. By that time, Gwen had caught up to him, armed with two hand held fire extinguishers. It was what he needed, a reminder that while he felt like falling apart, he could not, not while he could fight and battle with the roaring flames as he had done countless times before.

“Come on, Solo. I’ve got your back.”

Shaking his head, he relieved her of one of the fire extinguishers and with her behind him, he sprinted towards the stairs, mindful that the elevator was not an option in times of crisis. His building was small, despite the grandeur of it. There were six floors and he resided on the top one.

It was odd how he moved when the prospect of losing Rey hit him, he practically flew.

The sounds of boots smacking concrete filled the stairwells, he had never moved as fast in his entire life, his calves and thighs burned with exertion but a sharp, overwhelming dose of adrenaline made him oblivious to any ache or tiredness. Sweat coated his brow and wet his face as it fell freely. It was no easy feat but he conquered it, clearing each floor with a seemingly effortless finesse.

Upon reaching the sixth floor, he was met by smoke, it filtered out from underneath his front door and clung heavy to the air. Anxiety laced his guts but he did not miss a beat, he rushed forward and accessed the situation in front of him.

“Rey?” He shouted out, trying the door but he found it locked. He relinquished his hold on the handle and quickly realised that the only solution was to force entry.

“We will have to break it down.”

Unwilling to accept that smoke had taken her from him; he took a step back, bracing himself. There were tools and instruments for such a situation but his means was quicker. With one heavy kick of his boot and then another, the door flew inwards, releasing a surge of billowing smoke whose tendrils near enough blinded him.

With the smoke, came Callie. She darted outwards and ran towards the elevator but she was alone in her escape. Gwen hoisted her extinguisher, beyond them, amber filled the far side of the apartment so she entered first, coating nearly every surface or flame as well as she could.

It was a desperate search, while the fire crackled, popped and hissed as it climbed the walls and left destruction in its wait, the visibility was low in areas.

“Rey!” Ben shouted despite his voice being drowned by the commotion, the hell that tore through his home and spirit.

Squinting, he moved forward, breathing deep and harshly. The kitchen was where the damage seemingly originated and Gwen was making quick work of dousing the element but it was difficult, more embers seemed to flicker to life and take hold of more possessions.
In the darkness, he searched for her in a hectic haze before he noticed the bookshelf overturned. Books were splayed wide open and their pages painted black by the chaos around. Underneath it all, he noticed a hand; her ring shone and reflected the flames, a wicked but blessed kind of call to him.

Feeling himself come undone at such a sight, he barrelled forward and pried the shelf upwards, throwing it to the side without care. Crumpled and curled up, lay Rey. Soot covered every inch of her, blood reddened her forehead and wet her hair. A scratch adjourned her cheek and he presumed Callie had attempted to wake her but the life had been sucked from her body, suffocated by the fire. She was a ghastly sight like a ghost ready to haunt him and he realised that perhaps he was too late. Choking back a sob, Ben swiftly pulled her from the ground and took her in his arms, refusing to let her slip away from him. Their story would not end this way, he would battle death himself if it meant she could return to him. Hux and Mitaka had gathered at this point and were aiding Gwen in her efforts, which appeared successful.

Ben had to get her out of there, it did not matter what happened to his home. Cradling her close, he pressed forward until he was out of the apartment. She was not moving; nothing showed of life inside of her, her breaths were absent and eyes closed.

Crying now, shoulders quaking, he did not set her down until they reached the stairwell, blessedly free of smoke and harm. Callie, like always, was his shadow. As he did, he noticed a bruise forming on her forehead and a cruel kind of branding, a vicious burn on her upper arm but he ignored it, he was near enough oblivious to it. The blood had drooled freely over her face and he could barely stomach it, he palmed her head and searched for the injury.

Like a man possessed, he tore the mask from his face and bent low, his hands frantically groped her waist and then upwards, patting her down as he examined her chest. All he needed her to do was breath, exhibit that she still fought on and was clawing to her life.

None appeared thought, he wailed as his suspicions were confirmed, her chest did not rise and fall, nor did her eyes flutter or cheeks fill with colour.

Quickly slipping into rescue mode, he began to perform CPR, tilting her chin upwards towards him, he scrambled and placed his hands on her chest and began compressions. It was unnatural, an abomination that this was happening. Without him and his hands, her body would shut down without the beating of her heart; her organs would starve of oxygen, hungry pieces of flesh in dire need of sustenance.

For a moment, his thoughts blackened, if he lost her, it would end him. No hope would reside and he would fall, crippled by a heart that refused to heal from the ultimate loss. Grunting, lips trembling, he drove forward with a new resolve, he would not end his efforts. Once before, he had promised to love and protect her by any means possible and he proceeded to do just that. For now, he would be her heart and force it to pump blood through her system. When he brought his lips upon her soot and blood coated lips, he would fill her lungs with air, his own precious essence. If it meant she would live, he would gladly give her his last breath. Breathing hard and deep, he gave her the kiss of life, repeatedly in conjunction with pounding on her chest in rhythmed rotations.

Rey was not responding.

That did not stop him, with a fire in his belly and heart, nearing hysteria; he tasted copper and felt her ribs below his palms. Some of his fingers had cracked with his determination but he felt nothing, not while she refused to come back to him. The distance between them was more than the ocean he had once cursed; she was slipping away and leaving him, she was smoke he could not grasp to no matter how he tried. Despite her flesh below him, he could sense that she was far from
this place and it tore him up and threatened to take him too and envelop him in darkness.

Swallowing hard, he found his forearms beginning to quake as he strained to keep upright and maintain his gruelling routine. Callie looked on, nudging Rey’s legs as if to wake her. She kept nuzzling them despite the lack of response.

“Rey, don’t leave me! I just found you; you promised you would stay with me, please! Please come back, I need you,” he was begging her; he screamed the words aloud like a primal scream in hope she would hear.

One hand trailed to her stomach and for the first time, he noticed a slight roundness there and he knew that she was carrying life inside of her, a child that was hers and his. His tears soaked her face as he thought of how the future had been bright that morning, he thought of their wedding and pregnancies to come and again, he dipped his head low and to hers. After finishing a round of compressions, he sucked in a deep breath, gathered it for her, and brought his lips against hers.

It was not needed.

Crying out, he felt the slightest of breaths touch his lips and he gasped, eyes blurred with tears as he finally saw her heave in her own breaths.

Still distraught about her condition, he placed his mask over her face to provide her a steady flow of fresh air and called for help, requesting immediate assistance. He handled her carefully as if one wrong movement would snatch her away from him again; he kept her head off the ground and clung to the dirtied strands.

The only thing that kept him sane was his hand wrapped around her wrist and feeling the steady, if not speedy pulse that sang true.

“Rey.”

Chapter End Notes

1 main chapter and 3 epilogues left.
Rey-New York, United States of America

Beeping filled her consciousness, lulling her outwards from the blackness that had consumed her. Slowly but surely, she clawed her way back against the current that had swallowed her being without thought. Every gain was painful, as she came to, she felt the incessant ache in her nostrils and throat, the kind that told of burning that left her raw and defiled by hot black smoke.

Still, she persevered and fought, she resisted the almost irresistible need to curl up and fall again, to succumb instead of toil against what plagued her. It hurt to drag herself away from the numbing sensation of free falling in the dark, the more aware she became, the more her senses returned to her and with it, came the agonies of living and surviving through trauma.

It seeped and trickled at first but eventually it flooded her mind and body, she wanted to cry out but she lacked the ability to do so, still trapped and weighted in unconsciousness. Despite the hardship of doing so, she continued to push herself and embrace the pain. Pain meant that she was alive and that was the greatest thing of all because she wished for more tomorrows. She was greedy in her want to live for thousands of more nights and to see the sunrise in the mornings with its promise of light and renewal.

Unpleasant memories rushed forward. Callie had woken her from sleep with a wicked but necessary slash of her claws and she had gone to reprimand the cat until she realised what was happening. Smoke, so dense she could scarcely see and flames of bright orange, nearly white and tinged blue. In her haste to scramble to her feet, she had tripped and fell forward; one of the metal chairs, heated by its proximity to the belly of the fire had branded her upper arm. It burned, leaving sizzling flesh as Rey howled, dizzied and disorientated as she grasped the blistering flesh and found her footing.

She spun; her accelerated breathing had meant she was inhaling deep lungfuls of smoke that further incapacitated her. Still, she knew she had to escape and she teetered towards the door. As she rounded the corner, she stumbled, she righted herself too late and she grappled for aid and in doing so, toppled the heavy bookcase.

As she fell backwards and the weight of it came down on her body and head, she lost her will and succumbed, the blow to her head had quickly claimed any chance she had. The blow had knocked her and shook her senses; she felt little but could not complete her dash to safety, as she was pinned, trapped and losing consciousness fast.

Someone must have rescued her, she was sure in those final moments sprawled out on the floor that her time was up and that her life had come to an end before she had even lived. It was a bitter acceptance but in her last moments of clarity, she thought of Ben as she closed her eyes and how one day, she hoped to find him in another lifetime or wake from the nightmare she found herself the star of. She wanted to fight but every breath brought more weakness and so she was lost.

She had been lost and she had been found.

Though she was found, there were repercussions that riddled deep as everywhere hurt, her body was no longer her own, it infected every inch of skin and muscle but a coolness on the back of her
hand seemed to alleviate the worst of it.

From the tips of her toes to the top of her head, she felt it all. A crushing kind of misery took hold of her chest, it was as if someone had crushed her ribs, snatching the air from her lungs and left her battered and bruised. A headache bloomed which only worsened, as she was hypersensitive to the noise around her. The beeping chipped away at her skull, even more so when she attempted to pry her eyes open. It was unusual, her lids felt impossibly heavy as if they wanted to refuse her sight. The sound of light breathing of someone sleeping willed her on, she would know that sound anywhere, it was Ben.

Bright white filled her vision, a contrast to the black that swallowed her. Allowing herself to acclimatise to her surroundings slightly dazed and confused, she blinked and swallowed, evoking a stinging sensation in the back of her throat. It was a tough kind of agony, it licked ravaged flesh and left her exposed.

Squinting, she sucked in precious lungfuls of air, ignoring the discomfort that coincided with such an automatic response but through narrowed eyes, she found him.

Ben sat by her side, slouched over onto the bed but his hand clung to hers, the one that he had slid a ring onto only weeks before. Even in sleep, he refused to let her go and she choked back a sob, the heart monitor at her side sounded wildly as her heart rate increased.

Wanting to see him fully, she squeezed his hand, gentle at first as she waited for him to stir but he did not wake up. The urge to soothe and have his eyes upon her, the ones that could calm her with ease and without the use of his voice was overwhelming. A part of her needed the reassurance that all of this was real and that she had escaped death, not entirely unscathed but alive none the less.

“Ben,” she croaked, little more than a worn, hoarse whisper. Her fingertips moved against his own, she shook him with urgency despite her weakened state.

The man in question shot up from his folded position, clearly shaken. Such hastened movement caused him to back into the wall as his eyes fleeted over her, the disbelief was written across his features. She worried her lip between his teeth, suddenly feeling bare and exposed but he was quick to quell that. Rushing forward, he closed the distance between them and cupped her face, mindful to leave only feather light touches upon her skin. The heat that radiated from his fingertips felt exquisite, he splayed his fingers and cemented his delicate hold on her as his thumb traced the sweeping curve of her jaw.

The new closeness of him scent was heady, the sandalwood and sage was intoxicating but there was something else buried there, the unmistakable aroma of smoke.

“You came back to me, I thought…I thought I had lost you,” he cried out, it was a foreign sound, so rarely had she seen him consumed by grief and so wholly distressed.

The devastation was evident in every movement, his movements were forged and coaxed by pain and his desperate need to hold her came from his fear of nearly losing her. She loathed that her own mistake had affected him this way, his fingers shook, trembling as they brushed against her skin and his lips quivered as he worked to contain what ailed him.

Breathing hard, he rested his forehead against her own, his raven tendrils shielded her from the harsh light and his rapid, short breaths peppered her lips. He clamped his eyes shut and moved his fingers into her hair, clutching the strands as his anguish overcame him and he sobbed, quaking before her.
Despite the pain in her temple, she melted into his touch and felt his tears rush down her own cheeks. She welcomed them, eager to share the burden of his hurt and to be his strength, her own own pain was forgotten and laid to rest.

“Ben, I’m so sorry, I shouldn’t have lit the candle and fall asleep. You will never lose me, I’m not going anywhere,” she promised, her regret stung deep but her determination to stay with him outweighed it.

Above her, his ragged breathing levelled out as he opened his eyes, which she could now see clearly. They were bloodshot, vividly so and rimmed with rich shades of violet and indigo as he inspected her. She wondered how long it had been since he had last slept. His lashes were wet with tears but he blinked them away, some fell upon his lips, coming to a rest in the seam.

Leaning forward, she raised her hand, mindful of the cannula inserted there and swept her thumbs across the deep, dark circles. He shuddered under her touch but she neared closer and brought her lips against his own, tasting his tears in an effort to soothe him. It was like coming home, it was slow and gentle, he groaned as her neediness took hold and kissed him, remembering how close she had come to never tasting him again.

Breathless, she pulled away when the soreness in her chest became somewhat unbearable, she winced and trailed her fingers along the grooves of her ribs and looked on in question.

“You weren’t breathing when I found you-”

“-You found me?” She gasped, interrupting him.

Gazing into her eyes, he nodded slowly and entwined their fingers, an anchorage of two souls meant to meet.

It startled her; never had she imagined it would be him to save her. It brought a new kind of misery when she reflected, had his heart broke when he saw her trapped and unmoving. Was he hanging onto his sanity by a thread until she woke?

A part of her was glad that he had fallen into the role of her saviour. It was Ben, it was always him. That day, he had battled death in her place and tugged her from the icy and engulfing grasp of the reaper when she could not, left incapacitated and vulnerable but he had acted as her strength.

“Sunshine, I was always meant to find you.”

The double meaning of his words were not missed and lost on her but there was little more to say.

“Thank you,” she murmured and carefully shifted in the bed, draping the blanket over her as an opening for Ben.

Careful and with all the energy left in her, she mustered all of her strength and wrapped her arms around his neck, crossing them at the wrists as he moved on to the bed. With some adjustment, he managed to fit, albeit a tight squeeze. Once hid he was situated, she curled herself around him, tucking her face into the crook of his neck. Inhaling, she found a sweet kind of serenity and basked in it, nuzzling against the mark she had given him. All the while, he stroked her hair and threaded his nimble fingers through it, humming a pretty tune.

The rustle of the bandages and dressings on her upper arm were pushed from her mind, she knew of the scar, the wicked burn that lay beneath them, something she would carry to her dying day. It was hard to accept at first, it would serve as a bold and present reminder of her thoughtlessness and mistake but it was her price to pay, she survived and that was all that mattered.
For a while, they remained that way, enveloped in the combined heat of their bodies. It was a simple kind of love and affection, in his arms, she was safe, they were the same ones that had carried her from stalking flames and a plague of smoke. Cradled to him, her worries and and aches melted away into nothing and apparently, so did his. No longer did he shake or breathe as if he could scarcely catch a breath, he was lighter and holding her like he would never let her go again.

It was only when a doctor entered the room, a tall, tan woman with lilac hair intricately styled into a braid and out of her face, did they part. Sheepishly, Ben slid from the bed and reclaimed his place on the plush chair by her bed.

“Rey, this is my aunt, Amilyn, my mother’s closest friend,” Ben gestured to the woman in question.

Suddenly feeling conscious of her predicament and the idea of meeting another member of his family in her current state, Rey sat up and smoothed her hair.

“Hello, Rey. I wish I could say I was meeting you under better circumstances and welcoming you into the family in a different way. It is good to see you awake, you have been unconscious for just under two days but that is common with head wounds, you have a concussion.”

Rey nodded, not entirely surprised. The bookcase had done a number on her; in fact, it was a relief that the damage was not worse.

“There is something else we need to discuss, it is a matter of great importance and the sooner we address it, the better.”

Ben gripped her hand and she cast a fleeting look in his direction before her eyes wandered once more to the woman in front of her.

“What do we need to talk about?” Rey asked curiously, frowning, she pondered whether or not there were more serious injuries reeking havoc with her body.

Amilyn moved forward, collecting the chart from the bottom of her bed and appraised the chart for a brief moment, flipping the pages. After she did so, she looked between them, her eyes landed on Ben for a long moment and he shook his head in response. Confused, Rey waited for an answer, suddenly nervous of what awaited her.

Amilyn perched herself at the bottom of the bed, crossing her legs.

“When you arrived, the usual tests were taken. Ben…Ben voiced his suspicions that you might be pregnant. The results were positive and confirmed it but it is vital we perform an ultrasound to determine the health of the foetus as soon as possible. You were resuscitated and suffered with smoke inhalation so the sooner we can see if it had an affect on the pregnancy, the better and then we can progress with treatment.”

The blood rushed to her ears and a ringing sounded. Rey froze, gaping at the doctor and then at Ben who had paled considerably. Certain she had misheard; she blinked and gazed down at her stomach, hidden well under the drab and shapeless hospital gown. The more she thought about it and reflected on the last few weeks of her life, the more it made sense to her. In fact, she wanted to belittle herself for not seeing it sooner or entertaining the possibility.

The overwhelming tiredness, increased appetite and the onset nausea were not some side effect of increasing and withdrawing from her suppressants.

It was undeniable, she was pregnant.
Unable to stop herself, she planted her palms flat on her stomach, feeling the warmth of her skin through the thin layer of cotton. The pregnancy was early on, she knew that but she yearned to feel movement so she knew that the child was safe and developing properly.

Ben’s hand covered her own and then trailed lower between her hips. A hesitant, hopeful kind of smile graced his features as the couple allowed themselves the time to adjust to the news.

The guilt was there, it haunted her with its dark barbs in her psyche. What if she lost the child due to a foolish error? It was difficult to accept that she had endangered a life, a part of her and Ben in such a way. She was not sure she could forgive herself but she buried such thoughts deep, unwilling to stress herself and potentially cause more harm.

“How soon can we do the ultrasound?” She asked, unwilling to let her joy overrule rationality. Most pregnancies without trauma were often precarious until the twelve-week mark and she knew she was no more than eight. The life inside of her was no more than a flickering flame, battling on to life despite all that challenged it.

“We can wheel one of the mobile machines in now.” Amilyn assured her.

Rey nodded, still dazed as Ben’s hand roamed around her belly.

“What if the fire hurt them? What if-”

“None of that, Rey. Our child will be strong because you are the strongest woman I know and if they have inherited even half of your strength, they will flourish.”

It was hard to hope but she nodded, still trying to process it all. She had always wanted a child, someone that she could love, cherish and see a part of herself blend with her lover.

Peeking through her lashes, she observed Ben who seemed mesmerised by her stomach, it was still somewhat flat but a tiny curve existed, a barely noticeable roundness and she clung to that image. This was real and something she could grasp.

They were quiet as Amilyn entered the room, followed closely behind by a nurse who rolled the mobile machine inwards. Her heart raced, it was the moment of truth but Ben whispered quiet assurances as the preparation began. He was the one to lift her hospital gown and bare her stomach to the cool air.

The nurse was friendly, as if sensing Rey’s apprehension and nervousness; she explained the procedure in detail while Amilyn handled the physical side of things. A liberal dose of cool gel was applied to her abdomen and then a transducer rolled along it, it could move freely.

Ben leaned into her side as the two waited with bated breaths, the monitor was facing away from them and she gripped his hand so hard he winced.

“Sorry,” she whispered but he shook his head at her and told her to squeeze as hard as she needed. She loosened her hold but refused to cease contact as she gnawed at the insides of her cheek.

There was silence as Amilyn changed positions and gazed at the screen, she hummed to herself and quirked a brow in their direction for a brief moment before inspect the monitor once more.

It was terrible; Rey struggled to discern any of her reactions and so naturally, she worried, wrung with fear as she imagined the worst.

Amilyn called the nurse over and pointed at the screen before smiling wide and turning the
monitor. With a click of a button, the sound of heartbeats filled the room.

“Ben, it seems as if your family history of twins strikes again.”

On the screen, clear as day, two tiny blots took shape, each with a heart that thumped on, steady and strong.

Ben bent low and kissed Rey, crushing his lips to hers as they both rejoiced.

“Congratulations, it is still very early on but the signs are positive.”

As they cleared up, Rey made room for Ben in the bed as he caressed her stomach and held her close.

“Twins,” he whispered.

“You’re going to be a wonderful father, Ben, the best.” Rey murmured, running her hands through his hair. Tears pricked at his eyes but his smile was glorious, bright and wide, he was undoubtedly a man in love with lives he had yet to meet.

“I love you, thank you for coming to me,” Ben whispered.

“It was where I was supposed to be, I love you.”

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**Four months later**

They were set to marry during the height of spring.

The air was awash with floral fragrances and a sun that shone bright, fresh from the grey of winter and ready to bring life back to the land. It was a small affair, intimate with only family and a few close friends invited but all preferred it that way.

Leia had offered her family estate as the venue citing it was a family tradition but it also allowed room for all to congregate with plenty of space and comfort. Rey promptly agreed, as soon as she saw the Skywalker state, she felt enamoured by the openness and sprawling greens filled with decorative plots of flowers and troves of oaks.

Chewie had volunteered to make both the cake and the wedding arch; he had travelled to the coast for New Year and returned with plenty of driftwood that he wished to put to good use. Rey had wept when he told her over tea one day, her belly full of his cinnamon buns that she had been craving ever since the nausea and morning sickness had left her. The twins no doubt inherited Ben’s sweet tooth and favoured his favourite treat. Chewie and Rey had grown close and Ben joked that she was now his favourite. The giant man was quiet but more often than not, she found herself in his bakery and learning the trade from him. It came as no surprise that he offered her a job. Without hesitation, she accepted and found solace in that she no longer sat idle.

Of course, the pregnancy prevented her from standing for long periods, Rey had always been petite but her stomach grew with every passing day, which was hardly unusual. Two children grew within her and if they were anything like their father, they would be tall and strong. She certainly felt their strength as they kicked and moved, often when Ben spoke to them, lips pressed against her abdomen, they allowed their father to know they heard him and pressed their tiny hands and feet against his cheek. He did so every morning and night, whispering that he could not wait to meet them and that he loved them. Luke had only furthered the bonding by providing Rey with a lotion used to minimise stretch marks, they could not be avoided with her rate of growth but she wore
them proudly, the red, jagged lines became a fascination of Ben’s. He was proud of his soon to be
wife and that she was growing life within her, her body bore the signs of it and he expressed his
love for them. With care and special attention, he would rub the lotion into her skin, leaving his
hands smelling of argan oil and aloe vera.

“You’re beautiful,” he would tell her.

The day of the wedding was surprisingly warm. Ben and Rey had parted the night before which
was obviously quite difficult. Neither enjoyed the prospect of sleeping alone but Jyn had
volunteered to keep Rey company.

She woke with the sunlight streaming across her face and it followed her even as she sat and let
Leia apply her make up and braid her hair. Jyn was not as proficient as the other woman was so she
sat back, nursing champagne and offered assurances. The two alpha mothers had bonded
wonderfully, it was coming along swimmingly as both offered advice throughout the pregnancy.
Despite being an ocean apart, they had both reacted to the news of not one, but two grandchildren
in the same manner, squealing incoherently and then sitting down with a stiff drink.

Rey was nervous though she had no reason to be. It was Ben waiting for her; he was all she could
think of as she slipped into her dress, a simple long sleeved lace piece whose train trailed behind
her. It accommodated her stomach and clung to her new curves. The high off shoulder neckline
ensured it was a modest and tasteful choice and the long sleeves covered her arms. The patterns,
delicate sunflowers embroidered in the lace, offered glimpses of the golden skin underneath.

The burn on her upper arm was not something she felt shame about, the opposite in fact, but for a
day, she wished for no one to see it.

“Something old,” Leia offered, securing the diadem into her hair. It belonged to Padme, Ben’s
grandmother, a royal from Europe.

“Something new,” Jyn quirked her brow and dangled the garters in front of Rey.

Blushing, she pulled them on, knowing Ben would take one of them off later.

“Something borrowed,” Leia clasped a small bracelet around her wrist, one the older woman wore
daily and Rey marvelled over the delicate piece, engraved with Ben’s name and date of birth.

“Something blue,” Jyn stood and placed an ornate bridal hair comb in the back of her hair, it kept
the braids in check.

It was familiar, a family heirloom of the prestigious Ersos.

Rey had never felt so beautiful and loved.

“Time to go see Ben.”

Rey stood in the patio area, clinging to Cassian. Her father had cleaned up well, clean shaved and
with hair neatly combed, he was surprisingly bright and Rey had not missed how her mother had
pinched his behind on her way past.

“You’re shaking, Luna. It’s Ben out there, be calm, you have nothing to fear,” he whispered,
smoothing his thumb over her knuckles.

The music, a small orchestra sounded and it was their cue, they began to walk, her fingers dug into
his suit jacket but he led her well, keeping to her pace as he squeezed her in an effort to offer reassurance.

In one hand, she carried a single sunflower.

Once they reached the top of the makeshift aisle, Chewie’s arch stood tall but all else blurred and all she saw was Ben with Gwen acting as his best woman.

His hair was shorter, trimmed and his mouth gaped a fraction before he smiled wide, eyes shiny and wet with tears. It urged her to rush to him, the children inside of her moved in earnest as she closed the distance and Cassian placed her hand in Ben’s. She had never seen him in a suit, she was used to plaid and sweatpants but he was dashing and so handsome. She was breathless.

“Take care of my daughter.”

“Always,” Ben said, not missing a beat.

Ben took the sunflower from her hand, tucked it behind her ear before he stood back, and looked on as Luke began the ceremony. He had been ordained for decades so it was only natural that he married them.

After introducing them and speaking of their joining, he motioned to Ben.

“The groom has written something for his bride.”

Rey blinked, surprised by it all, it was something unexpected but she smiled, attempting to hold back the tears as Ben stood tall and gazed into her eyes.

“Rey, from the first moment I saw you, a piece of me loved you. You are my sun on a winter’s day and the rain in spring that brings me life. In times of trouble, I will not falter, I will not leave your side. Together we are two halves of a soul, my love and yours combined. I want to wake with you every morning and sleep with you every night. I want all your time and days left here, my heart, my love, whenever you need me, I will be near. The future is bright, my sunshine, the possibilities unexplored, I will do so with you as the wait for you kept my blazing heart true. Together, forevemore, I give myself to you, nothing can change that or undo. I love you, Rey.”

There was not a dry eye in the house, Rey included, she swarmed forward and clung to Ben. Luke dabbed his eyes and allowed them time to find themselves.

What followed were traditional vows, which they both repeated.

“Rey, do you take Ben to be your lawfully wedded husband, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death do you part?”

“I do,” she said firmly, resolute as she gazed into the cedar eyes that had enraptured her.

“Ben, do you take Rey to be your lawfully wedded wife, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, until death do you part?”

“I do,” his low timber left no room for argument.

Gwen offered the rings to him and he slid a simple, gold band onto her ring finger. She was his, in every way. A beautiful sense of completion overcame her. Her fingers trembled no more; she slid a
matching ring on his finger and then held his hands.

“Rey and Ben have consented together in holy matrimony and have pledged their love and loyalty
to each other and have declared the same by the joining and the giving of rings. By the power
vested in me and as witnessed by friends and family, I now pronounce you husband and wife. You
may kiss the bride,” Luke announced happily.

They wasted no time; Rey tugged on his tie and pulled him to her level as his hands found her hips.

They kissed as man and wife, bright and hopeful for the times ahead. Applause and cheers came
from their family and friends but they only saw the other.

“I love you, Ben Solo.”

“And I love you, Rey Solo.”

Chapter End Notes

So...this was the final main chapter...the end.

I originally had 3 epilogues planned but I decided to combine some things and so there
will now be 2 epilogues to come.

Thank you for reading...now...how about some Reylo babies? ;}
10 years later

Ben-New York, United States of America

Yawning, Ben reclined in his chair and turned off his computer. He arched his back, raising his hands in the air and felt his muscles constrict before they relaxed, leaving only a dull ache gnawing his back. Time had slipped away from him again. After an evening crouched over his keyboard and writing, it was no wonder he was sore. It was well past midnight, a time all too familiar in the last year and it had weighed heavy, their unexpected surprise had thrown their cushy sleeping schedules out of the window.

Standing, he surmised he should have ceased his nightly activity hours before. The house was silent save for the steady ticking of the grandfather clock in the corner and his office was bathed in amber light from the nearby lamp. Outside, it snowed, casting flickering shadows on the wall as one of the first snowfalls of the winter season rained down.

Scratching the back of his head, Ben traipsed over to the window and observed the shift in weather before closing the curtains and turning off the light, leaving the room in darkness. Despite the late hour, he set about fulfilling his nightly ritual; it had been a habit since the eldest twins were born. Each night, before he slept, he would check on each of his children, the act first came out of a place of worry but it was more of a habit he had no desire to shake.

It had begun when Jacen, his eldest son had developed bronchitis as a toddler. One time, Ben, unable to settle his unrest or nagging sense of worry, had stalked towards the room and found his two year old son experiencing his first asthma attack, blue lipped and limp. Luckily, his actions, skills learned from his firefighting days had resulted in Jacen being attended to until the paramedics arrived and his asthma diagnosed and therefore managed appropriately.

Since then, Ben would always make sure to hover before bed. Creeping along the hallway, doing his best not to make the floorboards squeak, he approached a door painted royal blue.

Jacen and Jaina, the eldest twins were born in the middle of one spring night.

*Rey was restless, continuously tossing and turning.*

“Are you alright, sunshine?” Ben asked, smoothing his hands across her stomach.

*Right away, one of the twins kicked his palm and rolled against his touch. They were obviously keeping Rey awake and it pained him to know that his wife suffered, his alpha instincts were on high alert. The pregnancy had been tough in the final months, unlike most omegas, Rey was petite.*
and while he had noticed the changes in her figure, she was still tiny and carrying two lives inside of her. It seemed like an impossible task.

Huffing, Rey ground against him, she was bare like him, insisting it was much too warm for clothes. The heat radiated off her in waves and that was one thing he had relished in. Her sexual appetite was difficult to keep up with; she would pounce on him during the most unexpected times. The most surprising was when he had bought her a jar of pickles on his way home from work one day and as soon as she saw them, a salty treat she craved on the daily, she bent over the kitchen table and lifted her skirt, begging him to take her. Ben tried to ignore how that despite the rough fuck he had given her, she seemed more transfixed over the pickles and ate four before he finished. He told himself her moans were because of him but he knew they were coaxed by the snack. What a thing to compete against.

“My back is so sore, Ben,” she groaned, she was drenched in sweat, her hair damp and cheeks flushed red.

“Do you want me to get you a hot water bottle?” He asked softly, kneading his fingers into the small of her back, just how she liked it.

She was thirty-two weeks pregnant and increasingly frustrated at her lack of comfort.

“Yes, that would be-”

A gush of warm fluid soaked him, Rey doubled over, mumbling louder than before. They knew what this was, months of prenatal classes and the endless stream of literature had all spoke of it.

Her waters had broken.

Ben launched himself out and up to his feet, rounding the bed in a hurried half panic, recalling he needed to remain calm as to not stress her. It was early but it was almost expected with twins. Grabbing a nearby towel, he dried himself off as he kneeled before her.

She was shaking, paler than he had ever seen so he gathered her up in one of the untouched blankets and tuck her in.

“You can do this, sunshine; I will be with you every single step on the way.”

Panic overcame her and she trembled, almost hysterical, eyes wide and tears streaking down her cheek.

“It is too early, Ben! There is something wrong.”

“Twins tend to come early, remember? We read that.”

Rey quieted, nodding slowly.

Ben rushed to throw on some clothes, not bothering to check what they were. Weeks before, they had packed her hospital bag, so it was only a matter of retrieving it from the closet. All the while, with his freehand, he called his mother, asking her to meet them at the hospital and to call ahead for them.

Carefully, he dressed Rey in a loose nightgown and layered her up with blankets and towels before carrying her to the car.

She writhed in the back seat as the contractions took hold of her. She wailed, sounding horribly
wounded and Ben struggled to maintain composure. The roads were mostly clear but the time stretched and every cry was agony, as he could not comfort her.

They made it to the hospital; Han, Leia and Chewie were already there, pacing at the front doors on their arrival. Chewie immediately offered to park their car, hands at the ready to catch the keys before a nurse with a wheelchair met them.

Rey broke two of Ben’s fingers, trumping Gwen by one but eleven hours later, she delivered the twins naturally, an unexpected but welcomed achievement.

First came Jacen, quiet but wriggly, red faced and a with brilliant head of hair, chestnut brown like Rey’s. Ben had dropped to his knees and smothered Rey in kisses, thanking her as he held his child. Jaina followed nine minutes later, screaming bloody murder. A daughter, another woman to love. They were so tiny and a physical representation of the love shared between them. Both children were placed onto Rey’s chest and soon Jaina relaxed and gazed straight at Ben, her little fingers grasped around his finger.

“They have your ears,” Rey laughed, shaking her head.

“Our poor children.”

He fell in love all over again.

The twins, despite turning ten that year, still insisted upon sharing a room. They were alike in many ways, their favourite colour was blue like their mother so Rey had painted the walls ocean blue and Ben had written their names in bold calligraphy amongst the waves. Mindful not to wake them, he stepped into the room, avoiding the squeaky floorboard by the door. Glow in the dark stars decorated the ceiling and walls, bathing the room in a hazy, green glow.

Jaina slept on the top bunk, she was the braver of the twins, the outgoing one who always wanted to lead Jacen in her direction. They resembled their mother in all ways but one, they took to the sun and their hair was light but their eyes were unmistakably his. Dark cedar brown would beam up at him over breakfast or when he picked them up from school.

Crouching, Ben pushed back Jacen’s curls from his face and brushed his thumb over the freckles on his nose. Jacen had dreams of becoming a firefighter, he had pulled five teeth out that year alone, hoping to give the tooth fairy a run for her money and he was convinced that one day, dinosaurs would rule the world again.

Chuckling, Ben pulled up the checkered blanket and wrapped it around his son before pressing a kiss to his forehead. He ruffled his curls once more before standing and finding Jaina gazing at him.

“I’m sorry; did I wake you, sweetheart?”

She shook her head, no.

“I had a nightmare, daddy,” Jaina whimpered, staring up at him with wide eyes, wet with tears. Clutching her teddy bear, she sniffed.

It tugged at his heart, to see how her lips formed into a pout. Leaning forward, he kissed her outstretched hands, planting a kiss on every finger. Not wanting to neglect her nighttime companion, he made sure to kiss the teddy too.

“You know, daddy will not let anything happen to you. Nightmares are just bad dreams; nothing
can hurt you while I am here.”

“Do you promise?” She asked, smiling then as if she had been freed of any fear or remnants of the nightmare.

“Pinkie promise.”

They locked pinkies and Jaina yawned before wrapping her hands around his neck. She was his daughter, he was naturally protective of her and so he rocked her until tiny snores and little breaths fanned against him.

Untangling himself, he set her down and kissed her cheek.

As quietly as possible, he left the room and walked towards another door.

Jacen and Jaina had turned one. The whole family attended but as Ben scanned the room, Rey was nowhere to be found.

Frowning, he set off in search of her. Leia and Jyn both held one of the twins each, bouncing them on their knees as the children screeched and cooed.

Entering the bedroom, Ben heard retching. He followed the sound and found Rey wrapped around the toilet and throwing up.

Rey was never ill so it confused him, she was fit and healthy, bouncing back after the twins surprisingly fast. The sleepless nights were more impactful on Ben. He struggled to stay awake but Rey, she exuded energy.

“You had to go and do it-”

Her rant was interrupted by another spell of heaving. Worried, Ben rubbed her back and pulled her hair back from her face and glanced down, seeing something in her hands.

“Is that what-”

“Yes. I am pregnant.”

Ben gulped. While they planned to add more additions to the family, they agreed it was best to wait a while until the twins were older. But life found a way.

They arranged to see the doctor the following week, Amilyn managed to see them and they waited patiently as she scanned Rey’s stomach, no longer as taut as it was once. Still, Ben was enamoured, he loved feeling the marks that showed she had carried his children and he would kiss them every night.

Amilyn gaped at the monitor and chuckled lowly, raising a brow in Ben’s direction.

“It looks like we have double trouble again.”

The screen revealed two hearts, another two children.

Rey had cried, sobbing all the way home. They would have four children under the age of two. While Ben was elated, she had worried, beyond stressed and stayed in bed for a week.

It took some coaxing but after week of gentle prodding, she finally accustomed herself to the idea.
“You and your stupid, alpha sperm,” she grumbled, feeding Jaina.

“You love it,” Ben quipped to which he promptly regretted.

Her fierce gaze was enough to make him shudder and so he picked up his car keys and retreated towards the door.

“I will go get the pickles.”

The second pregnancy was stressful, juggling young children was tiring and so Ben decided to retire from the firehouse. The fire with Rey had admittedly hung over his mind but more than anything, he wanted to be an involved father and help raise his children. Rey still worked at the bakery but it was only part time.

Everyone supported his decision to retire. In his free time, he would continue writing but he knew they were set financially, both coming from wealthy families on at least one side with trust funds and savings from both their jobs. Rey had sold her garage in London too.

Ben frequented the firehouse despite no longer being employed there. It was lunchtime, Rey was still at the bakery but Han and Chewie were in the lunchroom, each held a twin.

Jaina was especially fond of her uncle Chewie who would hold her on his shoulders and introduce her the sky, well, Ben imagined that is what it felt like.

Jacen preferred to sit in Han’s lap as he wheeled himself around the station; the child giggled loud and was spoiled by all.

They were sat at the table, Chewie was brushing Jaina’s hair and Han was teasing Jacen with a teddy bear as Rey stepped in. She was heavily pregnant, nearing her due date but Ben noted the shift in her scent and then gazed downwards. Her leggings were wet.

“My water broke,” she said calmly and Han choked, coughing loudly as Jacen squealed, clapping his hands together though he did not know what was going on.

This time, the ride to the hospital was a quiet affair. Rey was in the back of the car, rolling her head back and forth, as she smoothed her hands over her stomach. The contrast was unfathomable to Ben but with one labour behind her, he assumed she felt more relaxed and capable of handling any pain, knowing what was to come.

It was a quick labour. Four hours later and their twin girls entered the world.

Breha and Becca were born six minutes apart. More girls, his heart was ready to burst with the love he felt for them all. Breha favoured Rey and Ben’s ears were nowhere to be found. Becca though, she came into the world screaming and with a shock of black hair, as dark as his own.

Rey, dazed and exhausted gazed up as Ben held the newborn, clutching her to his chest.

“Finally, I got my raven haired kid.”

She yawned and guided Breha to her breast.

“No more twins,” Rey whispered.

Ben sat, grasping her hand.

“We’ll see.”
Breha and Becca’s room was pink and overflowing with butterfly stickers and lava lamps. Stuffed toys, mostly rabbits and ducks were strewn about. They shared a room but did not like to share much else. The girls fought more often than not, a startling contrast to Jacen and Jaina who were outgoing but quietly confident, ever supportive of their twin.

Ben sat at the end of the Breha’s bed. She slept on her stomach, her sheets were rumpled and one leg was hanging over the side. She was loud, awake and asleep, her snores filled the room. Just the day before, Becca and Breha fought over which film to watch. Kung Fu Panda was Becca’s choice but Breha hated it. Therefore, Becca had pushed her sister over and she experienced her first nosebleed.

Ben had been terrified, seeing the amount of blood spurt from his little girl; he had stopped the bleeding soon enough and attempted to tell Becca off. She pouted, gazing up at him with her lip quivering as she apologised.

Still, he banned Kung Fu Panda for a month. Becca grumbled and claimed it was fair whereas Rey, had wanted to throw the movie away, claiming it caused too many arguments.

“You’re too soft with them,” she scolded playfully.

He knew it to be true.

Yawning, he cupped his mouth and bent down, kissing the back of Breha’s head. He crossed the room and found Becca curled up on her side. Her dark hair was like his own; it messed easily and lay strewn about her face. Even in her sleep, she was stubborn, her chin was raised defiantly and her arms were crossed against her chest. It was endearing, he lifted her blanket and tucked her back in before kissing her forehead and standing. Something caught his eye. Curious, he retrieved the item from under her pillow and held back a laugh. It was Kung Fu Panda. The little troublemaker had found its hiding place and secretly, he was impressed. He slid it back in place and pretended he had never seen it, ruffling her hair.

“You best keep that hidden from your mother,” he murmured before turning towards the door.

Perhaps he was too soft on the girls.

He closed the door behind him and set off towards the final bedroom.

The eldest twins had turned nine years old and the younger ones were eight. Life was great, albeit tiring. Ben had recently published a novel, a romance one and again, it topped the New York Times Best Sellers list.

After celebrating with Gwen, a rare night away from the family, he snuck home, slightly intoxicated and found Rey on the bed, arms wrapped around her middle. A pregnancy test lay at her feet.

Ben blinked.

After the two births, they had agreed four children were enough. Rey had went on birth control and for years, it worked.

Stumbling slightly, Ben traipsed to the bed and wrapped his arms around her, unsure of what else to do. The prospect of another child was exciting.

“Are you mad?”
Ben chuckled, shaking his head.

“Of course, not.”

“There will be such an age difference between this one and the rest,” she whispered, burrowing deeper into his chest.

“They will be loved.”

Ben Junior was loved. From the moment he arrived in the world, he had four older siblings who doted on him and rallied around to help in anyway, they could.

He was the spitting image of Ben and it was almost surreal to see. From his ears, full lips and dark hair, it was as if his second and youngest son was his twin.

“Why does he get daddy’s name?” Becca huffed one night as she chewed on her pizza slice.

Rey looked between them.

“He looks like a Ben, does he not?”

Ben stirred in her arms and Becca nodded.

“I suppose he does.”

Ben Jr was nearing a year old and he was sleeping longer. The nursery was quiet; the tinkle of a sweet lullaby was lulling. Callie, who guarded the infant’s door, stirred by the threshold and peered inwards.

He leaned over the cot and just stared, enamoured by the boy who had carved out such a huge piece in his heart.

“Good night, Bennie.”

With his final kiss planted, Ben ambled to the master bedroom, surprised to find Rey awake. In the dark of the room, she was only illuminated by the glow of the moon and every night, he awed at the beauty that awaited him in bed. Despite the decade that had passed since he had married her, she had hardly aged, she was just as bright and glowing from when he first met her.

Rolling over, she smiled at him, patting the space beside her. Unable to deny her anything, he sat down, carding his hands in her hair. She whined with the touch, startling him as she rubbed her thighs together.

“Ben, it hurts,” she mewled, gesturing to her chest.

He knew what she wanted; he pressed his lips together, humming as he lay down.

Ben Jr was feeding less and less from her breasts, leaving them full and aching. Licking his lips, he trailed his fingers along her camisole, before tugging it downwards, revealing her chest to him. She was bigger there, more than a handful and he revelled in the sight. He looped his fingers around her nipples, both already hard peaks and wet.

“Please, I need it.”

“Does mommy need to daddy to help her out?” He breathed out, blowing against her nipples.
She jostled against him, wrapping her legs against his waist. Backache apparently forgotten, he adjusted himself and her hands found purchase in his hair.

“Is daddy hungry?” She challenged.

The first time he had tried her breast milk, it was accidental. He was a breast man, always fondling them and taking her nipples in her mouth and one day after nursing the twins, he tasted some and both could not deny themselves.

It became a regular thing when she was pregnant or nursing.

“Always,” Ben groaned, kneading her breasts, she moaned, jutting shamelessly against him, eager hands freed him from his sleep pants.

Fuck, she worked him well, stroking his length as he finally put his mouth where she wanted it the most. He lapped up any spillage before suckling, feeling a stream of her milk fill his mouth. She screamed and so he covered her lips with his hand and hollowed his cheeks as he sucked, loud and obscenely.

Her hands made quick work of her panties and she lined him up to her entrance, she was always so wet for him, so hot and he slid home and buried himself inside her, sure it was the place he was always meant to be.

Her hands tugged at his hair, urging him to take more and so he did, thrusting, he let her nipple free before taking the other one and having his fill.

Both were red faced, panting as she came, the stimulation too much and Ben followed soon after, making sure to pull out. He coated her stomach in his cum before rolling over, breathing hard and fast.

“Thank you,” she smiled, tilting her head up to face him.

The baby monitor sounded up and Ben Jr cried out. Rey blinked, yawning and stood but Ben pulled her back down to bed and wrapped the blankets arounds her.

“I’ll get him.”

Rey seemed to contemplate it for a moment before she lay back down, thoroughly spent.

“You’re too good to me, Ben Solo.”

“I love you, Rey Solo,” he smiled, tired but ready to check on his son.

Chapter End Notes

One more really short epilogue to go, I will post it on Thursday.

It's going to be difficult to say goodbye to these two <3
The Mating Service

Chapter Summary

The final chapter-18 years after the wedding.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

18 years after the wedding

Rey-New York, United States of America

The Skywalker estate was bustling with activity as family swarmed the grounds, each bearing gifts and offering wide smiles. It was a time for celebration, Jacen and Jaina were eighteen years old, something Rey could scarcely fathom.

Where had the time gone?

Standing, she observed the oaks that lined the green, standing still for the first time that morning. Beneath one, sat Ben Jr, nose in a book and notepad at the ready. To the family, he was affectionally known as Bennie. At nine years old, he was quite younger than his older siblings who were eighteen and seventeen respectively, but in some ways, he was far more mature than them. One look into his eyes, the ones he had inherited from his father, all cedar and coffee, rich and deep, told of an old soul, wise beyond his years.

While his siblings were loud and outgoing, Bennie preferred his own company above all, fiction was a fascination of his and like his father before him, he yearned to pen words, words he hoped would be remembered long after he was gone.

As if sensing her presence, Bennie excavated himself from his book and met her stare. He was beautiful, the curling of his lips promised a smile and he delivered, waving at her from across the grass. She waved back.

It was a special place to Bennie and so she did not wish to intrude, he was still grieving. Callie had passed away a couple of months before. While Callie loved Ben, her love for Bennie was otherworldly. From the moment he was born, she was by his side. As an infant, she slept outside of his door and as he aged, she slept in his bed. They were inseparable, she followed him everywhere but she was nearing twenty when she passed away in her sleep. Bennie had found her, curled up to his side and despite his young age, he had known what had happened. He wrapped her up in her favourite blanket before telling anyone, not wishing to wake them. It gave him a chance to say a final goodbye and make his peace with it.

The children spent a great deal of time at the Skywalker estate so Bennie wished to bury her there under his favourite oak so he could visit her often and spend some time with his beloved friend. A new kitten sat in his lap though, he was ready to love again and because he was a junior himself with a borrowed name from his father, he decided to call her Callie Junior which was often shortened to CJ.
Rey observed him for a while, noticing how attentive he was to the small kitten, black and lean like her namesake despite his focus on the literature in front of him. Despite the distance, she recognised the cover well, it was Ben’s third and final book of poems, dedicated solely to his five children.

“How’s my sunshine?” Ben asked, looping his hands round her middle. Somewhat startled, Rey playfully slapped his forearms as he spun her around.

“I was just watching your son, I swear, did you somehow clone yourself? I see none of me in him,” she joked, tilting her head so she could look at her husband.

At fifty two, he had aged well. Sure, there were a few more lines adjourning his face and some grey had found its way into his ebony locks but he maintained a handsomeness that Rey always found herself in awe of. He was still well built, physically strong as over the years, he had paid special attention to his health and diet. It had paid off.

“I assure you, that is not the case. I believe I can pinpoint his conception date if you want me to go into details,” Ben teased.

Rey blushed against him, remembering the night well, Ben had finished writing his romance novel so they had spent a weekend away at a remote couple’s spa but they had rarely left their room for treatment.

“That is unnecessary, I believe I can too.”

“Plus, he gets his brains from you. I saw him doing Becca’s algebra homework for her the other day. Numbers are my kryptonite so he definitely takes after you in some ways.”

“How much did she pay him?” Rey asked flippantly, knowing full well the activities her children participated in. They were menaces at times but each was kind and passionate.

“Fifteen dollars.”

“Well, that sounds about right,” she laughed, leaning back into his embrace, he was warmth incarnate.

“Do you think he is okay?” Ben questioned, his eyes flickered over to his son, a tiny version of himself.

Rey thought about it. The loss had hurt Bennie but he was a capable child, he was dealing with it in his own way. Death was a difficult concept for anyone let alone a child but he understood that she had gone peacefully, cuddled into his side. He would see her again.

“I think he’s hurting but he’ll be okay. Callie Jr is keeping him occupied alongside your book.”

Ben hummed into the crook of her neck and planted a kiss there.

“Father, it’s time to cut the cake!” Breha appeared, gesturing towards the three tier cake that she and Chewie had spent hours making. Her long hair, warm with honey streaks was thrown up haphazardly into a bun, pink frosting was caked into some of the strands.

With only a year left of a high school, she planned to join Chewie in the bakery and attend culinary school. All of the children had chosen their own paths in life, they followed their passions and the pride she felt in her children could not be said enough.
Jacen and Jaina, while alike, had opted for different careers. Jacen wanted to become a firefighter like his father and grandfather before him whereas Jaina was going to college to major in political science. Leia had been a shining influence and the girl who appeared the double of Rey wished to change the world with legislation and battles in Washington.

Becca and Breha although still in high school, had already mapped out their futures too. Breha wanted to be an engineer and work in a garage like Rey had as a teen which meant the two were especially close, their days spent under cars or fiddling about with tools. Becca detested numbers, often bribing Bennie, who only at nine years old, excelled in all subjects. No, she wished to work in the film industry in the animation or writing sector though she loved the time spent with Jyn and could mix you any drink you could think of.

Bennie was still young but he had written a novel that he had refused to let anyone read except Ben. Rey, respectful of her son’s wishes, accepted it and held Ben’s hand as he read through the handwritten pages. By the end of it, Ben was in tears, his hands shaking as he closed the cover.

“He reminds me of myself,” he had whispered.

Ben smiled at Breha, his face lighting up with the kind of smile only his children could coax.

“Jacen and Jaina can cut the cake, sweetheart.”

“Jaina ran off after she blew out the candles!”

Rey gazed up at her husband, unsure of what had caused such a reaction. Beyond them, Jacen dipped his finger into the frosting and Leia slapped his hand.

“Sneaky! Wait until I cut you a piece,” she scolded, laughing.

Becca and Breha gathered in closer, eager for a piece and pushed one another. Though they were teenagers, they still fought, forever intent on annoying the other. Even Bennie joined, clutching Callie Jr to his chest. Chewie and Han were there beside the tiered cake and more fingers dipped into the frosting, too many for Leia to catch. Huffing, she grumbled and told them to go at it and everyone crowded in, laughing. Breha screamed at the ruin of her creation but snatched herself a piece to appease her annoyance.

Rey and Ben walked back into the house and strolled towards the courtyard, Jaina’s favourite place in the estate. Soon enough, they heard the tell tale cries of their eldest daughter.

Unable to listen to her child’s obvious distress, Rey rushed forward and hugged Jaina, smoothing her palm against her back.

“What is it, honey?” She cooed.

Ben followed suit, taking his daughter’s hand. Jaina unfurled her fist, revealing a brochure for Match, The Mating Service.

At eighteen, both Jacen and Jaina were eligible to join but the service had remained an optional service.

Gazing down, Rey soothed her daughter as much as she could, feeling the wetness of her tears soak through her shirt.

“I don’t know if I want to join, what if Jared is not my mate? I love him, I don’t want anyone else, I don’t want to be told who to love,” she whispered, sitting straight.
Rey sighed, knowing the weight of indecision.

Jared Fel was Jaina’s boyfriend, the two had been dating for three years. Rey adored him, he was respectful and quite obviously in love with Jaina. He was a few months younger than her so he had yet to join the service.

“Whatever you decide, we will support you. No one will force you to join the service,” Rey stressed.

“Your mother’s right. Everything happens for a reason though, Jaina. Maybe you should wait until Jared is eighteen? Or don’t join for a while and live your life together. Sometimes you have to trust your heart,” Ben offered.

Jaina nodded, standing and kissed both Rey and Ben’s cheeks as she wiped her tears away.

“I’m going to talk to him now,” she hurried off, darting back inside.

Ben and Rey sat side by side, the crumpled up brochure between them.

“Joining the service was the best decision of my life, it brought me to you. I’m sorry for the wait, dear,” Rey murmured as she kissed Ben.

“The wait for you kept my blazing heart true,” he recited, Rey’s favourite line of all his poems.

The two shared a final kiss before Rey stood, pulling Ben with her. Together, they walked back to the party to enjoy the day, surrounded by family, completely and utterly in love.

Two souls, two hearts destined to never part.

Chapter End Notes

I just wanted to add that all their children were alphas...Jacen, Jaina, Becca, Breha...EXCEPT Bennie (Ben Jr) was an omega <3

Well...where do I begin.

I never imagined the response this story would get, it came to me one night after too many drinks but honestly, it has been such a beautiful experience.

I want to thank each and every one of you for sticking with this and loving these characters.

THANK YOU <3

So...I will be going back to writing my other fic, Wolves. But I will be starting a new fic, Snapshots but I am not too sure when...I have some chapters written but I know more than one WIP is stressful.

Snapshots will be about a mix up of photos back in 1999.

I am on Tumblr if you want to keep up with anything I write, my username is the
same-AlbaStarGazer or you can subscribe to my profile here.

Again...thank you. Saying goodbye to these two will be tough <3
Chapter Summary

A Christmas treat

Chapter Notes

Court and Patti totally inspired me to write this on twitter...the suspender kink is real.

Special thanks to Buni who made me moodboards for this and you can find them on my Tumblr!

Thank you to all my DR gals, CaP and TWD.

This chapter is a gift for Courtney. My swamp thang, you do so much for me and I wanted to treat you to some goodness...suspenders ahoy!

I love you <3

See the end of the chapter for more notes

REY-NEW YORK, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Rey huffed out a breath as she clambered up the ladder. It squeaked, not quite as sturdy as it once was. She was not getting any younger but Ben, at fifty three and ten years years older than her, had scaled it with ease. Supposing it was muscle memory from his days of firefighting, she grumbled but thoroughly enjoyed the view of his ass after he insisted on entering the attic first to test the strength of the wood.

The subtle protectiveness still manifested after all the years they had spent together, never really dwindling. An alpha through and through, his primary concern always revolved around the wellbeing of her and their children. It was a trait she had long found herself accustomed to, she took great comfort in the idea that he would care for them all in any way they needed.

The quiet notes of Wham’s ‘Last Christmas,’ followed them upwards, muted by the walls and space between the source of sound and their destination.

For the first time in a long while, they had found themselves blissfully alone, the house blessedly empty. Bennie was staying with Leia and Han at the estate, while Jacen lived in his own apartment with one of his friends, preferring to live nearer the fire-station, his training as a fully fledged firefighter nearing completion. Though it was difficult to see her babies fly the nest, with her omega instincts making the process quite difficult, she took it in her stride but still insisted he visit multiple times a week.

Jaina was nearly finished her first semester of college where she had chosen to major in political science so she could change the world and take the political scene by storm, just as her
grandmother had done years before. Her first day on campus had been a circus, as soon as reporters heard that Jaina Solo, the granddaughter of Leia Skywalker Solo, was pursuing a political career, they swamped the school.

Ben, Han, Leia and Chewie had driven over and kicked up hell, but it was all for nothing. Jaina handled them cordially but forcibly, ever the image of a tenacious alpha. It left the vultures sheepish looking and scurrying off before Jaina proceeded to attend to her first classes, just like any ordinary student would do.

Since her confirmed matching with her longtime boyfriend, Jared, they had lived together, inseparable and hopelessly devoted to one another. Their fears of ‘Match,’ and the mating service had been for nothing, their results perfectly coincided with the other. They were a perfect match, one of the lucky few who had met their mate well before they were confirmed as mates. Rey was proud of that, recalling the dream she once clung to and how her daughter lived it in her place.

Becca and Breha were both at friends’ houses, separate of course. They were also cramming for tests, both slowly but surely making their way through their final year of high school. Rey had nearly burst a blood vessel when Breha informed her oh so coyly that Becca failed algebra for the second time meaning she would need to take extra classes. Becca promptly retaliated by adding salt to one of Breha’s cake mixes, which Chewie, bless him, tried to ignore, grimacing as he chewed slowly, in an effort not to offend his protégé, young baker extraordinaire. It was not until Breha tried a piece did she realise that it was tampered with.

Though Rey loved her second twins dearly, there was always an underlying friction between them, so unlike the bond Jacen and Jaina shared. At the age of thirteen, they were parted and gifted separate rooms, which eased the tensions significantly. Still, screaming matches between them were the norm, their hot tempers reflective of their biological designation. They were good girls though, each alike in their understanding and willingness to help others. During the holidays, they volunteered their time at shelters and spent their pocket money on gifts for underprivileged families. The charitable work was something that they did together.

They burned bright, just like their father.

All of their children were alphas save for Bennie who had presented as an omega. It took everyone by surprise, no one more taken a back than Ben. The youngest of their children was almost a clone of himself in most aspects of his personality and his passion for writing but no more so than his looks and so it was natural to assume he would be an alpha.

That night, Ben had retired to his office alone, thinking over the implications of such a rare anomaly. Male omegas were almost entirely unheard of, so Cassian and Jyn made the trip across the pond to offer some reassurance though Bennie hardly seemed fussed or worried. Waving off all of their preconceived notions, he sat down with his father and explained in detail what it would entail and mean for him as he grew.

Cassian supplemented the knowledge with his own experiences to compliment the science he had come across in medical journals and textbooks which left both Rey and Ben feeling considerably lighter. Bennie was not worried, he was special and he saw it that way. Rey had heard him speaking to Callie Jr that night, telling even her what it meant to be an omega and how he was proud to take after his mother and grandfather. Callie Jr purred loudly as she fell asleep next to him, his whisperings went on for a while before he too fell asleep.

Ben offered her his hand through the hatch for the final few steps so she threaded her fingers with his, more than grateful for the assistance.
The task of decorating the house usually fell on Ben but Jacen had always been his little helper which continued even as he grew. Since he no longer lived at home, the responsibility now fell to Rey who was admittedly a bit of a grinch, who preferred to curl up with a hearty glass of red and watch her boys do all the work. Christmas time was when Ben came to life but she had never really enjoyed the season, summer was her favourite time of the year.

“Are you alright, sunshine? Perhaps you should be joining me for morning runs again,” he teased, palming her hips.

The years had been more than kind to him, combated with a strict diet and exercise regime which helped him retain the same body he had maintained since she first met him. Rey had not been as diligent in her self preservation. Working at the bakery with Chewie had awoken her sweet tooth and she preferred an extra hour of sleep when faced with the prospect of leaving bed and running, rain or shine.

Ben loved her curves, though she was not too much heavier than she once was, maybe twenty pounds or so. It suited her, she liked it but maybe it was time to at least increase her weekly exercising so she could climb those damn stairs without huffing and puffing.

Narrowing her eyes, she feigned irateness, attempting to hide her smile as he tilted his pelvis against her. Dipping her head, she rested against against his chest, nuzzling her nose into the wooly Christmas sweater he insisted on donning.

“But maybe not, I loved watching you grow round with our children,” he whispered lowly.

That was enough of that particular line of conversation, she pulled back and poked him hard in the chest with her index finger.

“Your baby making days are over, mister, it was not enough you impregnated me with multiples-”

“Twice,” he bragged, grinning down at her, flashing two digits as he waggled his dark brows.

“Twice. Plus, are we forgetting that someone sorted that problem out,” she quipped, eyes drifting down towards his crotch. There was a bulge straining against his sweatpants, tenting them.

Ben gulped, wincing as he undoubtedly recalled his vasectomy which he underwent when Bennie was three months old.

It did the trick, Ben planted a kiss on her forehead and bent over, taking in the sights of the attic. It was relatively neat, shelves housed boxes and items long forgotten and unused. Unwilling to let the opportunity pass, she slapped his ass, palming it, giggling before she kneeled beside him. It was hard to keep her hands to herself.

Ben groaned, side eyeing her with a full on pout. Yes, he knew how to work her but she shuffled through the boxes, playing coy.

“We’ll never get these decorations downstairs if you keep that up.”

Smirking to herself, she plucked a box up and held it to her chest, hearing the contents rattle around inside.

“Perhaps that was my evil plan all along!”

“You’re a mean one, Mrs Grinch.”
The attic was drafty and cold, the snow falling outside was a testament to the chill that crept inwards. It was late too so the temperature was dropping by the hour. Shivering, she walked towards the hatch, mindful to take her time in descending the steps. Ben followed closely behind, ready to steady her at a second’s notice despite the heavy box he carried.

The scene shifted as they travelled through the house, deciding to leave the boxes in their bedroom and start anew the next morning. Ben showered whilst she undressed, switching her jeans and sweatshirt for a camisole and panties. It was a cold night but Ben would soon warm her up, he emanated heat and ran hot, an alpha trait.

To pass the time, she opened the smallest of the boxes, feeling nostalgic. All of her children had made decorations by hand through the years and they meant a great deal to her. They brought memories forth of when her babies were still babies, all chubby cheeks and curious eyes, always full of awe and magical wonder in the holiday season.

Opening the lid, she immediately realised that it was not a box of Christmas decorations, no, it was something else.

Craning her neck, she listened to Ben singing in the shower, his rendition of ‘O’Holy Night’ something of a tradition before she dove in, eyes widening at the sight in front of her. It had been years since she had seen any of this, the calendar was at least eighteen years old.

Chucking, she flipped it open and stopped when she reached the middle section, greeted by one oiled up Ben, a firehose hung limply between his legs.

“Mr July.”

So young and fresh, he was intense and all hers, even then. It seemed he could warm her up without the need of physical closeness. Biting her bottom lip, she placed the calendar down beside her and explored further, grinning wide when his firefighting uniform met her eye. Nested on top were the bunker pants adorned with thick red suspenders. Rey swallowed hard, recalling the day when he took her in the backroom of the firehouse but even then, he had not been in uniform.

Itching to see him in it once again, she clenched her thighs together and plucked them out, the scent of smoke still clung to array of different fabrics. Ever so slowly, she ran her fingers along the length of the red suspenders, testing the elasticity, enjoying the subtle stretch. They were thicker than most of their kind, heavy duty and wider.

Smiling to herself, more aroused than she would ever admit, she tiptoed into the bathroom, bunker pants in hand. Steam filled the small space as Ben sang, only stopping when he saw her through the glass panels, his fingers still lathering shampoo into his scalp. The subtle rise of his shoulders and flare of his nostrils told her that he had scented her in the confined space.

Dropping his head under the spray, he tilted his neck and scrubbed harder until his hair was clean and then planted his hand on the glass, splaying his fingers wide.

She left the bunker pants on the counter and stepped forward, mirroring his action. A stand off ensued, Ben’s eyes seemed impossibly dark and his scent rolled off him in heady, sweet waves. Like before, he breathed in, perhaps more deeply that time and swarmed her by pressing himself taut against the glass.

“I can smell you, Rey, I bet you’re dripping.”

The words alone were enough to send her into a heated spiral, slick trickled down the insides of her
thighs and soaked her panties.

“I found something…I was hoping you would wear it for me?”

Ben gazed to the side where the bottom half of his old uniform lay, a slow, knowing smirk split his face and the quirk of his brow was the response she needed.

“It depends.”

“On what?”

“Have you been a good girl this year, Rey? Were you a good omega for your alpha?”

It was sweet torture, a macabre delight and brilliant showing of his affinity to read and map a situation. Seamlessly, he had managed to fall into the role she wished him to take and lead like he was the one who had masterminded it all.

His words though, he always knew what to say. Whether he was reciting his poetry or detailing the plot of his latest novel, his words always struck deep, right into her core and the depths of her mind. Unsurprisingly, her body almost hummed in response and her limbs crackled in anticipation, eager for what was to come.

Long ago, she would detest the power an alpha had over her and it nearly ruined them in the beginning but now, she willingly offered herself to him and trusted in his ability to care and influence her body with ease.

Her fingertips trembled, a visual presentation of the arousal seeping through and within her. They pitter-pattered on the glass as rivulets of water streamed and streaked around them. A shiver lanced through her but she was not cold, far from it, the heat in Ben’s eyes intensified as his pupils bled out into his cedar-wood irises and nearly swallowed them all. Lust, of the most unadulterated kind took hold of them both.

“Yes,” she whispered.

“Then go lay down on the bed and wait for me.”

Unwilling to waste anymore time, she backed away, refusing to break the eye contact until the last second, relishing in how primed and ready he seemed, all flexing muscles and chest heaving.

She turned.

“And Rey, take off your clothes, I want you bare when I get through there.”

The words hit her hard, gripping her.

Nodding, she slipped out of the bathroom, sucking in deep lungfuls of his scent, tasting it in the back of her throat until she was dizzy. Not so gracefully, she pulled off her shirt, throwing it to the ground with no regard. Bent over, she peeled her panties away from her legs, still lean and toned despite her lack of recent exercise. They pooled at her feet so she kicked them away with her foot, her nails were painted cerise in nod to the holiday.

Excited simmered deeply and bubbled beneath her skin. It had been a while since they had been able to enjoy intimacy so boldly. Their gaggle of children meant most times were desperate, unplanned trysts whenever they could catch a moment to themselves. Against the door in the laundry room as the kids mindlessly watched cartoons, completely unaware of what was
transpiring. Rey’s favourite was in the car after they managed to slip out for a quiet dinner alone but the kids were of course at home waiting for their return. Han always shot them a knowing look, he knew exactly what they did, Ben’s hair was always a little too tousled, Rey was handsy, she was aware of that and had no plans to change.

Completely nude, she kneeled on the bed, settling back on the pillow, legs crossed at the ankles. The faint sounds of Ben exiting the shower drifted under the door along with a cheery whistle. It was some Christmas tune, his holiday spirit never really left him and it coaxed a giggle from her. Reaching out, she dimmed the bedside light until the room was cloaked in darkness with only the faintest of yellowish glows.

Her fingers combed through her hair, pulling it free from the messy bun she had thrown it up in earlier. It gathered around her neck so she smoothed it down until it fell over her chest in loose waves, still dark and free of grey.

The door swung open and there stood Ben, looming in the doorway. His broad frame left little space there. Rey gaped.

The bunker pants still fit perfectly, secured by the suspenders. The bright red of the suspenders contrasted beautifully with the paleness of his skin, still wet from the shower.

A little smirk tugged at the corners of his lips.

Rey had seen her husband in many outfits over the years but nothing hit the spot quite like his firefighting gear, there was something inherently brilliant about it.

She crooked her finger in invitation.

“Come here.”

He did so without further question, his swagger natural and relaxed but there was no doubt about who was in control. Laid flat out on the bed, entirely exposed, she was ready for him, more than ready. If he would just give her what she wanted, she would muster up some Christmas spirit, wear the itchy, ugly sweater he loved, the pink one with the even uglier dog on it. She would even sit down and watch ‘The Grinch’ with him and let him poke at her with little jabs that she was the female version of the notorious character.

Okay, she was the female grinch.

The reflective stripes on his bunker pants lit up when he neared closer. Before she could even think of touching them, he lifted his leg and straddled her. He kept his weight off her, supporting himself by planting one of his hands on the headboard and the majority of it on his own knees.

“Ben-”

“You wanted this, didn’t you?”

Peeking up at him through half lidded eyes, she nodded, feeling him grasp her jaw with his forefinger and thumb.

Ben tutted, loudly.

“See, this is where we have a problem, sunshine. Only good girls deserve treats like this and I’m not sure what list you’re on.”
He tilted his head, smoothing his thumb along the seam of her lips.

“Naughty or nice, hm?”

“I think you know I’ve been nice,” she quipped.

Unable to stop herself, she grasped both of the suspenders and tugged, bringing him down to her. She did so with a white knuckled grip, unwilling to let him tease anymore.

She nipped at his lips playfully before kissing them, soft and gentle.

A low groan escaped Ben as he pulled up, cheeks flushed red.

Narrowing her eyes, she hooked her finger around the suspender and pulled it back before releasing it. It snapped against his nipple with a hard, resounding smack.

He hissed, securing a hold on her wrists.

“That wasn’t very nice, Rey.”

His cock tenting his bunker pants told her otherwise.

“I think you like it, perhaps too much,” she challenged.

The telltale twitch of the muscle below his left eye told her all she needed to know. With parted lips, he released her wrists and sat straighter.

“Do it again, harder this time.”

Smirking to herself, she did the same as before, pulling the red fabric back more that time before letting it go. It smacked against his chest. Within seconds, a red mark appeared on his skin but he enjoyed it, she could see that he did.

The ache between her legs increased at seeing his own pleasure. His teeth found purchase in his bottom lip, teasing the flesh.

“Naughty, you’re very naughty.”

She had no idea what he was doing. There was a sound, a snap and release and one of the suspenders fell from his shoulder. With wide eyes, she watched as he unhooked it from the pants and then gathered it up in his hands.

She settled back against the pillows as he worked, rolling the suspender around his hand. He sat back, no longer on top of her.

“Sit up.”

She did so without thought.

“Open your mouth.”

Parting her lips, she could only watch as he kneeled before her. He pressed the fabric against her lips, pushing it inwards before wrapping the rest around her head, securing it with a knot.

Ben gagged her.
He had gagged her with his suspender.

She worked it with her tongue, sucking it into her mouth.

“Maybe you can be nice now that your pretty mouth can’t land you on the naughty list,” he hummed.

Slowly, he pressed his palm flat against her chest and guided her down back onto the bed. All the while, he let his fingers roam lower until he reached where she needed him the most.

He cupped her cunt and slid two fingers inwards. They were thick and long, enough to quench her need for a moment. Hovering above her, his mouth came to rest just above her hardened nipples before he sucked one into his hot, wet mouth.

The combined stimulation was enough to leave her mewling and panting but unable to voice her satisfaction.

The heel of his palm worked her clit with every inward stroke of his fingers. They pumped in and out slowly until she silently pleaded for more with the shimming of her hips. He hastened his movements, finger fucking her without care for gentleness.

His teeth grazed her nipples and he took his fill, burning a hot trail downwards.

“I know what you need, if you’re nice, I will give you my cock, you want that, don’t you, Rey?”

Nodding, not caring how desperate she seemed, she did so with enthusiasm. Ben seemed to appreciate it as he withdrew his fingers and released her nipple.

Gazing up at him, she lay as a spectator as he trailed his drenched fingers around her mouth and along the makeshift gag. The taste of herself hit her tongue and the suspender.

“I’ve got you.”

He stood and she whined, watching as he slipped the other suspender from his shoulder and unbuttoned his pants. They dropped and he stepped out of them, revealing his hard cock.

Gripping himself, he gave it a few hard tugs, twisting his wrist when he reached he base.

She moaned louder then, calling for his attention. He sat back on the bed and settled between her thighs, nudging his cock at her entrance.

“Fuck, Rey, you’re so wet for me.”

He leaned over her, bringing his mouth to the shell of her ear.

“Such a nice, girl.”

She was a nice girl, at least for him.

It made her spread her legs further so could hook her feet around his hips. Without further delay, he pressed forward and filled her.

Swallowing a gasp, she pawed at his chest and then tucked her hands below his armpits and pulled him closer, deeper. Oh how deep he could reach. He huffed, planting his hands on her hips.

“You’re still so fucking tight.”
He moved, thrusting hard and fast, just like they needed. Her walls squeezed his cock, the pull and
drag their own kind of heaven. She would never tire of it, never get enough of him even though
they had been together for over eighteen years.

He knew her body as well as his own having perfected the art of bringing her to the highest heights
long ago. Heavy pants painted the crook of her neck, he nuzzled there, suckling her gland which in
turn near enough ruined her right there and then. She could feel her release building, steady and
true, it coiled in her belly and forged a fiery trail lower, deeper.

Saliva built up in her mouth, a shallow pool that she swallowed while the rest saturated into the
material on her tongue. Breathing harshly through her nose, she bit down on the damp suspender, it
muffled her cries and added to their lewdness, utterly lost in fantasy.

Though he was in his early fifties, his stamina exceeded her own and so he drove into her, a sweet
kissing of hips and meeting of skin. It was hard not to come undone, he tilted his hips just right and
that gave way to a new angle, the one that would hit that ridged spot inside her. It made her toes
curl. Blunt nails ran down the expanse of Ben’s flexing arms, still so strong and thick with muscle.

“Touch yourself,” he gritted out.

The increase of his pacing had her clenching the suspender with her teeth and his cock with her
cunt. Doing as he instructed, she dropped her hand and placed it between then, feeling the slickness
of her folds and his cock driving into her.

Moving up, she found her clit and applied pressure, rolling her fingers in tight circles. All too soon,
she came, evoking a spring of curses from Ben who followed soon after, choosing to pull out and
coat her stomach in hot spurts of his spend. Like the territorial alpha he was, he rubbed it into her
skin to scent her and she encouraged such a thing. She did not want to wash it away just yet.

“You’re beautiful,” he murmured, carefully untying the knot at the back of her head. It fell away
and she gasped, licking her lips, wetting them.

He trailed kisses where the fabric had chafed her cheeks and lips, whatever kind of dominance and
role that came with their sexual escapades slipped away and back was her Ben. The soft, loving
man that loved her

“Merry Christmas to me,” Rey whispered, feeling spent and content, warm and wanted.

“Next year, I’ll tie you up with them,” he panted, laughing as he threw the suspender to the floor.

“I can’t wait, is there anything special I can get you for Christmas?” Rey asked, curling her fingers
around his.

“All I want for Christmas is you.”

Chapter End Notes

Merry Christmas ya filthy animals!

I have one more epilogue planned and then I think I will have to accept that I need to
let these characters and world go but until then, ENJOY!
Rebirth

Chapter Summary

The final epilogue

Chapter Notes

Grab the tissues, I know I had to use them when writing this.

Warning-this chapter contains a major character death-Rey.

There is mentions of terminal brain cancer. If this is something you wish to avoid, scroll down to 60 years later <3

This was no easy decision but I hope when you read the final part of the chapter, you will be left with hope.

Lots of love, Alba

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Rey, New York, United States of America

Life had been kind to her.

At least for the most part.

With her loving husband at her side, she could conquer all, or at least, that was what she thought. At forty-seven, she began to experience headaches. Not the kind you could keep at bay with pills. No, the drugs did not work. The migraines increased until she could barely function.

Ben was worried, incessantly so and urged her to seek help, most of the time she tried to play them off and carry on with a smile but it was too difficult. The doctors were not too worried at first, they carried out some tests and then they were worried, it shadowed their faces and quieted their words.

They found a tumor in her brain, cancerous and inoperable, terminal.

That was the day she witnessed a part of Ben die before her eyes, he was broken and for the first time in her life, she could find no way to fix him, to hold him together. They grieved, the entire family did.

She wanted to stay at home and so they did just that. Ben slipped into the role of her caregiver with ease, he always did, possessing a quiet strength that surpassed his own pain.

Some days she was lucid, others not too much. The whole idea of dying had never crossed her mind, some part of her thought she would live forever or until she was old and gray. Time, she thought she had more time and every passing second slipped through her grasp until none
remained. She fought tooth and nail to stay around as long as she could. She wanted to live some more.

Laid back in bed, surrounded by all her children, she smiled a watery grin, still seeing the light in the situation. They were all so strong, all so bright and successful. Jaina cradled her newborn on her lap, another little Rey to walk the Earth with pudgy outstretched fingers and the signature Skywalker pout. It was the circle of life, the forest green in her eyes was telling, they were her own.

Jacen stood by the door, biting his fist, tears streaming and chest heaving. He would be okay, Jaina would make sure of it and his own silent strength would see him through. He fought fires, he was brave and courageous.

Next was Breha and Becca. The two of them sat next to each other for the first time in a long time, each relying on the other to sit straight, hands clasped together, so tight that their knuckles were white. It warmed her heart to see her girls united, prepared to weather the storm of heartache that would follow.

She mouthed that she loved them all, much too weak to do much else.

Bennie was still so young and she loathed that she would not see him grow into the great man she knew he would be. His brain could save the world, his love and patience could inspire a generation. Callie Jr lay by her side, purring softly. Bennie offered her a soft, sad smile, bending low to kiss her forehead.

“We’ll be okay, mama, it’s okay to let go.”

She knew they would, she could feel it, deep in the bones of her.

A sob tore through Becca’s throat, Breha was quick to pull her close, rocking her gently. Little Rey babbled, bouncing, beautifully unaware of the loss that would soon follow.

One by one, each of her children stood, each kissing her goodbye, whispering they loved her. She was loved, she knew that.

When the door closed, only one remained.

Ben.

His face was red, grief spilled down his cheeks. Squinting at him, she sighed, the final goodbye would be the hardest.

How could she leave him? The other part of her soul.

“I was never supposed to lose you, I’m older, it should be me. It’s not fair,” he cried out, shoulders quaking.

Entwining their fingers, she brushed her thumb against his wedding ring, one of the few things solid and clear to her.

“No one said life would be fair, darling. You need to live, Ben, watch our children grow some more, little Rey will need her grandfather.”

Ben shuffled into bed and curled his body around hers, his grey hair tickled her nose in this final embrace. He was so warm. Muffled cries wet her chest, just above her heart. She would carry him there forever.
“I don’t know if I can do this without you,” he admitted hoarsely, his fingertips trailed along the length of her arm.

“Of course you can, you’re the strongest man I know, the love of my life. You’ve made me the happiest woman that ever lived and lived I did, all because of you.”

“I love you, Rey, my sunshine, always.”

“I’ll be with you, I promise, the first sunny day in winter or the breeze in summer, that’ll be me. You’re not alone.”

“Neither are you. I’ll find you again, one day, we’ll be together again.”

He cemented the promise with a gentle kiss on her lips.

Rey closed her eyes, feeling herself slipping away. With a smile on her face and the taste of Ben to see her through, she floated away, finally at peace and free of pain.

60 YEARS LATER

**Kira-London, England**

Kira adjusted her hood, shielding herself from the rain. The sun shone down on the city despite the light shower. Shallow puddles were dotted around the pavements so she skipped over them, her long shoelaces soaking wet.

The day of her eighteenth birthday came with no particular show of fanfare or cheer. It was her preference. Her father woke her with breakfast in bed, a stack of pancakes piled high and drizzled in thick syrup, a side of bacon and a glass of orange juice. Ben Kenobi was an older man of few words but he pressed a kiss on her cheek, mussed her hair and placed the brochure she had been scanning for months on her pillow.

**Match,** the highly successful mating service was renowned. Waiting until her birthday to sign up had been difficult, ever since she presented as an omega at the age of twelve, she had felt instilled with a need to find the person she would spend the rest of her life with.

The procedure had been relatively painless. The extraction process had once came with some deal of discomfort, but extracting pheromones from her mating gland was little more than one sharp pinch now. That was it.

After, she found herself mindlessly wandering around, not quite ready to go home just quite yet. For the first time in years, she could breathe easy. The knowledge that her potential mate could be located within hours was something of a comfort. Though her father loved her, she longed for more, having never experienced any kind of romantic love before.

Passing a coffeeshop, she stilled, struck with a scent. It was calling her, sea salt and driftwood, a fire so hot it burned blue and burned her insides. Scanning the inside of the shop, she saw a few couples strewn about or others by themselves hunched over newspapers and sipping their choice of drink.

Her legs moved on their own accord. Pulling the metal handle, she let herself in and tugged her hood down. The space was dimly lit with a relaxing kind of amber ambience. A delicious, blended aroma of coffee beans and vanilla filled the small shop but there was nothing more intoxicating than the scent that filled her nostrils and tickled her tongue.
Looking around again, she located the source. A tall man stood in line, his figure cutting above the rest. A number two pencil lay tucked behind his ear amongst the dark, ebony locks framing his face. In his pocket, there was the familiar brochure. It was for ‘Match.’

Nearing closer, she only stilled when he stiffened, clearly inhaling, his shoulders heaved upwards. Was it her that had influenced him? Did he feel the pull that had coaxed her inwards?

He inclined his neck, searching around the coffeeshop before he turned, locking eyes with her. The heat rose to her cheeks and for a brief moment, she gazed downwards, suddenly overcome with the real possibility she had inadvertently found her mate.

The alpha did no such thing. His long legs carried him over to her and so she mustered her courage and tilted her chin upwards. He was much more appealing up close, broad and tall, he was handsome, strikingly beautiful.

His eyes.

They burned hot and bright as if this moment had been his first sight.

In some way, it was.

They were familiar, so startlingly so.

“It’s you,” they whispered in unison.

“I mean…I feel as if I know you,” Kira carried on, stepping forward.

The man smiled, his full lips lifted at the corners and his dark eyes brightened.

“Don’t be afraid, I feel it too.”

For a while, they simply stood, eyeing the other and both taking deep inhales.

There was no mistaking who he was. He was her mate.

He offered her his hand, his fingers trembled but she promptly entwined their fingers, immediately relaxing into his touch and warmth.

“I’m Kylo.”

A part of her came alive, she recognised the name but possessed no real recollection of it.

It was something else.

Fate.

“I’m Kira.”

Chapter End Notes

_We all shine on, like the moon and the stars and the sun._ 🌛 ⭐️

They will always find each other. Again and again, through different lifetimes...death.
cannot part them.

(Kylo was Ben reborn/Kira was Rey reborn in case you did not understand)

Thank you...that is all I can say.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you for joining me on this journey <3

End Notes

Your comments keep me going, thank you <3

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!