Crybaby
by Noctomata

Summary

Allen and Kanda have been juggling their relationship for a while now and things aren't as good as they could be.

Allen doesn't know what to do and thinking about breaking up at all makes his world crumble down in guilt and shame.

His head is a mess as well as his heart and with his bartender work at night and school at day, he barely has time to even try to order his own thoughts.

But what will happen when Yuu leaves for work two weeks leaving him with his more-than-charming best friend, Lavi?

A librarian its said to be good with tiding everything up and ordering stuff, you just have to let him in.

A bit of magic, a lot of drama and things that you expect to unexpect. Isn't love and life wonderful things? Be careful what you wish for, since with desires you have to specify.
Hello to you who are still looking for D.Gray Man content. I salute you, you guys are restless.
Hoshino works hard but the fandom works harder. (?)

Well this is actually a self-indulgent fanfiction, as I am fixing what I messed up 8 years ago so...if you like it thats an extra for its purpose!

Since you are here I hope you enjoy it. I must clarify that this starts as a Yullen, for the sake of the plot but it will evolve as Laven. I don't know how long it will be and Im not sure if I will be uploading as frequently as my other proyects, so I apologize.

Thanks for passing by!
Allen has a quiet afternoon that his mind uses to remind him how love truly seems to be. Alone at his shared apartment, the voice inside him starts a question that perhaps was better to leave unanswered. But now that it was pronounced and someone else listened at it... Will his solitude be a better option than sharing his thoughts with Lavi? Sometimes love at the first sight isn't as stupid as it sounds...

Hello to you who are still looking for D.Gray Man content. I salute you; you guys are restless. Hoshino works hard to ignore the manga but the fandom works harder (?). Well, this is actually a self-indulgent fanfiction, as I am fixing what I messed up 9 years ago or so. So, if you like it it's an extra of its purpose!

Since you are here I hope you enjoy it. I must clarify that this starts as a Yullen, for the sake of the plot but it will evolve to Laven.

I wasn't sure how much it would last, but as I'm editing this already finished everything else, I'm glad to tell you that this fanfic is completely and I'm pretty happy with the result. If you read it and you like it, don't think twice on leaving a comment! I love to read people thoughts, even if they are in random chapters, not necessarily only at the end.

Anyway, thank you very much!

“I love you.”

Life hasn’t been as nice to him as to many people. He had a troubled youth, filled with poker houses and bad decisions.

He stared at his hands; back and forth for an answer to his muted question. One was perfect and pristine and one stained with a disgusting pigment that went all the way up to his chest left side. A stain that branded him as a freak to society. To people. To humans.

Was he allowed to have second thoughts about all that?

Allen didn’t know. He wasn’t very sure how everything worked. Life and feelings were a complicated subject with little to no explanations. Just a freefall into the abyss of human soul. No
parachute included.

Was he feeling like that before? Or that particular thing started that day? Maybe he was getting sick.

Maybe that was the reason why he was getting that foreign vertigo sensation that swirled around his empty stomach; stretching its long black arms and threatening to grasp his throat.

Vertigo. Something he forgot that existed when he was four and his stepfather asked him to leave the apartment by the window when he had visitors.

An apartment in the seventh floor, that was.

So, it was either adapting or having a heart attack at a very young age.

Yeah, maybe he was sick. After all, he couldn’t be sure that everything he ate at the school cafeteria was in the best condition.

He sighed and put his gloves on again. A security blanket that allowed him to close his eyes in front of everything that made him feel like an pariah. It was a costume and an armor. A protection from preying eyes; so they couldn’t stare as his true self and be disgusted. There was no one in the flat that could say something about the way they looked, but he just didn’t feel like staring at them himself. A piece of normality to held onto.

“Or maybe you aren’t sick, and you know this is all about him.”

He was about to get up from that stupidly comfortable sofa, when the annoying voice in his head spoke. The effort was just too much now, and he let himself sink again on the furniture.

His white hair, thin but abundant, followed his movements like fathers, some strands falling over his face in a painfully slow motion.

-Shut up. – There was no one there. But being all those years alone, Allen didn’t have more choices than to learn to accept the voice as company and talk to it as well. A friend or an enemy it didn’t matter anymore. It wasn’t like it would go away, anyhow.

At least he was aware it was part of him and not some strange divinity message or an entirely different entity, as his therapist (who may or may not be ditched almost every time they settled an appointment) asked him once.

“Come on, buddy. You know what’s happening. You are doing the thing. You are slowly ceasing to love him. As you always do. Numb emotions in a dull body. Nothing here to see. Nothing here to feel. Just you, being abnormal.”

- Fuck you, I don’t do that. I’m not like that…– He interpreted the silence on his mind as defiance and blew air to push away the hairs that were on his face. Specifically, over his nose. – I’m not! Everything is fine! –

The voice didn’t say anything back, but his heart did. Pulling down a muscle inside his chest, as if someone squeezed it; like a big fat lemon that refuses to give its scarce juice.

- Everything is fine. – Almost a whisper. He was staring at his gloved hands again, the sunlight that leaked like ethereal champagne by the glass door that went to the balcony caressing the right
side of his face and his lap. Just lazy twilight light that didn’t want to leave. Just like him.

“Then, tell him you love him. Think of this as an exercise. Picture his face and say it.”

Allen frowned. He did that every day.

“Oh? You do? Really?”

He hated the condescending tone that that voice sometimes acquired. It reminded him of his stepfather and his annoying smug smile that curved around that bloody cigarette. And those eyes that accused him of being stupid as a dead turtle... The judgment, the pity... the humiliation... He hated it.

He didn’t answer to it. Refusing to give the voice a chance to blame him again. Instead, thinking of every time he told Yuu he loved him those past days.

An uneventful week got displayed at his memory. In a fast forward, analytic video, he stared looking for those moments.

Moments that he realized... weren’t there, to start with.

He blinked several times. The vertigo hand finally scratching the skin inside his throat; playing like a cat with a half dead mouse. Knowing that sooner or later he we fall completely into the sensation.

His gray eyes clouded with tears at the corner, the salty announcement of his guilt as he realized that his fear was no longer an idea, but a fact. Feelings were so, impossibly strange. Was it possible to have them all and not knowing them at all?

“You don’t tell him you love him anymore.”

It was true. He didn’t.

Allen was pretty good at lying, but he wasn’t that great at lying at himself. Maybe that was the price to pay; when you are too good at something, it just doesn’t work with you anymore. Like voodoo or confectionery.

It wasn’t good enough.

He put his head on his hands; rubbing them on his face in a habit that he always brought up when he was emotionally tired.

Had he loved him at all?

Yes.

Did he still loved him, after everything it happen? He wasn’t sure.

Love, among the other complicated emotions, was the worst. The king at the undecipherable parade.

Was every love meant to last forever? He thought about his other friends dating different people and decided it didn’t.

But, was he allowed to despise the feelings that were poured over him being who he was? What he was? He drew a sharp breath and without really addressing it, he thought he probably wasn’t.
When love transforms in apathy? Which is the moment where everything vanishes? Is there a
certain point, when you can mark it with red circle and say “It was exactly here. This was what
made me stop loving him.”? Like a bandage, rip it off; now you are not in love.

Probably not.

As far as Allen concerned it was like getting drunk on vodka. You had one glass after another, and
everything was perfectly fine. Until you got up to leave or to the bathroom and everything started
spinning around like the top cart of a wild game at the carnival. And then, it hit you, fuck I’m
drunken. But it was too late to do much.

He remembered when Yuu asked him out.

- If I win, I want something as a prize. I’m getting tired of training with you without getting
something back. It’s a waste of time. –

He was confused. He paid the gym fee on point every month. Did he had to pay a special fee for
training kick boxing? Was he getting advantage of his handsome trainer?

- Oh, okay then. – Allen smiled to him, starting to feel ashamed of not knowing about that. A
wordless apology that was infused with confusion.

Of course, Yuu beat him. He was taller, he was faster, more experienced and he distracted him a
lot with that fancy long ponytail and his determined black eyes and elegant movements. So, less
than three movements later, he was laying on his back at the floor, covered in sweat and out of
breath.

He was never **that** self-conscious at the gym before that day; as he always thought that no one
would pay attention to him in big clothes and silent movements that bothered nobody. Until he saw
Yuu face over his, decorated with an incredible arrogant (but sexy) smile and he realized he
probably looked like a hot mess.

- Uh… well I guess I have to pay. – He mumbled, thanking that his cheeks were already red
because of the training.

- Yeah. -He stood up, flicking his hair. Offering him a hand to stand up. -I’m free on Sunday. I’ll
pick you up. –

Allen didn’t know what to say, his perplexity reflected on his face.

- I’m asking you out, idiot. –

That was it. That was all.

They met that Sunday and had lunch at a pretty good Japanese place. Yuu didn’t talk a lot and
Allen didn’t believe it was happening, so he kept his thoughts to himself. Afraid to blow the
illusion away if that was the case. Regardless, that went on for a while and now they were living
together. Everything else was pretty much a blur. Only pauses between his mistakes hung on the
gallery of his selective memories. How horrible was the fact that bad memories stuck more that
good ones! Traces of whatever good we had, lost; washed-out by the pain that always has a best
grip on the human brain.

They were fine at first. Allen had fun and felt like someone finally cared about him and Yuu
pushed him just the right way for him to get into a better path. Like choosing his major or switching places to live.

-Just do whatever you want, beansprout. Forget your old man, he isn’t paying anyway. It’s not like his opinion matters.

So, he dropped Business and started Art History. And now, in the sixth semester of his career, he couldn’t be happier…professionally speaking. He worked as a bartender at nights in a close by place; and when he managed to have free time, he used to exercise, get long baths or longer naps.

Allen enjoyed his work and he was pretty good at it, but it was one of the things that started the downside of his relationship with Yuu.

It wasn’t like he could have any another job.

Not many people accepted employees that not only looked underage but also had such…extravagant features. With his silver white hair, the scar that crossed his face with a strange pentacle on top and his tendency to use long sleeves and gloves no matter the weather, getting another job was a near impossible task.

At the bar, the manager was nice to him and payed him well. He even allowed him to do homework whenever the bar was slow. He remembered him lending him a book once to pass the time when the place was practically dead. A paternal figure that danced between a big brother and a father, caring in a way that even when it was unusual to Allen, he always shrugged it as a professional perk and not something more fraternal.

“There’s no such thing as a free meal.”

But the manager wasn’t the problem. It was the bar itself. With its dark atmosphere and its concurrent and mostly male clientele.

Allen didn’t consider himself someone attractive, but, for some reason, drunk people not only thought he really was so, but also tried time and time again to either kiss him or get something else.

- You have the face of an angel. –

A costumer told him once. This wasn’t the weirdest thing someone ever told him, but it was one that he remembered well because of how strange an absurd that sounded to him. He never knew how to respond, so usually he stuck to smile and either thank them or tell them he didn’t really think so. Depending on how the costumer themselves seemed. Regardless, it wasn’t the flirting what mattered. At least, not to him. It was all meaningless words from drunk people that most times than not, confused him with a girl. Alcohol being the glasses to the heart wishes.

And yet, all of that could not matter. It should’ve not.

Flirting, in his experience, only mattered when both parties were into it. Yet, all that was required was one time of Yuu visiting at his work to everything start to get ruined; to him to learn that when you belong to someone, even not playing the game was a reason to lose.

One time, a man was particularly insistent on getting his number, no matter how much or how many times Allen tried to avoid his advances.

- He is a guy, you know? – The voice familiar, making him turn with a glass still on his hands. – And he told you he is not interested. Don’t you get it, moron? –
Yuu could’ve pass for such a petty provocation. But he choice otherwise. He didn’t only talk to the guy, as he expected him to do. Not just like a gentleman, but a decent, civilized person. Instead, he smashed his head on the bar, starting a fight that, even when it didn’t last for long, was nasty to see.

He wasn’t prone to violence and he didn’t like it most of the times, a triggering reminder of some parts of his childhood he was better without thinking about.

Him training kick boxing only a sport directed for his health, the idea of using it outside a controlled environment enough to freeze his blood. So, looking at his boyfriend acting that aggressively over basically nothing, scared the hell out of him. Nasty memories creeping to remind him the place he came from.

-WHAT IS WRONG WITH YOU?! -He accused Yuu back then, after jumping over the bar, to check on the unconscious costumer. His heart beating in a frenetic pace, terrified to the bone. His tone, raised to be understood like a scream, only a reflection of a fear that he didn’t know how to tame or direct. The adrenaline shot only pushing him forward.

- Huh? With me? – Yuu didn’t had a scratch and didn’t even sweat. His hands were again inside the pockets of his coat after cleaning them with the napkin that was placed for the guy he just knocked out. His hair perfectly combed back in the permanent style of his choice.

- YES? – Allen couldn’t believe it. He was always so calm and serious and then, out of the blue, he hit a guy that wasn’t doing much beside being pretty annoying. The words would’ve been enough. He didn’t have to hurt him. Just a warning, a threat even…Just words.

- What is wrong with you? Why are you defending him? – The boy searched the unconscious man for any more wounds, putting the clean rag that he had on his bleeding temple. The guy grunted, and he allowed himself to turn his gray eyes to his lover, now sure that he wasn’t dead.

- What do you mean? – He was upset but the look on Yuu’s eyes made him flinch. Cowering in a reflex that was branded on his soul. Kanda didn’t kneel to his level or talk to him face to face. Instead, he was staring at him from his towering height as if he was a misbehaving pet.

“A very, very bad dog.”

What was all that about?

-Were you having an affair with him? Did you like his attention? Was that what was happening? Because I don’t see any other reason why you would be all that worried for a guy that was harassing you. –

-Wh-what…? – Allen couldn’t believe it. He just couldn’t. He never gave him a reason to be all worked up like that and he didn’t know what to tell him then. Or how to defend himself. Not that he gave him the chance.

-We will talk about this at home. – The last word before he left. Because, from that point forward…he would always get the last word.

Allen remembered this vividly, because that was the first time.

The first time of many, to be honest. Yuu wasn’t very social, and neither was him, but he was as
kind and charming as he needed to be either for his work or for school and apparently his boyfriend wouldn’t have that.

- Do you have to flirt with everyone, Walker? Even in my face? –

That phrase was what hurt him more, he thought now, looking back. It was simple, but it held a lot of things inside.

It meant that he didn’t trust him, that he didn’t thought Allen respected him, or loved him enough. That was what hurt him more. The fact that Kanda didn’t think he loved him.

-If there’s a point in the line, I guess that was it. –

After that, Allen wasn’t allowed to do a lot of stuff. Yes, he could still work in that bar and Yuu agreed to never step in but just as long as he was messaging him every thirty minutes. Just... “to be sure.”

But he didn’t meet his friends without him there. He couldn’t go alone to a party or a bar or whatever; it didn’t matter if it was school, business or long last friendship. Not that he had such things, though. His internet social media was limited to photos of his cat or food, never his face and in the strange case it was, never alone. Not even mentioning the place, hashtags already a forgotten subject.

He didn’t blame Yuu, he was sure he meant to protect him. After all, he had a troublesome youth as well and he was aware that he had a lot of unresolved issues. Issues he wanted to help with but wasn’t allowed to know.

At least not until Lavi appeared on the picture. With shared secrets that now, he was more likely to know than he thought.

Lavi was Yuu best friend. For a reason that was not only beyond Allen’s imagination but everyone’s else as well.

Lavi was the opposite of Yuu. He was cheerful, playful and talkative. He adored to spend time outside, workout, be everywhere and anywhere and if that wasn’t enough knowing people and their business; that was probably his only true passion.

He met Yuu at high school and stuck with him since then. He was a librarian and a professor at the same place Allen attended. Weird, how the world seemed to be so small. The chances of ending at the same place with so many other to chose, being ridiculous.

Regardless, they didn’t meet there. Yuu brought him home one day when spring break started. It was a weird first meeting, and just as he remembered how Yuu asked him out, he recalled how meeting Lavi the first time was.

He had taken a nap after school, free from homework but not from work; and anticipating the crowd that being a bar near the university meant, he slept until two hours before his shift, knowing the how busy the nights could get.

The silver haired opened his eyes slowly, as light was dying just like then. And there beside him in the most comfortable couch of the house was an unknown redhead.
Allen thought he was still sleeping and stared at him without saying a word, his mind trying to dissipate the bubbles of the dream that drags reality with them.

- Good morning, *angel*. – The stranger said, the teasing so obvious it made him blush. Such manners straight out of a dream, indeed.

He was really tall, his red hair more like copper, his only visible eye a beautiful jade. He was wearing a hair band that kept his hair out of his face and what face that was…! His lines were made like a Guillaume Geefs statue or a Michelangelo’s; his jaw perfectly squared with lips that made an elegant curve with an “M” in the middle of the movement, where they parted.

Allen thought it was definitely, positively a dream when he saw the eye patch. Black and exactly around the place his eye should be…Who wore that in the XXI century?

- Hello. – He said shyly. That person smiled warmly, the action bringing light to his iris, the bridge of his perfectly sculpted nose sprinkled with a night sky of discreet freckles. Exposing him as a natural ginger.

- Stop harassing him, stupid rabbit. – The voice of Yuu broke whatever charm was being used and he covered himself with the blanket he dragged there. He blinked fast, trying to adjust to life only to feel a headache threatening to hit his brain. Like a red lightning of pain.

- But he is so cute! You didn’t say he was *this* cute! – Allen couldn’t believe what was happening. Yuu only made a disapproving noise with his tongue before opening a bottle of something Allen couldn’t identify at first.

- Beansprout, this is Lavi. I met him when we were on high school and I can’t get rid of him. Lavi, Bean spout. –

He blinked again, a part of his mind working on the pun on Lavi’s name, Kanda being Japanese; his understanding of the language somehow decent.

- Oh, nice to meet…- He offered his right hand. His tone friendly with a pinch of doubt, until the words he spoke got meaning. – MY NAME IS ALLEN, WHY DO YOU DO THIS? –

Yuu didn’t pay him any attention, the second Allen got distracted getting used by the newcomer to get closer.

- Beansprout is because of your hair? I like it! – He was holding the hand he extended to him before but in a way that made him feel like a princess. Instead of just squeezing it like a businessperson, Lavi held it and brought it to his lips, kissing it without moving his pupil from Allen eyes.

He turned red, the maneuver taking him completely by surprise. His senses overloading.

- Oh! Look at that, you could be a beet now! – He laughed, and Allen pulled his hand close to his chest, getting free of him. Beyond embarrassed.

- But really, it’s a pleasure to meet you, Allen. Yuu has talked about you a lot. –

Allen doubted that, but he moved his sight to his lover who was blankly staring at them with what now he noticed was a beer in his hand. He didn’t seem upset or jealous; instead, looking like he was used to that behavior.

He ignored the way his hand tingled and his skin tickled when he said his name and *specially*, he
avoided thinking in how it sounded when his voice pronounced the word “pleasure” as if meeting him was an especially exquisite dessert. Or a fully exotic experience.

“One of a kind.”

- Don’t mind him, he is always like that. – The long-haired man addressed him. He gave a long gulp to his drink and moved his head pointing at their room. – Don’t you have a shift to cover, Beansprout? I guess you are getting a shower. –

And just like that, life came back on track with routines and time. Making him rush to get ready and leave, the midnight bells destroying the spell for a fairytale that couldn’t happen at all. Lavi and Yuu both forgotten the moment he started working.

After that incredibly busy shift, Allen arrived home a little after four in the morning. Completely beaten and thinking about sleep even if was there on the floor. He managed to drag himself to the same couch where he was remembering everything, but when he sat on it the warmth and a coughed laugh almost had him screaming in a terrorized surprise that he had to swallow as fast as a tequila shot.

- Hey, I bet there are better ways to ride me, Beansprout! –

Allen had to bite his lips to avoid shouting. A thing that always happened when he got scared or surprised, danger and verbal aggression an equivalence exchange as long as it was sudden. Like an artic fox, incapable of growling. Only a fluffy ball of screaming stress.

- What the fuck are you doing here?! – He whispered fast and harsh and Lavi asked him to repeat it at least three times more in a strained laugh.

- You heard me, asshole! What are you doing in my couch! – He punched him with his bag making him complain and laugh shortly after. The moonlight gracing his striking smile, his handsome features emphasized by this star dusted spotlight.

- I’m sorry! – He didn’t sound like he was, particularly because he was holding his wrist and laughing like they were kids playing hide and seek in a secret spot. His breath tickling his skin as he brought it to his lips. Still laying down. – You are so adorable, that’s all! –

Allen punched him again, this time a bit softer, the adrenaline of the scare wearing off. He let himself drop against the couch. Not trying to get away from his grasp, getting comfortable in it instead. A thing Lavi noticed but kept to himself as an impression he built for his own taste.

- Isn’t his hand warm?"

- You curse a lot for someone with such a lovely face. – He smiled him with such kindness that Allen wanted to hit him again to make him stop, instead munching on the inside of his cheek. Avoiding his stare, the blush growing on his cheeks like spring roses.

If Yuu woke up, he would be beyond pissed and Allen wasn’t really in the mood for a fight. Specially with a guest in their house to witness it all. So he kept it quiet and rested his head on the couch, barely brushing his chest, the movement of his breathing easing his mood.

- I just had too many drinks and asked Yuu if I could stay. -He continued explaining. -I’m sorry Allen, am I bothering you? –

He turned quickly to face him being staring at their room’s door, in the process noticing Lavi was still wearing that eyepatch. The silence of the night made the crack his neck noticeable and Allen
knew that the movement will make his muscles hurt like hell in a very close future.

Strangely he hated that Lavi said his name so casually. He hated more being called “Beansprout” but no matter how much he asked or fought with Kanda about it, he didn’t seem to care enough to stop. Yet, with Lavi was different. It was weird being called by him name by him. He couldn’t put his finger on what it was, but he wanted it to stop and all the same...he didn’t want to. He didn’t say anything only because even to himself, it sounded like a stupid complaint.

His name with that voice a call that felt like pulling from a string that was directly tied to his heart. Was that a good thing? Allen bet it wasn’t.

Lavi thought Allen looked like a poem. His gray eyes like the moon itself, two twin mirrors of silver that were accusing him of a sin he didn’t understand but was glad he was committing. If that made him look at him that way. A penitence worth of paying, even if it dragged him to hell. His hair moved slowly with a delay of his movements, five strands of white hair that were missing the really small and messy bun he made to keep it away from his beautiful round face. He wanted to touch his scar that traveled to his face like a plead to kiss his temple. Just like a map.

“The star marks the treasure?”

Lavi was many things, but among them stupid was never on the list, so he didn’t touch him...At least...not how he wished he could. Letting his arm go as he considered his position. Allen was his mate’s boyfriend. And hell, Yuu had an amazing taste on them.

And Allen now, just like back then, repeated the question; an overlapping image of a memory that echoed that day.

- Bothering me? – It was such a strange concept that he repeated the words even then, when he was reliving them in a hazed state.

- Am I? – A voice in the present time asked him; the emerald eye staring at him.

He observed him, trying to identify if he was there or in his memories.


- If you say my name like that, you are going to make me think I’m some kind of Dirty Little Secret, Beansprout. – The redhead was kneeling in front of him, barely touching his knees.

“With those big, warm hands...”

He pushed him by the shoulder, making him fall. A poker face in place. Protecting an embarrassment that he didn't understand but certainly he felt guilty about; flustered enough to try and hide that sentiment...pushing the source of it away.

At least for a moment.

-You are so mean! – Lavi complained watching him getting up. – And I even came here to take you out, so you won’t be bored! – He pretended to be offended, but a smile was getting drawn over his lips. Dissolving the façade.

Allen looked at him as he stretched, avoiding his look. The feeling on his heart pulsating more faintly, like a pill that’s already losing its effect.
-I don’t know what you’re talking about. – Timcanpy, his cat, walked from the fake chimney shelf to sit on his shoulder now that he was close to it. He patted his head, the animal rubbing himself on the side of his face with happy and loud purrs.

-Didn’t you read your messages? – Lavi was laying on the floor, looking him from there and observing as the expression of pretended annoyance with pretty nose wrinkled in a fake disdain, washed from his face to leave one of growing panic. He hated to be the one to do that to Allen. He was a good guy. One with many talents and an amazingly kind heart. One with a beautiful face and a much more beautiful soul.

“Stranding from the path... Aren’t you?”

The point was, he didn’t deserve to be scared of forgetting his phone unattended. He wasn’t a cheater. For devil’s sake, he was a saint.

The redhead could understand the need for Yuu to protect him. To want him for himself. Allen was too kind, too charming. Too stupid to be left around unsupervised with so many cruel people in the world with such lack of malice. But he wasn’t a child either. He was allowed to have some liberty to make his own mistakes. Or at least that was what he thought. Not that anybody asked him, of course.

-Ah! I-I forgot! Darn! – He shuffled anxiously around the room looking for a phone that Lavi knew well was out of battery. A little thing that he learnt ten minutes ago when he tried to call him, so he would open the door. But as a lady’s voice informed that the line was out of reach, he tried to open. Finding a silver haired beauty sitting at the couch, his gaze lost in the nothing. Absent. And that was why after he called him, without getting a response, he approached; kneeling in front of him.

Lavi thought in how cute it was that he avoided cursing all the time. It wasn’t like he didn’t know about his ill-mannered mouth whenever nobody was looking, after all.

His phone rang this time and he answered knowing perfectly well who was. A slow and painful pressure under his heart.

-Don’t worry buddy, he is good. He just fell asleep; you know how he gets when is his free day! Haha! – Allen froze and stared at him. He put a finger over his own lips, a gesture that was confident the other would get as a sign to trust him. His laugh easy to release. -Hm? Yeah, his phone died as well. But you can call him here, of course. You wanna talk to him? – His friend mumbled on the other line and cut the call without anything else. -I guess that’s a no. -

- Is he mad? – The child-like voice that exited Allen’s mouth made him want to hug him, but as he always did… he kept his distance, smiling at him. His wishes remaining as they should. Completely hypothetical.

- Nah. He just said that you need to be more careful. He trusts I’ll take care of you these two weeks. –

“Liar.”

Allen listened what the redhead that was sitting on his living room floor said but he took a moment trying to understand it. The idea itself wild enough to leave a strange taste over his tongue.

-Two… weeks? – Yuu never left him alone that long. In fact, he never even left him for a day. And now he was gone for two entire weeks? What was he supposed to do? How was he supposed to act?!
-Yes! Two weeks of fun with me! – He stood up and put both of his hands over Allen’s shoulders, only to get bitted on one by the cat whom was now back on the shelf.

-Why with you? – He certainly didn’t mean the question like he phrased it. Wondering instead, why that was happening without him knowing anything. Why Lavi? A tall, handsome, incredibly nice guy. His best friend.

“Is this a test?” Their eyes met and his heart stopped for a moment. Fearing such thing being true.

- Ouch! You hurt my feelings beansprout! You don’t want me here? I thought we had a thing! – Lavi faked just a little that his heart ached and put his bitten hand over it. Just a little, because it might ache, but not because of that. It was something else, that was ironically tied to Allen, too.

“I bet this is a test.” He thought, as well.

- No! I didn’t mean that! Sorry! – Allen never noticed, but whenever they talked like that, he stepped closer to him.

“Tempting.”

It was horrible, Lavi thought. Horrible that he realized, horrible that he still wanted to provoke it, horrible because that was his best friend boyfriend.

Wasn’t he a horrible person? A horrible person, after all.

- I mean, why did he leave? – He took a step back, taking Timcanpy on his arms to pet him, his thought frantically running in look for an explanation that he didn’t have.

“Is this some sort of punishment?”

- Because he had a tournament, I think. You know that trainer thing he does? It’s a tournament or seminary or something like that. I didn’t really catch onto it. But he had to go, so, he left you with me, since I’m… - He sighed. - …his best friend. –

Such horrible person. With such horrible words to say.

Allen turned away from Lavi, leaving the cat again on his favorite place.

Why did Yuu leave when he was thinking that everything they had didn’t work? What was he supposed to do?! He loved him despite everything he was… despite everything he did. Despite how horrible he was.

“Horrible indeed. With your eyes wandering off to his face…”

- You don’t have to stay with me Lavi, I don’t want to bother you. –

It was a week before winter break, and he knew the redhead was surely busy with all the tests he was supposed to apply to poor stressed students and grade them.

- Oh no, Allen, you don’t get it. – There it was. His name pronounced by that voice. – I want you to bother me. –

- Shut up. – He said almost immediately managing to hide his laugh. It was by now a year since they knew each other. A year since he called him angel when he first put his eyes on him. And that dangerous voice when they were alone… wasn’t exactly helping him with the test Yuu put him
through. – Why didn’t he tell me? –

He was sure that was what it was. A test. Yuu was tired of him and he started to notice they were drifting away. So he, surely, decided to test him, never forgiving his past.

A past, Allen wished, he himself could forget.

Lavi felt bad enough for flirting that shamelessly, but having Allen talking about Yuu hurt his heart just the right amount for him to compose.

Talking like that was something he couldn’t avoid. Not with such face. Not with him around.

-I’m sorry. I’m sure he just didn’t want to bother you since you are starting finals and you are so busy with work. – He gave him a reassuring smile and he finally faced him.

Allen hated that Lavi called him by his name. But what he hated more, was that sensation of being lit from the inside with coals that shimmered in red glows when he did. A strange and confusing sensation that brought vertigo to new, unexpected heights. That, and that stupid smile of his; that promised him to fix everything in his life, when he didn’t ask for it.

“Oh, but don’t you need it?”

-Are you really staying the whole two weeks? – He asked trying to work with whatever emotion he was having. Trying to understand.

-Yes, unless you prefer to stay at my place, but is full of books. Does that bother you? –

-Do you mean the books or are you talking about yourself? – He wasn’t like that with anybody else. He didn’t use his witty mouth and his graduated sarcasm. He didn’t understand what was making him be like that with him. He wanted to be as nice and kind and patient as he was with his regulars, but Lavi had something that made it impossible…

“Is that smile…”

-Uff, such a rude mouth! Do you treat all your costumers like this? You are going to ruin that bar, buddy! –Allen rolled his eyes and then laughed. It was fine that Lavi stayed. Maybe he could help him settle his thoughts.

Lavi stared as the shortest laughed. Maybe it was a bad idea for him to stay. Maybe he wouldn’t be able to control himself.

And that, would certainly be horrible.

Everything was fun and games, until someone fell in love.
Dollhouse

Chapter Summary

Getting alone together is hard for many, but for this two? A slow fire that would probably end burning them both. Lavi has a little secret, one easily judged and terribly useful.

Everybody thinks seeing the future is a wonderful gift, but what about seeing you on your worst? Would that be great at all?

A littleeeeee NSFW? I guess.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

-Lavi...don't. –He held him tighter, pulling him a bit closer, not getting enough.

It was the feeling of his skin against his lips, the glorious smell of a strange but fresh flower, the taste of ambrosia whenever he kissed that particular spot. It was everything and more; the knowing guilt of breaking every rule, spoken or not; that stung behind his tongue with a buzzing delicious numb.

The sound of Allen’s voice was wrecking every ounce of coherent thought he ever owned. He knew what he was saying, but the tone he was using, his body pushing towards him and his hands refusing to let him go, relieved him from believing him.

-We can’t do this… -The redhead felt as if his veins were filled with gasoline instead of blood, the way Allen spoke the only spark that was needed to ignite him in a never ending, abrasive piece of fire.

-Why not? –He didn’t understand how he could be talking.

His lips never once leaving Allen’s neck, obsessed with taste every single space that was available to him.

A foreign hunger that was taking his sanity away from him.

-Because...mnh...B-because…-A part of him was screaming to hear him moan for real, to keep going until he was pushing him to his very edge. To force those cute pure lips to say nothing more but begs and his name.

To make him scream of a pleasure that words would be short about to define.

His remaining logic fighting for him to stop, warning him about the growing pain between his legs, that would be helped if he submitted to his wish.

The last he decided (with more than little effort) to listen to.
-Because? – Allen was sitting on his lap, his arms over his shoulders; letting him do as he wanted.

One hand grasping his hair while the other surely was leaving his perfect mark on his back, holding him that strong to keep him on place. There was little to none space between them, and he pulled back relentlessly, just enough to face him.

A mistake that he would regret sooner than later.

His eyes were clouded with a feeling he knew well; his cheeks flushed pink and his lips partially open, breathing heavily in a provocative manner that was forcing him to concentrate into being those inches separated from him before everything was too fast and too late.

-Because…- Allen grabbed his jaw with his right hand, leaning even closer so their lips would be brushing at every movement, the desire of passing his tongue over them and then kiss him so he didn’t have to finish that sentence. – Because I’m dating Yuu, and you are his best friend. – He licked his own lips, touching Lavi’s on the same way.

“Fuck me”

A plead, more than a desire.

-I guess you are a pretty lousy boyfriend, buddy. – It was a strangled whisper. Suddenly everything felt like he was in the hottest day of summer and the only way to get a bit of freshness, a bit of water so he would not die from dehydration were those pretentious pretty pink lips.

-Oh? – It was small motion; the movement wave his mouth acquired. Like a stone that broke the water surface; a natural motion that drew you closer without any second chance.

He breathed deep and long and after torturing enough with that longing distance, he finally kissed him. And what a hell of a kiss that was! Lavi was sure his mind shut down for at least an entire minute of pure ecstasy.

He surely was giving his whole.

The kiss was open mouthed, without any other thoughts. Without any shame or guilt or anything besides passion.

A flaming shooting star made of passionate fire, intending to consume everything it touches to ashes.

His tongue was looking for his as soon it arrived, touching sweetly and with all the security in the world. A kind invitation to sin.

A deal with the devil himself.

Because after tasting that, Lavi was sure, he couldn’t just say goodbye.

Whoever Yuu was once was already doomed.

As he pulled back (much to Lavi’s demise), he bit his lip playfully. Making the redhead try to follow him again to keep the kiss going. A skilled lead to surrender your heart.

Nevertheless, he got apart again, and as he looked down at him from his privileged seat, he smiled in such a malicious way that Lavi thought if in reality that innocent face was nothing but a trick.

Didn’t the church warn him about such wicked ways?
-Not as lousy as you as a best friend, isn’t it…buddy? –The sentence a melody on its own. A siren call that started as a purr and ended with a poisoned dagger, decorated with a teasing laugh. Lavi felt again that sting of embarrassment, knowing what he did. His hands now slithering over his shirt, slowly in every right place.

What a horrible friend he was, indeed.

Because behind all, he couldn’t wish a better place to be beside under that demonic angel of god.

He closed his eyes for a second. The fear taking the ship’s control and driving towards reality. A terrible crash that ended his fantasies with a falling smack.

Music came from somewhere close, he noticed as he fought to open his eyes; feeling cold sweat covering his body like a fever that tried to exorcize his own sickness. And looking around he realized, with no little disappointment that there was not a single trace of those eyes filled with mischief and lust.

-Fuck…-He whispered, a single lamp on a white ceiling that wasn’t his own. The clattering of the kitchen not too far, the music still going. Starting to pierce his ears with an increasingly annoying volume. He put his hands over his eyes, immediately checking for the eyepatch; that luckily was where it was supposed to be.

A little normality in that crazy train wreck his life became.

“Only a dream…”

The music kept playing and with more a reflex than an actual conscious action, he searched blindly around looking for his phone. Finally, after trying time and time again like a persistent security guard at an airport, he got hold of the thing; getting off the alarm that screamed with videogame music.

“Stupid water temple. I was starting to like you.”

He sat on the couch he slept, feeling cold in his wet t-shirt, his head still pounding with such images.

-Hey, good morning Lavi! –If the cold wasn’t enough coming from the outside, his stomach decided it was a great idea to froze at the sound of that voice. –Is everything ok? –

The cheering tone of Allen fading into worry, and Lavi pushed himself to look at him; never ready to make him feel anything but happy.

And there he was.

Wearing dark jeans and a red sweater with twin white stripes on the left side, that was too big for… for anybody, actually. The color only making his skin look paler and softer, his oh, so perfect lips pinker and his sparkling eyes more live with the silver light of joy.

“What a concept! Anything to say? Because you should.”

-Hey…you…- His voice came out weak and trembling, making him clear his throat in an attempt
to recover some of his lost dignity.

The redhead always heard about people saying how awkward was to face the friend whom just dreamed about in an absolute sexual way, but never ever actually happened to him before.

He remembered laughing at those *poor bastards*.

**Not anymore.**

*“Sucks being the poor bastard, huh?”* He thought, gulping.

How was he supposed to see him in the eye without thinking on how his face looked before he kissed the sense out of his brain? And after hearing him talk to him like that, how he breathed, how he *tasted*…

-Lavi? –Now Allen was kneeling beside him, his face closer than how he needed it to be. The moment when he arrived lost in his introspection.

-Yes! –He practically screamed, jumping a bit on his seat. Closing his hands in fist like a child that was asked to answer in a middle of a crowded class. –Yes! Of course, haha! I’m…*totally* fine Beansprout! -Allen raised an eyebrow, resting his face over his hand as his elbows rested on the corner of the couch.

-Yes? –The shortest pressed lightheartedly, not believing him.

-Yeah! I just… I was just super bewildered that someone was making breakfast for *little old me.* – Lavi hated every word he spoke. If he was trying to look more suspicious than before that was just the way to do it.

*“Not the sharpest tool in the shed.”* Puberty was behind him, but never forgotten, he bitterly thought as his first awkward teenage years came back in a flash that ran through his body like a nauseating sensation.

-Maybe I’m just trying to be nice. –The smaller boy told him as he allowed his eyes to travel from his friend’s face to his chest, observing how the wet fabric stuck to him, drawing every muscle like a sculpture, reminding him of his very first impression of the redhead.

-Or trying to poison me. -A silly joke to try and ease his heartbeats. He realized where was Allen looking and his nerves started to increase as those precious and unreadable eyes were going lower.

–What are you trying buddy, to make me *fall in love*?–

Quickly he moved, holding his knees to avoid the embarrassment that was hiding a bit down, still excited about that little dream…or nightmare? There was something different about Allen that morning, but as his mixed feelings were playing with everything inside his mind, he couldn’t pinpoint it as he tried to not stare at that beautiful face.

-Maybe. –Allen smiled without knowing what he was doing to him, a line that curved on the end marking one dimple on the right side where it touched his cheek. He was only being in the best mood he ever remembered having. Being rested, relaxed and happy. His distraction preventing him from listening that last part; his answer to the poison inquire. And then, Lavi realized what his stupid mouth just said, hiding his blushed face between his crossed arms.

-I made pancakes, come on. They’re going to get cold. – He stood up, walking to pet Timcanpy, who was expecting him against the doorframe of the kitchen. Luckily, the silver haired not
seeming to realize the distress of his friend.

- May I get a shower first? I… I need to change I’m all sweaty and… - Lavi pinched the fabric trying to separate it from his body, looking at Allen fully for the first time, a comical apologetic expression plastered on his face.

- Surely, you can do whatever you want. We’ll wait for you. – He picked the cat from the floor, and as he turned to see him, Lavi’s soul dropped to his feet.

Allen didn’t have a single hair over his baby face because he was sporting his bandana.

- Is… Is that my…? – Allen gave him an adorable questioning look, and as he followed his stare, he switched the cat to his left, carrying him like a baby. With his other hand he touched the piece of cloth, his expression changing as fast as lightning.

- Oh! OH! I’m so sorry Lavi! I shouldn’t have… I… - Lavi’s heart went after his soul and fell to the floor with what he imagined was a loud thud or a crystal crash.

Why was he so scared? He didn’t mind him using the thing. For what it mattered, it was at least flattering.

- No, no, no, don’t apologize man! I was just surprised how good it looked on you! – He tried to smile to him reassuringly and as the smallest of the two smiled cautiously, hugging the cat, he allowed himself to keep breathing.

- Really? –

A pulsing problem that refused to let him abandon the blanket warned him about his staring and pushing his luck that far. After all, adorability was definitely one of his biggest weaknesses.

- Yeah, but not as good as me. –

A silence that was only interrupted by the soft landing of the cat slapped him on the face with the real meaning of his phrasing and how his voice betrayed his master along the way.

- … W-what? – Lavi closed his eye tight recognizing what he said, his lips pursed in an already too late gesture to keep his words to himself and think of them before letting them out. As his grandfather would say.

When he finally decided that the silence was longer than it should he opened his eye, facing him, Allen reduced to a red mess that was hiding half of his features against his open palm.

“Did you just said that you… would look better ON him?!”

- I mean, it looks better on me. But you can keep it. On second thoughts it looks so much better on you, very nice, yes. –

“Great save, dude.” The nervous laugh that was implicit between every word didn’t help in anyway.

Allen felt his skin warmer. He was used to Lavi friendly hitting on him, but a honestly flustered Lavi? That was sure new to him.

In the second he took trying to cool off from the surprise the redhead quickly rushed to the shower, carrying his things with him. Nothing left to say. At least not if he wanted to preserve those dignity
crumbles from disappearing.

Yet, as his confusion started to run a lot of different thoughts, Allen decided he would breath and enjoy his free day, I mean, it was just Lavi.

He would never mean anything more than what was there.

“Even if you do?”

-Shut the entire fuck you fucker. – Timcanpy meowed worried, his tail moving into a question mark that seemed perfectly adequate to the moment. –No, not you little baby! You are a good kitty. – He apologized giving him a treat. The animal sitting in his back legs to ask for it, earning being petted as well.

The water started running and after some minutes, Allen started to put the table and wait for his guest, feeling like there was nothing else but his imagination.

“It’s just the nerves of being with someone else alone after so long. That’s all.” He thought. Trying to convince himself.

-I need to see you. – On the other side of the phone a disbelieving sound was followed by a warm, feminine giggle.

-You sound like a total douchebag, dude! –

-Lena, please. –

He was already naked, every piece of clothing on the floor as the water ran, filling the place with steam, his reflection losing clarity; his now patchless eye, staring back at him with affliction.

-Ok, ok. – His friend said, excusing herself. – But if it’s about another meaningless crush I am going to kill you. I do have a life, as difficult that is for you to imagine. –

- I don’t think it’s just a meaningless crush this time Leena… -

His heart ached as he spoke, backing up his words. A disease that pulsated under a doctor’s diagnosis, recognizing its name; like a demon under the disguise of a normal soul.

There were a few seconds of silence and for a moment he thought his phone died.

-Ok Lavi, what’s this about? - Her voice started like a big sister being upset in the middle of an important friend gathering but as the answer from the redhead delayed, it transformed into a warmer, more worried tone. - Are you ok? I can meet you today, if you like. –

-Yes, please. Just… give me twenty, I’ll meet you at the faculty café. – The sentence felt strange. Like going to the dentist and having half of your mouth numb by the anesthesia; that now had absolute control of your messy attempts to create words. Trying a strange experience on its own.

-All right. Don’t leave a lady waiting, bunny. – She still sounded worried but tried her best to hide it and he picked up on that.

-Thanks. - He hung up without anything else, finally letting the shower clean him from the cold
sweat that he was sure, stank with his impure desires.

-Hell is such a beautifully horrible place. –He whispered as he allowed his mind to slip away, only a little bit further under the water stream.

Lavi wondered, after the shower, if the situation was something to call Lenalee over. Maybe he over reacted. Maybe it wasn’t that important.

It was just like when he was a teen and suddenly because of a word, the change of the weather or even a look he would have a breakdown and get all upset and start fight only to realize, a minute later that maybe… just maybe it wasn’t that much of a deal…

He sat with Allen, who still wore his bandanna like a model; and ate the most wonderful breakfast of his life. A single bite was enough to blast his mind.

“This are just pancakes…how could he make them taste so…good?!”

-Is it good? – The silver haired stared at him, without touching his own food. As if he was waiting for his approval to start eating.

-Good? – It was almost impossible to notice, but his eyes seemed to darken with the anticipation of a negative statement. –This is great! What are you doing as a bartender?? If you had your own place, I would go every day! –

The shy giggle that accompanied the gesture of putting a strand of hair behind his ear, made his skin tingle, screaming with the need of touching him again. Whatever reason was enough. If he could just casually touch his face, his arm, his hand… Only once more…

He blinked several times realizing how weird the thought was; calling for Lenalee confirmed as the right decision.

-Don’t be silly. You can eat the stuff I make whenever you want. –Lavi wasn’t the jealous type. Actually, he was always proud on the happiness his friends gave him by being happy themselves. But right then the life Yuu had and he didn’t, bit him in the throat like merciless starving dingo. What wouldn’t he give, to had what he had! A day with that smile, a night at the same bed.

“It would be worth the world.”

Allen kept talking, clueless to this. Happy enough to be praised for something a thing that was neglected to him for a really long time.

-In fact, you have to, unless you want to have something outside. For the next two weeks that’s it. – He finally started eating and Lavi did the same as slowly as he could, savoring the image of having breakfast with that piece of heaven every day. Wishing again and imagining that that was his daily life and not only a borrowed moment of someone else.

Everything went too fast for his taste, and when he realized, his phone was ringing with a message from his already waiting friend in a close by cafe.

-Hey Allen. –They were sitting in the living room now, Allen at the very same spot he was in his dream. Without him, that was. The dishes were clean, and the atmosphere was charged with a
sense of tranquility and homelike vibe that was making hard for Lavi to even mentioning leaving. Another piece to the window of a borrowed life he wished it was his own.

“Is Yuu like that with him?”

-Yes? – Allen shivered from hearing his name, a wild smile that he was trying to tame. They were alone in perfect silence, Lavi checking some papers from his students as himself read about Vermeer and his influence on lighting for his upcoming exam on baroque. Not a single thing wrong with each other lack of words. The air carrying only the warm of each other company.

Why did he have to say his name like that? As if he was tasting the letters between his lips, like a spell or a forbidden word? Why it made him feel like whenever he was called, he was being owned in a way that could never mean anything besides freedom?

And why did it feel like such a dangerous bet, that his old habits kicked in, asking to join instead of fleeing away?

Was he thinking on it too much?

Possibly.

Was he letting that handsome face distract him?

Surely.

-I have to go…-Allen didn’t want to pull away from his book. The pain that those words made him feel, too real to acknowledge. Too stupid to understand. So Allen just raised his gaze to the man standing in front of him, trying hard to not let his turbulent mess of emotions show. His now perfected poker face in place. –For a couple hours. –

A ridiculous relief washed over him like a wave.

“You seem too eager to see him again and he hasn’t even left. Thought you said you didn’t need anybody? Thought you said he was just a friend?”

-Is that ok? I’m just meeting a buddy of mine; I won’t take long. –He didn’t know why he was explaining that much to him, but leaving Allen alone felt like he was ditching him and that was the last thing he wanted the shortest to think. His voice an apologetic tone that made him sound more like he was asking for an excuse to not leave. -I can even reschedule if you want to do something else? I mean, it’s not that important. If you want me to stay, I can stay…–

“A little obvious?”

-What? –The smile that finally appeared on his face felt like it would split it on half. –You don’t have to do that, dork. It’s ok to leave, I’m not a child. I’ll be ok. I’m just going to study today. If you’re so worried, about me. –

- Ok… - A dumb smirk was the best he could come up with, melted by the sight of the other, in front of him, still sitting on the couch. – Well, I’ll be leaving… -

Regardless of his words, he stood there, motionless, shamelessly staring.

Allen closed his book over his lap. Noticing the rolled sleeves of the redhead and how pretty the rings on his left hand, that was resting on his hips, were.
He stood up; Lavi never moving. Not even a centimeter back.

A giggle escaped his lips and he transformed his (probably too obvious) expression in a knowing-all smirk.

-Do you want to take a picture? –He asked.

-And what if I do? -Allen knew the game. Maybe he was pretty out of shape, but once a player, always a player.

“Yeah, a friendly game, right?”

His smile changed, a scolded student, slapped in the wrist by the governess. A constant vigilant on his mind. His own ball and chain for his own decisions. A seal to keep what he was away from the others.

“Keep up with the façade.”

-You and what camera? -He pushed him softly, walking with him to the door, the redhead not taking anything beside his phone and wallet.

-Take care. – He said as the taller was out. A cold breeze getting inside as winter find shelter on the dark corners of the apartment building that had no one in them.

-For you? Anything. –And the sincerity of the phrase floated again between them, making Allen warm and fuzzy and Lavi drunk on what ifs.

-You are so stupid. –He laughed. His heart felt like a huge water glass where someone just dropped an Alka-Seltzer. –Just don’t die. –

- Of course, I’ll have to be back for you. – He stepped toward Allen, stopping dead on track realizing what he was about to do. His hand flied to his lips, trying to hide the tool for the treason he managed to stop that day. -See ya’ then. –

Lavi turn away from his favorite temptation and rushed towards the stairs, thinking the exercise would keep his mind out of Yuu’s business.

-You look fabulously awful, Lavi. –

-What the fuck, Lena. –

She was sitting alone outside of their favorite coffee shop. The iron table twisting in delicate forms that seemed made only for her aesthetic of choice. Like a doll on a showcase. Lavi always wondered how girls could use skirts with such cold weathers, but as far as he was concerned Lenalee was beyond every human comprehension. Like a witch or a fairy.

He smiled at her, and let his body drop to the cushioned chair that she always saved for him. It gave him the sensation of being hugged without the compromise, so it was his absolute favorite and he was happy she remembered it.

They were best friends as long as with Kanda and the only person that he could trust no matter
what.

-That’s a horrible thing to say to your favorite man, isn’t it? –His back sounded like a pack of firecrackers, but the relief was a pleasure so unique that the noise was honestly, easy to ignore.

- You are not my favorite man, dork. –The twin pigtails of her hair waved graciously as she moved to give him the coffee she always ordered on his behalf. With a comic little bunny as an art latte.

- I am almost wounded. – His voice a flat monotone followed by a deep sigh as he took the drink with both hands, letting the heat travel through his cold skin. – How was work today? –

A little gulp of coffee, flooding his body with the most needed warmth and the contrast of a life outside his tribulations.

-Are you honestly asking me about my job? Thought you had a little someone to talk about… sounded pretty urgent on the phone… -Lenalee teased, playing with the silver spoon of his tea, like she couldn’t care less about whatever he needed to say.

“A bad liar if you ask me.”

Lavi shrugged, without stop drinking; something that told her more than what his words could. The girl stared at him patiently; a dynamic she knew it had to be done, knowing that pushing him to speak would only make him less keen to talk to her. After all, he was a man of books, and having patience was the only way to get to him.

After two or so minutes, Lavi sighed, concentrated on the color of his coffee and how it steamed.

- I…have this friend… A…- And then and there he realized that Lenalee knew Kanda and therefore…she probably knew Allen. Just like he did. His friend or not, he knew how much she appreciated Yuu and was almost sure that wouldn’t really condole him trying to still the boyfriend of his so called best-male-friend…

Because having a crush on him was a thing, but wanting him to break up with his current man?

Totally not right.

-…A friend that I appreciate a lot and…it’s really cute and I can’t stop thinking about them every damn second of the day? –

-You look weird with your hair down. – She extended an arm to pull softly one of his copper locks. Making him stare in disbelief. –Come on Lavi… You had a thousand of other crushes. What makes him different? –

-They could be a she. – He answered defensively.

-Is he? – Lenalee smiled knowingly, resting his face against her folded hands in a way that made her eyelashes look longer, her lips in a peach shade that contrasted with her hazelnut eyeshadow.

-No…-He let his forehead drop against the table, surrendering and suddenly tired. –I…I had a dream about him. –

-Well that’s pretty standard. –She started petting his head, listening patiently and lovingly like the sister he never had. Absently wondering about the bandana, who never abandoned that orange mess of hair for as long as she knew him.
-No Leena…A dream. You know…A dream. Those so vivid and real that it’s like waking up to another part of history that you weren’t supposed to? A dream. –

He switched his face so he could see her, emphasizing the words; her black eyes filled with deep intrigue. Trying to understand his obnoxious use of the word even when he was a professor and his lexicon was far beyond that stark term.

-Do you mean a premonition? – She asked with an incredible poker face that could rival Allen’s.

-For fuck’s sake, don’t say it like that! – She smiled sweetly and started to eat a small cake that was previously abandoned; amused for his paranoia as he looked back and forth for someone that could overhear their little chat. Not like anybody would care or believe them, but that wasn’t the point.

-Oh Lavi…Are you still ashamed of the mystic gift you have? I already told you. It isn’t your fault. –

-It sounds stupid. – She rolled her eyes. An eternal discussion that had her exhausted. Furthermore, she was also pretty sure Lavi already knew his seer gift was more than real; after all that happened those past years.

-Tell me. About the dream I mean. –

The line between his hair and his skin disappeared and she thought that, if that dream had Lavi blushing like that, she surely didn’t want to hear about it.

-I can’t. It can’t be a premonition Lena…-His voice was strangled, and she remembered the first time she surprised him without the eyepatch.

She caressed the piece of cloth very gently, the expression of a much younger Lavi, branded into her mind. Confused and terrified.

Alone.

- Why not? What does this cutie have that is impossible to think you would be dating him? –

-He is dating one of my best friends. –He was biting his lip, ready for the scolding of the decade. But all that it was there in the eyes of the Chinese was an awful and merciful…pity.

One that made him realize how desperate he looked and what a terrible mistake that conversation was.

“You only have one best friend. I bet she already knows.”

- Oh sweetie… If we could only avoid the future. –She squeezed his hand, only for a moment, her tone a conformity condemn that was just the shadow of the last vision that became true. A mistake he wished to prevent. But time was impossible to brought back. Lenalee always thinking of that as something inevitable.

Lavi stared at her, his covered eye itching. A warm pair of drops falling free over his cheeks. Starting to feel as doomed as a ghost.
-Why am I such a horrible person, Lena? –

-You are not horrible Lavi… -A mantra to repeat to the redhead. Sweet sixteen and until then.

-Then why do I feel like this? –

He could tell Lenalee thought he was saying that because of Kanda, the friend from who he was betraying by falling in love with his significant other, but no. He felt horrible because even knowing that, all that he could think about was the way Allen smiled at him.

How he moved, how he smelled.

And the hungry wonder of how he really tasted.

It didn’t take much for him to be back at Allen’s place. But as he walked over there one single thought lingered on his mind. He would tell him about the dream. About how he sometimes had premonitions, about how could they avoid it. About how he wouldn’t allow him to feel as dirty as he was now; stained by his desires. About how…

“You sure think highly of yourself.”

Everyone has inner voices. Some of them are louder than others. And unfortunately, most of the times the voice that speaks louder is the one that hates us the most.

“Do you think he would believe all that magic crap? Do you think he won’t stop talking to you the second your mouth goes off with that seer stuff? The reason you keep your eyepatch there? Do you think for a second, that he won’t stare at you, thinking you are a miss matched, patched up mongrel? That he will forgive how a terrible person you are? Will you talk about her? Without breaking down. Are you going let everything crumble? Everything you were so dedicated to build? Your perfect image? Everyone thinks that we’re perfect. Please, don’t let them look through the curtains. Because behind all that, you and I… We are nothing…but a mess.”

He stood in front of the door, frozen. Not knowing when he arrived there. His hand without touching the doorknob; suspended in the air.

“Doubtful.”

And as he was deep in his thoughts, the door opened on his own, like a revelation. Allen speaking with words he couldn’t hear.

-Lavi? –His name distant, like light filtering through a cotton thick panel. Allen took his hand timidly and lead him inside, closing the door. The clicking allowing him to be back at his body.

-Sorry! I spaced out. –He apologized as he dusted some snow that fell on his shoulders as he walked back to his apartment.

Allen had the whole morning to think about how strange Lavi was acting and as the hours passed, he was getting more and more worried that it was because of something that he did. So, he stepped cautiously with his words, trying to know without exposing too much. Grateful that at least he found him just before he started looking for him outside, making everything more uncomfortable.
-Do you have something on your mind? –
Lavi wasn’t very keen on destiny.

Destiny was crap. For all he cared.

It took people lives and carried them however it pleased. It ruined friendships, it destroyed hearts. It forced you to take a path you clearly didn’t want or even worse it endorsed the one you wanted…no matter how that would hurt the people around you.

But it didn’t matter how you fought it. How you resisted. Eventually you would be there.

And as far as he knew, his premonitions never failed. Just like Lenalee pointed out. The future is always what it should be. Everything a cog in the destiny machine.

But it wasn’t fair. He hated to be the one used and manipulated by some supposed god or higher being that with a flick of their wrist would write their lives as if they were meaningless stories to tell in the dark. So tired, he decided he would play with it. He would play as well as he could. With his own rules.

He would be himself.

-Yes. You. –

And what a horrible thing that was, indeed.

Chapter End Notes

Hello there! If you are here reading this, that means you know a lot about patience and that you reeeeeeeeeeeel really love D.Gray Man, as I do! Im taking my time with this baby, and Im sorry to keep you waiting, but I hope you really enjoy the end!

[This chapter was heavily edited as well, the word count getting up.] Thank you for passing by and always feel free to leave a comment, it doesn't matter the language. I'm happy to try new things.
Tag, You Are It!

Chapter Summary

A little lie that turns out into a heated moment.
Lavi takes Allen to his class and as the time passes he discovers the only thing he wants to teach about isn’t exactly accepted in public.

The classroom is alone and this two have enough issues on their own.

"Let me take you for a joyride. I've got some candy for you inside"~

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

-Me? –

-Yes, specifically I was wondering if you ever assisted a history class before. –The words rolled out his tongue easily. Like rehearsed lines of a play where he had the lead.

Allen stared at him, confused. His major was Art History. Of course he went to such lectures. Then again, he couldn’t remember if he ever told him.

-Only about art, if those count. –He made a small pause, wondering if that was a subtle enough way to let him know. –Why? –

-I need you to accompany to one of my lectures. -Lavi felt stupid by asking an such an obvious question. But as the sentence built up itself, he hopped for it to make more sense than it had inside his mind. Which was none. -You see; my students usually attend all my classes, but they fail miserably when it’s about finals. So…I need you to tell me if I am not explaining myself properly or if there’s any way for me to improve. Please? I’m tired of seen that kid, Mimi, on my classes. Its been a whole year and I’m starting to think it’s on purpose. –

Lavi was impressed by how smooth the lie came out. He never stuttered, he didn’t sound pushy and most of all, it didn’t sound as if he just came out with the idea right on the spot.

Which he certainly did.

There was the possibility of Allen being busy by the hour any of his lectures was supposed to happen; but if he was or was not, that would be the very first bet he would make with destiny.

“Whatever it’s supposed to happen, will happen.”

-Yes, I would love to. –A giggle that was filled with sparks like a flare on New Year’s Eve that anticipated his response. He was hugging the book he was reading before he left, and Lavi once again realized how much he got near to him. Did he even notice himself?

Probably not.

The worst part was that he knew Allen wasn’t like that with people he didn’t like. Getting that
close was a privilege to those who were worthy enough to be someone that he loved.

“Loved…”

Once or twice he saw him do the same with Lenalee, but…it wasn’t really the same. Was it?

“Or maybe you are again, thinking too much of yourself.”

-The only issue is that the lecture is today…- His tone was lower and instead of keeping his distance he maintained his ground, letting him get closer. Waiting for something he didn’t know.

“You are playing a dangerous game, dude.”

-It’s ok, my manager doesn’t expect me to show up to work when I’m at finals. And my first exam is tomorrow. –

Oh, the irony.

“They say the road to hell is paved with good intentions…but yours is surely paved with provocations to life.” He smiled, happiness truly there; ignoring that teasing voice.

In his life there weren’t many things that he was proud of, but his lectures? Those were his pride and joy. And taking Allen to one? Damn, the thought made his chest puff with glee. It was like inviting him to the best part of himself.

“The only good part of yourself.”

It wasn’t only how he did his job; it was more about how he opened about it. Lavi loved history. Every part of it. The wars, the loves, the plagues, the rituals, the discoveries, the people. History was everywhere. If there was really a god somewhere, history would be it. Observing everything, being everywhere, knowing it all. And as a god, history was the guideline that people were meant to follow…if they didn’t want to repeat their ancestors’ mistakes.

From the wheel to the pyramids. From the electricity to just knowing the night was not an abandonment of some other cruel divinity. Like a giant diary written by the stars, telling the story of thousands of small humans that made their way through life and now, allowed them to be where they were. It was like…the true face of fate.

“Fate…”

Knowing about the past kept him tied to the present, instead of lost in the sea that were every revelation of the future, that had no date, not context or meaning. Seeing the future was more like drowning in the middle of a dark nowhere, where history was the only lifeline.

But as many things, this was something not everyone enjoyed. So, speaking about history and his random “fun” facts bored most of his acquaintances to death.

Leaving him once again, alone.

-Well then, we have…- He checked his watch, a Geckota C-01 racing chronograph. A square piece of engineering with a brown leather strap that was the first thing he buy himself with his professor paycheck. He was careful to not push Allen, who was so close to him now, that he could be reading the thing himself if he wanted. –Half an hour. –

-Perfect. I’ll take a bath. Do you need anything? –His lips moved softly and Lavi required all his
willpower to concentrate on the question.

“To join you.”

-No, I’ll be reading the last papers I need to grade, if you don’t mind. –

“But I hope you do so you ask me to be with you, instead.” Lavi smiled, at him slowly. Uncapable to keep his thoughts out of his face, some hairs moving with Allen’s breathing, being as close as he were. The silver haired smiled mirroring him in a cuter, more flustered way and after murmuring an “ok” that was half a song and half a giggle went off to his room; as Lavi finally let out the breath he was holding. Still daydreaming about the blush that started at his neck and advanced to through Allen’s face to reach his ears.

“Adorable…But, two weeks of this? If he gets anywhere nearer than that he’ll surely know I do not have anything in my pockets and I’m only super happy to see him...”

A palmface that sounded just like someone slamming a plus four in an UNO game when someone called it.

Allen sat in the bathtub slowly as the water covered him with warm bubbles. He let the water cover him over his lips, only from his nose up above it. He observed the swirls of soap with multiple colors as the bath bomb he decided to finally use, dissolved with a soft sizzling noise and a rich roses scent. His chest was visibly pounding, the water moving softly in the secret rhythm of his heart. He moved his hands slowly under the liquid to touch the exact point his heart was under.

One beat after another, the only sound being the one the drops that fell from the tap made when it touched the water. Allen let his eyelids drop once again, looking for a question and an answer at the same time.

“He is just being kind to you.”

-I know. –His voice resonating in his sacred space; used to talk to himself he knew it wouldn’t reach outside.

“Then why are you all excited just because he invited you to a class?”

-I’m not sure. –

“Yuu haven’t texted as often. Do you think he finally found someone better than you and moved on?”

Allen didn’t answer his own question. Instead, he let himself sunk in the tub, washing his hair. Surrendering to the momentary peace that submerging gave him.

“Not that you missed him this day and a half with that stud out of your room.”

He came out of the water, coughing. His own thought shocking him.

- Lavi is my friend...! –

“Yes, a very handsome, dedicated, loving, funny friend. And a boy. Almost like a boy-friend, you know?”
- Fuck off. –Allen didn’t want to give the reason to this selfish part of him, but he knew what it was about. It wasn’t only that he saw Lavi like that. It was the fact that he was thinking of him like that when he already had a boyfriend. When he was already lucky to be wanted by someone, being as problematic as he was; and he was trashing it away for no one else, but his boyfriend’s best fucking friend.

What would Lavi think about that?

He was so loyal and great… He would probably hate him. A picture of Lavi walking away, disgusted by discovering his not that innocent crush, made him curl in the water.

-I could never…- Little drops falling from his hair like tears into the bathtub.

He rose up the water after a while, the silence of his mind and the guilt inside him enough for him to keep bearing. He took a towel and realized he didn’t bring his clothes to the bathroom, adding another brick to the wall of his faults. Allen put the cloth around his waist and with annoyance noticed that one was the shortest one they had. The fabric barely covering above his knee.

-Great…-He opened the door, too busy with his own thoughts, finding not a hallway but a black t-shirt and a thin gold chain with an upside-down triangle hanging from it. The ticking of a clock close and loud for his ears that were deprived from any sound that wasn’t echoing drops of water, making feel in a strangely familiar dream realm.

-I’m sorry, I called for you, but you didn’t answer, and I was getting…uh…-Red was becoming his standard skin shade with that man around; he thought, hardly grabbing the towel as it slipped. Allowing him to cover his manhood and the part of decency he still got, everything else on display.

“Facing your crush, naked, is one of your boldest moves.”

Lavi wished his other eye wasn’t wearing the eyepatch. He wished Allen was single, he wished that was the morning after and they were only looking for excuses to never leave and keep the bed warm in that oh, so cold, winter. He wished he wasn’t even friends with Kanda, and most of all he wished he wasn’t such a terrible person.

-I’m sorry. –He said looking away only with great effort, scratching his cupid arch as he tried not to stare again. – I’ll wait for you at the living room. -

The redhead felt his arms were sticks that were badly glued to his toy soldier body; and walking like a wooden puppet with less articulations than a bicycle, he went to the spot that kept his deepest dreams.

“Look at that, he already hates you and he didn’t even see you fully naked!” Allen held the towel tighter, the discoloring of his arm obviously without any clothes to cover it. Quickly he went to his bedroom, picking another pair of jeans, a white shirt and a deep green cardigan that didn’t allow a single space of skin to show. Then, he picked a pair of gray gloves and put over his graphite coat.

He looked at himself in the mirror what felt like a thousand years and after brushing his hair he decided that that was the best he could do without overdoing it.

-Sorry about that Lavi, I hope I’m not making you late? –

“Trying to act as if nothing happen only makes the elephant in the room more obvious. Genius.”

Lavi looked at him over the last paper he was deciding to fail, planning a quick glance to not lose
focus on that piece of blabbering garbage that seemed written by an autocorrect remix; but after resting his eyes on Allen, the paper was already forgotten.

“Sorry for whoever you are.” After all the effort that was to concentrate on reading and not to relive his dream picturing now a gorgeously naked Allen…He opened and closed his mouth one time and another; a goldfish trying to breath.

-Woah…-The redhead whispered, out of words.

-Uh? –

-Are… are you going like that to my lecture? –He pointed the outfit, uncapable of stop looking at him. How could he hide all that potential in fabric and still look as stunning as a masterpiece?

-Is it underdressed? -He twisted trying to look at his own back. Searching for a slipup that didn’t exist. -I never went to another faculty and Art’s pretty messy; you know? –

It was now when Lavi noticed he wasn’t wearing the bandanna anymore. A punch to his ego that he tried to dismiss.

“He wouldn’t be wearing it all the time. Obviously. He took a bath. Is not like it was glued at him for forever.”

-N-no, I mean…-He laughed between nervous and sarcastic. –Man, you are gonna distract half of my students! –

“And me. Mostly me. Just me. Forget the others.”

-I’ll be quiet, I promise. –Allen seemed so small when he did that. The fidgeting hands and the eyes glued to the floor. A child that was waiting for a punishing hand for a fault he didn’t understand. And the redhead couldn’t fight against his need to protect him. To erase that expression from his face. From his life.

-Don’t put that face, buddy… I’m saying you look great. –He stepped further and hugged him, closing the distance. Squeezing the atoms that were the only thing between them beside the morals he didn’t have.

A hug that made something that was locked inside him break free. A demon who was patiently waiting for him.

-I don’t want to give you any troubles… - He looked at him with his big worried eyes. How could Yuu had him like that? Allen was someone who wasn’t meant to be castigated. He had that already managed on his own. Lavi knew the guy and he doubted that Yuu didn’t love him, but his clear insecurities and fears were destroying that beauty. Dragging him down to a path of no return.

-Don’t say that. – He wanted to look away, but those twin silver lakes were too much, and drowning seemed so much easier than fighting against them. A paradise he could get lost in forever and always, without any need of looking back.

The envy came back, slithering through his back, cold and slowly like a thin eastern garter snake. Why should Yuu have him? Was it a compensation for that time when…?

-I’m always happy to have you with me, Allen. Nobody is going to say anything about you being there. So please, don’t make that sad face, it’s breaking my heart. –The redhead hesitated but decided to move his hand to touch his cheek, cupping it; Allen blinked slowly, his hands resting on
Lavi’s chest. That he noticed, was wider than Yuu’s and over all softer, kinder… and felt… more like home.

-Please Allen. —Begging.

“He is so close.” Allen thought. His name moving slowly over his lips again, truly like a spell.

Maybe Medusa really existed, and the guys he made stone came back, but never stopped looking like a god’s stone figure.

He couldn’t stop the hammering inside his ribcage. His heart racing and dulling the noise from outside his body; the sensation of a dream again injected in his blood.

-Why? – He asked out loud without noticing. His habit of speaking with himself betraying him. Looking for something in that eye that would help him calm his heart.

Lavi felt the attraction like a magnet, being softly but decisively drawn to the smallest.

-Because I may not resist…-His nose was now brushing against his. His emerald eye, the same hue that Allen’s sweater had, darkening with danger and invitation.

“Then don’t.” Both thought at the same time. Only a readjusting angle was needed to transform that into a kiss.

If one of them only moved their head slightly to one side. Any side… A kiss would be almost required.

A kiss would be mandatory.

Lavi was moving slowly, the weight of Allen on his arms, the contrasting temperature of his skin against his, so close. If he could only get the courage to do it.

“Kiss him.” Both voices called.

It was right there. Was it really happening? All that Allen needed was a quick movement and the kiss he secretly desired would be fulfilled. It felt like a dream, he couldn’t even know if he was really moving or if it was gravity happening. Attracting him like a star…

His heart for once didn’t feel like it was asking to be let out. Instead, it beat to a wonderful music from somewhere else, vibrating through his body, moving him toward his yearning. A dance for just them, just that once.

“Kiss him.”

Just a little further.

Just a little more…

A ringtone that was loud enough to wake up someone living in the next city screamed from Lavi’s front pocket, making them both jump backwards. A pair of kids discovered stealing the last piece of cake.

-Yes? Hello? –Lavi answered more than pissed off. Unable to hide his irritation.

- Hey stupid rabbit. It’s the Beansprout with you? –
Once upon a time, when he was around thirteen, he and one of his friends were messing with an elevator. They pushed so many buttons the poor machine went bonkers and started to open and close its door like a stressed old lady trying to remember streets. Everything was fun and all, until the metal deathtrap fell five floors really quick, trying to catch up with every command they pushed into it. A short circuit that gave his anxiety points another thing to be worried about.

The sensation was similar of what he imagined it felt when someone pulled your skin from the inside.

And then, with Yuu’s voice over the phone, the feeling came back. It was just like that. Five floors down, make your prayers. If you don’t believe, honey, this is your time.

-Uh, yes. – He listened to himself, his mouth full of the cotton of lies. He turned to face Allen, who motioned asking if everything was fine.

“Yes, sorry. I was trying to kiss you and your boyfriend cockblocked me over the phone.”

He mouthed the name of his best friend instead, trying to act like nothing happened. Overreacted gestures to keep up with that game he played with himself.

-Perfect. I need you to keep an eye on him. He tends to attract a lot of…unrequited attention. Do you get me? –

“Man, do I.” He thought with some irony.

-Yes, don’t worry dude. Got you covered. He is safe with me. –

“Liars go to hell, Lavi.” Conscience it’s supposed to be a little voice that whispers for you to do the right thing. Yet, there he was. Thinking he needed a refund from the conscience-store where he got that asshole that accused him worse than the inquisition to a witch at the trials.

-Fine. Anything I need to know? –

-Humm… -Lavi felt a light push towards his left side, Allen watching him nervously as he spoke. The redhead paused, forgetting Kanda for a second. Instead, he put his arm around the shortest one shoulders, making him try to fit with him, a gloved hand over his torso, cutting him with an urge that burn from inside his bones to the outside. -Nah, everything good. Take care. –

And he ended the call.

-Is everything ok, is he ok? Is he mad at me? –

“Now you care?” Allen’s mind pestered.

The tallest smiled at him lovingly, forcing his heart to his throat in a tempo that .

-He’s fine, don’t worry about it. –And his lips hurt with the need of at least kissing his temple. But as Allen sighed, resting his head against him, he decided he would wait.

At least as long as he could manage.

How many days did Lucifer take to decide to become Satan?

Did Judas even know what hesitation was for?
They then took their way to Lavi’s lecture, and as Allen entered the huge room with a lot of staring students, he started to regret his decision of following the redhead. He chose one of the free seats near the door, feeling like everyone in the room had their eyes on him.

But everything quickly disappeared, as the tall professor started with the class.

-I am sure you all are as amazed as I am that this walking piece of art joined us to my boring class, -Allen wanted to hide behind anything, but getting there with nothing but himself, he ended waving his hand to the curious students that, if they weren’t looking before, now they were for sure. –But please, allow me one minute or two of your attention to talk about how our good old Greeks threw apples to ask for someone to marry them and I mean…why? -Someone raised their hand, but Lavi kept going. - And no, you can’t throw me any apples to pass, I’m afraid. –

He ended, addressing the student, whom put down his hand with the joke, shrugging. Everyone laughed and just like that, the tension was gone. A magic trick of a well skilled teacher on his territory.

It took the lecture two hours and fifteen minutes to end, but Allen couldn’t say time even passed. The way Lavi talked through history, every part being special, every part as exciting and interesting as the last, surrounded everything in the room with an atmosphere of fairytale on its own. Like a mystic bard that carried the adventures of previously unknown heroes to the kingdom that desperately needed some hope.

“A light bringer.”

Suddenly everyone started leaving and Allen’s bubble burst breaking him free from his daydreaming, the sun already hidden on its winter temper. Time dressed on illusion.

-Hey…I hope that wasn’t too boring? –Lavi was suddenly sitting beside him and Allen couldn’t stop the smile that immediately creeped over his lips. The feel of having him that close something that he was starting to get hooked on.

-It was amazing. –He whispered, his eyes closing just a little bit, his white eyelashes like snowflakes crowning his eyelids. –It’s so incredible how you talk about history. I don’t remember the last time anyone talked that passionately about anything… –

And again, he was getting closer. Lavi had his arm over the back of their seat, giving him just the space to get against his chest. A luck for the two, without knowing each other feelings, that the seats were long like bleachers at the coliseum. Allowing them to be close, without having to explain why they wished for it, so much.

-It’s just like art for me. It’s so easy to know how much it matters to you. You were so easy to listen, so cool. I… I don’t even have words! I just love…“-There were they again, a few centimeters away. Just that. Nose against nose, a delicate request to submit.

-You love…? – Lavi repeated, too busy staring at his lips to really catch on his words.

-I… I love…-A conscious answer of a word that he almost never used now.

-Yes? –

They were murmuring. Their breath making small steamy clouds as the room was getting cold without any other people. Only them, once again.
-Oh my god. –Allen jumped at the sudden loud voice, holding Lavi’s shirt’s neck in his fist; his face flushed as he faced the person. Feeling trapped. –Professor…I…I didn’t know you… -

It was a young, blond girl. Beautiful, with big blue eyes, her bangs perfectly straight, her mouth heart shaped and rose.

Allen felt as if he knew her from before but couldn’t place her, the blood that ran through his brain too fast for him to pause into a coherent thought. Making him dizzy.

Lavi looked at her with what she thought was boredom or anger. Maybe both. Maybe none. She couldn’t figure which.

-What? –The cold tone startled Allen once again, the left hand where Lavi wore his rings now over his right shoulder holding him kindly on place, protecting him.

He felt so many things.

He wanted to run. To hide. To feel…

“That.”

Allen thought on how someone like Lavi never even should be seen with someone like him. On how he was there thinking inappropriate things when he was already taken, when he could never be loved or even noticed by him, when he and he past were nothing but…

-I…didn’t know you were… dating a student…-Now he wanted the earth to open up and swallow him without anything else left behind.

Among all the things he was doing wrong, he was also a student of the same college Lavi taught in.

-And what if I am, Lala? As far as I know that is not of your concern. –It was getting a habit of Lavi saying things that threatened to hurt his neck permanently, as he turned as fast as he could to face him, incredulous of what he heard.

What was he saying?

-I…I won’t say anything, sorry. –She left quickly, her shoes making a musical sound as she left. Her white dress like a doll’s disappearing with her as she left the room.

Lavi couldn’t believe what he said, but that day seemed one for him to keep talking without thinking. His grandfather somewhere probably having a headache for his misbehavior. What’ve gotten into him? Did he missed so much being the center of the troubles?

-Why didn’t you tell her? Lavi…what if she tells anybody… –Allen shyly asked.

-Because is not of her damn business, Beansprout. –The silver haired looked for a sign of Lavi being upset with him, but everything was dissipated with a reassuring smile and what he guessed was a wink.

Or at least everything that wasn’t the bird trapped inside his stomach.

“You are such a dick.” Lavi refused to pay attention to the voice that started to sound sometimes like Lenalee and some awful times, like Yuu.

They walked towards the closed the door and as everything went quiet, Lavi had a terrible idea, one that his body was more than happy to obey. As all bad ideas seem to have a special appeal for
our physique to compel.

Bad as every idea we think when silence is there and there is no voice that gives us a reason for not doing it. His conscience useless or dead. Its place usurped by that little demon that had fun either blaming him or asking him kindly to sin.

His hand moved, stopping Allen from opening the door, the piece sounding loudly against its frame as it closed. The moment like an involuntary jerk that he perceived like a blink with tints of possession. The only logical explanation he found that did not force him to face the truth. That it was all his wild desires.

-Lavi? – Allen asked, not trying again to open it, his name a question infused with edginess.

-Yes? – Lavi responded, just behind him, his mouth so close, terribly close to his ear’s shell. Without any warning but a deep breath. An attempt to reassure him that sent his senses into an alarm that was a mix between danger of a thing he would regret and danger for a thing that he would not. Allen shivered with the thought. They weren’t doing anything…and yet…

-Aren’t we going to leave? – “Oh Allen, as if that’s what you wish.” He said to himself.

He swallowed, trying to focus on everything beside the full height of the redhead behind him.

-Yes, of course. –He went a little bit closer, his head now at the level of Allen’s neck.

“Cornering him like a prey? Is that even playing fair?”

-T-then…? – Lavi’s other hand was resting on his waist, under the coat. His touch fiery like a dragon’s breath; making him feel like there was too much distance between his skin and his. And how badly, Allen realized, how badly he wanted him to touch him.

-Then…- The air when he talked crashing with the same neck he dreamed to kiss. So vividly, so naturally…so…predestinated.

“Yes, let’s ruin our friendship. Let’s ruin everyone’s friendship. Let’s be lovers instead.” A conclusion easy to reach if it was so close to him. The smell of his hair like flowers and perfectly crafted secrets, preserved on the middle of a book like dried petals. A crown of a secret garden where Yuu was no one but a myth and his past…only a bad dream.

Allen didn’t know where to keep his hands, so he kept them against the wall, careful not to move them, afraid of where they would end if he wouldn’t. A very weak defense between the space he created with the entrance and being pushed against the door.

“Not that that would bother you. Isn’t it? Being with him seems a little intoxicating for you. Don’t you know about your limitations, as you trade poisons for a job?”

“Just a little.” His mind said. “A little bit of poison in me.”

“I can taste your skin on my teeth.” Was the answer in the mind just next to his, both without saying anything out loud. Equally heated thoughts that weren’t shared with the class. A secret message on a ripped piece of paper, passed between two schoolmates. Never caught by the teacher.

Lavi’s brain, with every knowledge on how history ended when you betrayed someone like Yuu, decided to only work with the heat department; submerged in how everything would go if he could just take a little bite on that pristine and perfectly tempting pale neck.
A single action.

A simple mark.

A lonely butterfly that would bring a hurricane.

His lips were already brushing him. And he wasn’t saying no.

-L-Lavi…-His back was flushed against the redhead chest, his hand moving over Allen’s torso, hugging him more, his palm daring to be open to feel just a little more over the cardigan. Whatever he could was good enough.

-Allen. –That was it.

He was shoved against him with only listening to his name by that string that attached his will to the way he pronounced it. His hands leaving the door to hold his arm, without any intention of pushing him aside; more like wanting him to keep holding him, letting his breath leave from his parted lips.

Looking him in the eyes? Never. Lavi would melt. He was strong, he was a great player…but no one on earth was that good.

-Nh…- It was a small almost inaudible noise, but it was a symphony to the tallest ears.

There was no phone call to keep them away now. Both of them left them in silence as the university rules asked.

“Do it.” A game of tag where none of them would decide who would be “it”. Who would be chased and who would do the chasing? Getting a role would make them accountable for their evils.

Allen wanted to look at that gorgeous green eye, but, how could he? If only having him behind him was enough to strip him from every milligram of common sense that he owned. He curled his lips, vaguely aware of the sound he made, closing his eyes as if that was enough to resist the urge.

Lavi licked his lips slowly, the only thing that could cloud his mind over there between his arms.

What was the reason he didn’t already kissed Allen?

He remembered the first time they met and how badly he wished to kiss him for him to wake. So peacefully slept like a princess. So wonderfully beautiful. So…

A knock on the door interrupted his thoughts.

He hugged Allen with both arms, dragging him away from the door like he was just his to care and take; the pure idea of someone else watching him like that a toxic thought. His wellbeing his only care in the world.

-Sorry, professor. I was about to clean the room…thought nobody was here. –Frey, a man that was always kind and resembled a lot to Tiedoll, Yuu’s father, apologized. He had a shorter mustache and straight her, beside the lack of glasses but…the idea was there.

Lavi felt it like a slap on the cheek. Couldn’t it be any other employee? Did it had to be the man that could be the twin of his friend’s father?

“Fuck my life. I get the message.” He thought. Feeling the judgment of the wheel of fate far away,
at his unreachable throne. Mocking him.

-Don’t worry, we were leaving. Have a goodnight. –The redhead smiled, but it didn’t reach his eye. He grabbed Allen’s hand and start walking quickly down the hall. The air hitting him in the face with cold and reality.

What was he thinking? Pinning him against the door?

What was the plan? Doing him over the desk like last month research? Fucking him right there? He wanted to smack his own face against a wall.

Allen didn’t dare to speak, his mind enough of a chaos to understand what was happening.

“I miss going to the bar.” He missed the easy life of pouring drinks and being nobody else business. Instead on pouring himself into that man.

Now, dealing with a hot history professor/librarian on his very couch each night and whatever that happened every time they were close?

He surely was going to explode.

Whenever you are bad at tag, your best chance is to be it, but unfortunately for Allen, he was just running in circles, not really wanting to run away from who was really it.

The roles were taken as destiny desired. Too bad and too late for them to notice. The plates dancing in acrobatics waiting to be broken, for someone would have to pay.

Chapter End Notes

My dear readers, I am baffled. How are you all here? I honestly thought 3 people would read this and now here you are! Giving this mess kudos. I am really thankful!

I am having a lot of fun with this fanfic, I hope you are too. Please, don't be shy, if you have anything to say I am always glad to read your comments. If you don't want anyone else to know you are in this deep hell of waiting for ever that is D.Gray Man, you can send me a private message through twitter! @noctomata

Anyway, thanks!
Chapter Summary

There's always something lurking in the dark that wait until you sleep to catch you.

A nightmare, some tears and a proposition to share a bed.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

The walk back to the apartment was made in complete and utter silence.

Allen didn’t dare to say anything; peeking from time to time to see Lavi’s face, whom was more serious than ever. Fearing for him to be upset for something he had done. He bit his lip in an anxious habit that never abandoned him. Like a security blanket that was more a familiar of the monster under the bed; using pain to distract himself from his growing need to cry.

Whatever happened inside that classroom was starting to fade in the mist of daydreaming. Did it mean anything?

Probably not. Perhaps, Lavi was only playing and teasing him like he always did. Maybe he was planning to scare him or was having fun making him blush, like he used to. For god’s sake, he could even be avoiding someone outside. It made more sense than pinning him against the door and wanting to…

The image of the redhead turning him in a single motion and kissing him clear as if it was a memory in his mind. An easy imagination that came to him just like a wish for the master of a genie. In a single puff.

He felt his ears burning again with a new savage wave of pink, and turned his face to the ground, trying to cool off staring at the snow that fell faintly; barely capable of being noticed on the path.

It was nothing… right?

"Should I remind you that you’re dating someone? He still is Yuu’s friend. Isn’t that a new level of low to you?"

When Allen reached this point in his eternal monologue, he found himself staring back at Lavi; who still had that bizarre serious expression that didn’t quite fit with his handsome features. The background had changed; the streetlamps, the dormant trees and the buildings gone. The familiar walls with the smell of cleaning products and some lost plants replacing them. A dark rectangle that existed in his everyday routine, with its golden doorknob at the exact height for him to reach easily in front of them like a judge waiting for their arguments to be presented to proceed. Everything alienated to him.

Lavi offered his hand and Allen gave his own without much hesitation, still immersed in that feeling of being floating between his thoughts and the nothing. Then, that pretty green eye he liked so much abandoned his severe aura, immediately softening with tenderness. A lighthouse for his lost boat.
The silver-haired didn’t understand the gesture, still waiting for something to happen, until Lavi squeezed his hand softly and rubbed his thumb in three small circles the shadow of a childhood mantra that kept with him all those years waiting for someone to be worthy. A charm. A spell.

-The keys, Allen. —His voice was gentle and tired, a sprinkle of a discreet chuckle in the middle. And Allen listened, taking a moment to analyze his words; too lost in the way it was pronounced and the sound it made when it was said to comprehend them.

The redhead waited patiently, giving him a smile that slowly grew like one of his regulars; the ones that, just when he wasn’t expecting them, made Allen heart skip a beat. He moved their hands up and down playfully rocking them, guessing the smaller didn’t understand what he had said.

-Well? We can’t get in without them… -

Then, the words finally transformed magically to his language, making him blush furiously at his ignorance.

-Ah, right! Sorry! —He pulled the keys out of his front pocket with his other hand, since Lavi was still holding the right one with both of his own; finding himself unable to pull away. The taller took the keys, without leaving his hand, opening the door fairly quickly for someone that didn’t have their own set.

“Ah, skillful hands. I bet that’s an absolute upgrade comparing them to the rough hands of your… current selection…”

The door opened making him flinch more embarrassed by the statement that the voice in his mind, most times feeling like a completely different person than himself, made. Tim went to meow to them, only to disappear after, like cats usually do.

-Hello to you too, little golem. —He said as he entered making the silver haired smile, snapping him back to the moment; the consideration to his pet being something not many people had. Earning a purring noise that sounded like the end of a conversation.

Lavi stepped inside first, yet, was attentive enough to wait for Allen to go ahead of him before closing the door. He then walked to the sofa and let himself drop onto it, stretching his arms. Meanwhile, Allen went to the kitchen to get a glass of water as he put the coffee maker to do its job. He observed the machine a little bit, always entertained by the little purring sound it made as it was getting warm.

The water was too cold, his head feeling as if a force was squeezing it from the inside as the freezing came over. He pinched the bridge of his nose and pushed his tongue over the roof of his mouth to make it stop, closing his eyes. The temperature helped him cool down his thoughts; a new slot to try again.

“He is nothing but a friend.” A conviction and a threat.

Lavi thought about how everything seemed to be against him that day. Not that he was consciously trying to kiss Allen but… Everything appeared to be there to stop him whenever it was incidental or not. So, either fate was sending mixed messages, or he was too dumb to read them now that he wanted to. Inevitably, his thoughts went back to Allen and how his lips curved when he smiled. How weird it was that he never saw those kinds of smiles when Yuu was around but with him…

“Don’t get weird ideas, Junior.” The voice of his friend accused him on his head.

-Do you… Do you want some coffee? —He turned, picturing he was still inside the kitchen. Yet, to
his surprise, there he was. Resting against the door frame, a cup in his hand. The coat already hanged against the door, the cardigan he was wearing alone giving him the vibe of an adorable student from some prestigious school of magic.

-Isn’t it a bit late for you to drink coffee? – His words said one thing, but his was waiting hand said another. Offering him a smirk he couldn’t hide.

“Maybe it isn’t meant to be, and it whatever you had last night was only a weird dream.” Lavi thought as Allen extended the drink to him carefully, a smile in return that never reached his eyes and hurt him like a punch in the liver as he was just remembering how beautiful his honest ones were. Almost getting proud of how many he had from him that day. The idea shattered.

-I have an exam tomorrow, I don’t think I’ll be sleeping soon. – The silver haired sat in the loveseat in front of the window that opened to the balcony, curling his legs against his chest as he stared at the window; only darkness outside. The streetlight that usually acted as the nightguard, lost. The bulb probably dead sometime when they weren’t around.

-Do you need any help studying? I’m a professor, after all. I could lend you a hand…–

It was an unfortunate selection of words.

Allen couldn’t stop thinking about the girl and how she thought they were dating. All the troubles that could bring to Lavi if the rumor spread. The possible consequences. All his fault because he couldn’t act more decent.

-I am sorry, Lavi. – He refused to look at him, apparently ashamed and Lavi left the cup in the table, trying to decipher why was the apology for. His movements carefully thought; as if he was trying not to spook a bird away.

-About what? – His profile against the sleepy yellow streetlight from near the apartment that came back to life after a few buzzing sounds, looked delicate and divine. Like the course of an impeccably planned story; that even knowing the end, what matters the most is the journey. Little curves and details, long eyelashes and a nose that seemed chosen to exist only in that face as the peak of artistic faultlessness. His lower lip was plumper making him look like he was permanently making a pout. The scar was invisible from his point of view; the style of a perfect poem of an angel.

-For the troubles… I mean that girl saw us, and she thought that we were dating and…I’m really sorry. I didn’t know it was looking like a date…I don’t want to get you in troubles for that. –

Lavi replayed the sentences over and over, every part a different emotion. It was desperation to hug him when he said he was sorry for the troubles; a terrible acid pain when he said he was really sorry for that, as if it was unthinkable to see them as a couple and confusion when he said he didn’t know how it was looking like.

And as every time Lavi tried to handle too many emotions at the same time, his logic tried to hang onto something he understood: questions.

Make enough questions and you’ll get sufficient answers.

-What do you mean? Haven’t Yuu take you to any dates or what? –A laugh that was meant to dismiss the problem. To light the mood.

A joke. One that his brain didn’t spend a lot of time on. Being so simple and mundane. What
boyfriend wouldn’t take his significant other to dates?

-Uh… we went to some restaurants. But that was years ago. –Allen turned to see him; the redhead now sitting on the floor beside him. The absurdly cocky smile that he was sporting got erased from his face. The impression feeling like a slap.

-What? Why? -His surprise was obvious, and Allen started thinking, staring at the ceiling, somehow ashamed that he didn’t have a straight answer.

-I don’t know. I’m usually busy every day, mostly on weekends… and when I have finals usually Kanda doesn’t like to talk to me, even. Because he wants me to concentrate so… I guess we don’t…have compatible schedules? -

Lavi couldn’t believe it. Yuu was such a responsible adult now. If he was in his place? Damn, he would take Allen to the highway to damnation and fun.

“How anyone let me be a teacher?”

-And how’s your schedule, now? Do you have all two weeks booked? –A change of subject as an innocent question. With a not so innocent outcome planned.

-I have two exams tomorrow, a paper for Friday and two more for Wednesday. – Lavi sipped his coffee as he listened; the other counting his compromises with his fingers.

-So, you do have free days! –His arm was resting on the loveseat, his head now resting at Allen’s lap.

-Sort of, yes. – His hair was like strands of pure magic, slipping towards him as Allen let him be there. His tights warm and soft for him to rest there.


-You sure like risking yourself, Lavi. -At first the redhead thought he was listening to his inner voice, but Allen’s lips were moving as the words were spoken. – I could just drop you; you know? Don’t joke around. –

Lavi made a pout and Allen entertained himself staring at the necklace he was wearing; the lines of the triangle perfect cuts into the old gold. Everything to dodge his stare.

“He is playing with you. Don’t forget.”

-I’m being serious. –He saw how the other tried to look at the door, avoiding him as well as his question. –I’ll take you out; we can go to the museum or to a club. Have you ever been in one? – Allen finally looked at him, his eyes like storm clouds with annoyance. His lips curled in an expression that gave the redhead a boost in all the wrong places.

“Look at that, now you are also a masochist!”

-I work in a bar Lavi. Maybe isn’t as fancy as a club, but I bet is the same at the end of the night. –

-Drunk people and nice music? –His smile was so bright and huge that Allen rolled his eyes, trying not to laugh and not to give. –Pleeease? It will be fun, I swear! You can even use it to release stress from the finals! Come onnnnn –He waited until his target peeked by the corner of his eye, making the best puppy eyes he could manage. His secret weapon by choice.
Finally, Allen started laughing, a sound that made him think, would be enough to keep him living forever.

-You are a dork! -He covered his mouth with his right as he kept giggling and the taller had to use all his self-restraint to not held him and ask him to never do that again because he loved seeing him laugh in such way.

-Is that a yes? –Some hope in whatever that was. In nothing. In everything.

-Yes. Whatever. Stop bothering me. –A stroke on his cheek that Lavi received more than gladly, closing his eye…until Allen got up suddenly, making him hit his head against the sofa.

“A moment in the sun…”

-Ouch! I could have died! – He laid on the floor, dramatically. Too drowned in the feeling of being touched by the warmth and light of that hypothetical star. Allen rolled his eyes again, taking his book to check another time the definition he needed for his final. Reading without doing so, busy trying to stop smiling.

A few seconds passed, and after peeking time and time again for him to move, he returned to Lavi’s side; sitting in the floor with him.

-You don’t seem very dead to me. –He murmured poking him with his closed book. One of his fingers separating the part he was reading, as a marker. The redhead groaned.

-I am. Inside. -He sat back and laid his head against Allen’s shoulder; trying his luck again. The other didn’t push him, instead he kept reading, unfazed. After looking at him for some moments Lavi decided to let him be and started playing on his phone. Earning a smile that had all the magic that the one of a misbehaving child; as Allen looked at him just for a moment before he calmly resume his studies.

They stayed like that for more hours that they realized, the time existing in a different real with such a simple interaction.

-If you want to, I can ask you about the topics so you can see if you’re lacking in one or another. – Trying to look at him he turned his face to him, so close that every movement of a single muscle was more than noticeable; the turning of a page his momentary answer.

-Lavi…does your mouth gets itchy when you aren’t talking? –Lavi loved his sassiness. It was like a never-ending game that only kept getting better instead of worse like in most of the sequels.

-Sometimes…- An adorable chuckle that made him vibrate, the temptation of getting off the eyepatch so he could finally see him fully, almost unbearable.

He kept silent this time, hiding behind his book with his eyebrows cocked. And the redhead let him, getting comfortable as the levels of his insignificant game got destroyed with his not-that-useful skill.

The phone showed him a symbol of a red battery that flashed once and twice and then, it was dead. A black screen with his most unflattering reflection.
-Maaaan, I was going to beat my score! –He blew air up, his copper hair moving unto his face without the bandana. –Maybe I should get a hairband. He took one lock of his hair and pulled it distractedly. -What do you think? Would I look more handsome in a hairband instead of my bandanas? –

No answer.


He turned to see him and realized, between surprise and bliss, that Allen was asleep, his head resting on his own. Orange and white.

-Oh you. Why do you this to me? I’m not supposed to fall in love with you. –He sighed, wiggling some more to get enough room to lift him. –But I guess it is too late for that… Don’t you think? - He finally lifted him, the weight hurting his shoulders. -Lord, you are heavy! –

The walk to his room now seeming a thousand miles away. A comfortable soliloquy of his desired conversations with him.

–Do you believe in love at first sight, Allen? –He started walking, one step at a time, afraid to either dropping him or waking him up. -Of course, you do. –All his words were smothered by the effort, but he was decisive in at least, doing that for him. –How else would you end dating Yuu? –

He laughed at his own joke, a whizzing coming out instead.

Finally, after what was three years for him with such great effort, he ended leaving him as graciously as he could over his bed.

-There you go princess. –Lavi looked for a blanket, covering him. He sat beside him to catch his breath and as his weight shifted the pressure on the bed; Allen extended his hand looking for his.

The redhead observed, letting him do.

-You are such a devil. –A tender smile creeped to his lips, slowly drawing the motion. –Do you want me to melt? You are so fucking adorable. –

“Emphasis in fucking?”

He scratched the bridge of his nose, something he recurred when he was getting cornered and stressed.

-Yeah, whatever. –And then the door opened, a ray of the light of the hall falling on the silver haired’s face, making him flinch. Timcanpy emitted a familiar chirping as he entered, only to get in the small space that the window ledge allowed him.

“Dirty conscience?”

His eye again over Allen; so peacefully asleep. So relaxed. So beautiful.

Lavi bent a little, until he was so close to him that the soft whistling noise his breathing was, was loud and clear to him. His heart dancing around his chest. A bit closer and he planted a chaste kiss on his temple.

-Goodnight, snowflake. –
And with all his might, he got up, leaving the piece of heaven that was that scene. Closing the door behind.

He dropped on the couch that was starting to feel more like his home than his actual, lonely house. And as he connected his phone, he drifted away; the part of his hand that Allen touched feeling incredibly warm.

Zero. Four. Three. Seven.

Those red numbers were the first thing he saw when he opened his eyes. It was getting hard to breath.

He could hear himself trying to do it, a disgusting harsh cough.

A salty drop fell on one of his eyes, making everything worse. He managed to sit on the bed, pushing the mount of the moon of both of his hands unto his sockets. A terrible bad move that allowed exhaustion to roll his head like a pair of dice at a casino where everyone felt lucky. Quickly, Allen tried to open his eyes, the light of his nightstand clock making them water in agonizing pain.

He extended his arm, looking for a comfortable presence that would at least, stop the racing, crazy elevator his heart became. Up and down, never stopping. More like those carnival games that makes you think that that would be the day you’ll die.

But the bed was empty, since no one was there. Empty space and abandonment that crept under the covers.

Allen rubbed his left eye, the one that the scar passed over; as he probed the nightstand looking for his phone. The sound of a whack made him sigh in frustration as he realized he just dropped the thing; fortune his sworn enemy.

With a piercing headache that came in waves torturing his brain, he crawled out of his bed to retrieve the device; and if that wasn’t enough the blinding bright screen received him with a new battle at trying to unblock the thing. He tried two times and finally succeeded, looking quickly through the few numbers he had for one, specifically. He hit the button and closing his eyes, he listened to the comfort of the dialing tone.

A click on the other side as finally someone picked up.

-Beansprout, what do you need? –

-Yuu…Hi. –His voice was a croak and he tried to clear his throat to fix it, without achieving it.

-What time is it over there? –Kanda was someone pretty hard to read over the phone; his words the same either angry or calm.

-Uhm, I think four? In the…in the morning? I’m not sure…listen… –

-It’s the Rabbit over there? At the flat? –Allen tried to process his words as quickly as he could, the sound hammering behind his eyes.
-Yes? Yes, he is at the living room… I just…-

-Allen. –

His name.

He stopped talking, knowing that was exactly what he wanted.

-Is this something urgent? –The Japanese rushed his words in the only signal of his irritation.

-N-no…I guess not. I had…I had a nightmare and…-

-Then wake up Lavi. That’s why he is over there. I’m in a meeting. –

Allen felt something slimy tiptoe and nest under his chest. A nasty and lukewarm substance that tried to sneak over his organs and drown him. A punch with a wet and hot rag on the face; the smacking making a deafening hollow noise.

Embarrassment.

He was a twenty-something man, calling over his boyfriend on the other side of the world… because of a nightmare.

-Right…sorry. Good luck. –He hung up, swallowing heavy a knot made of repressed tears.

“Go talk to Lavi then.”

-I don’t want to bother him, either…-Now, the child that always hid behind every smartass thing he said, spoke. His shame palpable.

Instead, Allen skulked back to bed, hugging the blanket; trying once more to sleep.

-Lavi? Lavi are you awake? –

The voice was so soft that Lavi swore he almost didn’t want for him to be.

-Yes, baby. What’s up? –He felt his hands fiercely grabbing his arm, the notice of a mark that would certainly be there the next day. A warning that also alarmed him to open his eye instantly. - Allen? Hey, are you ok? –

As Lavi begged for his eyepatch to stay right in place, he looked at the two rivers of tears that were constantly filled with every blinking his owner made.

His prayer wasn’t heard. The piece of cloth moving just enough for him to sneak peek with his other eye, but not allowing for it to be seen. He sat quickly, everything inside him a hurricane of worry.

Lavi didn’t had more family than his grandfather and he always thought that since he had the “gift” of seeing the future, there wouldn’t be a thing that could hurt him anymore. All major surprises spoiled by his visions.

Oh, but how wrong he was and how awful was to comprehend this.
A crack that ended pulverizing his heart. How painful was to see Allen crying! The shock leaving him motionless; staring at the source of his suffering.

-I…I’m sorry…I…-The sobbing was interrupting his sentence and now, Lavi found himself battling to breathe. It was as if someone was taking his time destroying him from the inside. Every bone, every muscle, every cell. –I…had a nigh-nightmare… and I…I can’t sleep…I am sorry…! – He started crying. The weeping liquifying what it was left from the inside of the redhead.

How could everyone stand such a painful thing? How could Yuu cope with looking at that face crying and live another day not trying…no…Not forcing himself to take the duty of making that man smile, Every. Single. Second.

He threw himself at Allen, hugging him, terrified that he would break. Trying to keep everything together.

-No, no, no, no, Allen! Baby… Baby don’t think that! Don’t say that! It’s ok. Don’t cry! It’s ok, you can wake me up whenever… It’s ok…-

Lavi started rocking him as he spoke, gently petting his head and trying not to cry himself whenever he listened to Allen weeping. He squeezed him, worried that he wouldn’t feel protected enough.

-It’s ok. I’m here for you. I’ll always be here, yes? –As Allen calmed, he separated himself, just enough to see his face; fearing for his nerves.

-Ok? I’ll be here. I’m here, baby. –His forehead against his. Allen nodded, hugging him again.

The redhead sighed, feeling at least, a little more together. -What was the nightmare about, mh? Do you want to talk about it? – His voice was a whisper. Too gentle and too kind. –Sometimes when you talk about them out loud, they transform into stupid, little things. Almost funny…-

Desperation. Whatever he needed to do to make him happy again.

-It was….His eyelashes were adorned with some tears. Vaguely Lavi was reminded of the dew from a winter morning. –It was a-about some man… -

He listened, trying to give some sense to everything that was happening. Allen thought he would interrupt him and held his breath. But Lavi never did. Instead, he ran one hand along his back, trying to comfort him.

-I was in a hallway…and he was just there. Everything was dark and…and he was just staring at me…-He swallowed, afraid he would be mocked about such stupid and simplest dream.

-I see. –The redhead said, not a single second letting him go. – Do you have nightmares often? – The smaller nodded.

It was actually a dream he had since he was a child. One that appeared periodically and freaked him out for no logical reason.

Just a man. Alone in the darkness. A hallway with no other light but the one coming from a streetlight that was behind the man, giving away his silhouette. He was wearing a dressing shirt that was black as well and had short hair.

Everything es was too dark to define.

But every time, Allen was unable to move; the man staring at him, his hands folded behind his
back and sometimes... when he couldn’t wake up soon... he noticed the man slowly smiled at him. Making him feel not only that he was trapped, but that he was never meant to leave. A terrifying smile that gave him nothing but fear.

Only once, he woke up Kanda as he just did with Lavi, but the response was an entirely different thing.

-Was this man doing you something? Did he hurt you? –

-No. –

Yuu stared at him in confusion, the tiredness showing on his face.

-Then? Why are you afraid of him? – He knew he wasn’t trying to be mean. It was just the logical step to follow. And he himself couldn’t understand why he was afraid of that shadow figure. But that never stopped the fear from pumping his blood with venom and horror.

- I don’t know…-

-See? There is nothing to fear, Beansprout. Just go to sleep. You can hold to my hand if that makes you fear better. -

Sometimes it helped. But some others it didn’t.

Allen found out he was able to sleep again if he could feel someone with him; a ridicule security blanket he wasn’t able to let go even now.

-It’s ok Allen. – Lavi was taking some distance and he couldn’t stop himself, holding to him like a koala to the last tree standing. Allen looked at him afraid, the absence of the eyepatch surprising enough ease his grip a little. Still, that eye was shielded by his thick, orange hair, that covered it like a mysterious cartoon character.

-I’m sorry if it’s stupid… -He mumbled, softly. Lost within the image.

-I don’t think it’s stupid. -A sigh and his hand kindly lifted his chin up. -Stuff you can’t either understand or explain are pretty scary. I would be creepied out as well if some random guy was staring at me from the darkness. –

Allen was speechless. He stared intensely, trying to understand how and why was Lavi being like that with him.

After some long moments, Lavi smiled cautiously.

- Is there something on my face? –

- You aren’t wearing the eyepatch. –He practically slapped himself with his quick response that was filled with a comical shock that eased Allen’s heart. –And you have your other eye! Would you look at that! –

Lavi bit his inner cheek, staring at him. A painkiller on its own the way he was laughing.

-Of course I have it! What do you mean? –He noticed Allen was over his lap, the knowledge on when that happened lost, but well received.

-I don’t know, I thought you were some kind of pirate. How else do you explain someone wearing one of those in this year? –Lavi kept his hand on its place, not sure if Allen really saw his eye or
was just messing with him.

-Because it’s cool as fuck and I like it. –The other raised his gaze to see him, a loving look with a pair of pink cheeks that were still stained by the long marks the tears left; that warming every part of his soul.

-Yeah, I guess it’s a bit cool. –He sniffed and Lavi felt safe enough to separate his hand, knowing, for some reason, that Allen wouldn’t try to see his face without his consent.

-Ok Beansprout… How about we take you to bed and you have at least some rest before this final of yours? I have to torment some students tomorrow as well, you know? –Allen closed his hands in fists, that incidentally, grabbed some of the fabric from Lavi’s pajama pants.

Aware of this and knowing it only could mean the boy was still frightened by his nightmare; he rubbed his arms affectionally.

-Or I can…uhm stay with you until you sleep? I mean they can’t start the exam without the professor…right? –

Allen smiled, thankful for the offering.

-That would be nice. –He refused to look at his face. Instead, he focused on his shirt, a pair of crossed keys that were printed in white ink. He let go the cloth, following Lavi subtill movements and getting up.

-Oh no, buddy you ain’t going the good way. –The redhead got quickly on his feet and getting advantage of Allen’s confusion, he picked him up the floor manhandling him over his shoulder.

An involuntary scream that evolved into a laugh.

-Put me down you over sized walking carrot! –He fought a bit, the laugh weighting down his efforts.

-Such a big mouth! –He could tell his back would be killing him on the morning. But he couldn’t care less. –Can’t take this behavior anymore, need to put you to bed! -He dropped Allen on the bed an “oomf!” punched out of his body as he hit the mattress. Sitting at the edge he smiled at him with ease, the nightlight on.

-Make some room, hoarder. –Allen rolled on the bed, showing him his tongue, naïve enough to not know how badly Lavi wanted to kiss him.

The door was half open but getting up was out of the question. As they finally covered with the comforter; Lavi sat, taking out of his pajamas back pocket a very worn copy of a book that had the title vanished by the use. One that he carried everywhere where he meant to sleep. The plot and the habit part of what made him feel relaxed enough to snooze like a baby. The lamp on the nightstand doing wonders for his reading, a much better illumination that the light that sneaked from the outside at the living room.

Allen lied there, looking at him. His cheek against the cold but fluffy pillow.

-Do I still have something on my face, or you really want to see my other eye? –He never raised his eyes, still working the words. The many times he read it allowing him not to fully recreate the sentence by sight as well as memory.

-What are you reading? –
Lavi adored how many contrasts Allen’s voice could portray. A small smile that was hurting his cheeks now, as he turned the page, trying to hide it.


-Isn’t that a drama? –Now he was near him, his body heat making him want to hug him.

-It is. –

More silence.

-Can I hug you? –

Lavi wanted to see him. But his eye stayed glued at the words he wasn’t understanding anymore, his memory a mess with that face so close. The sin at the hand of the sinner.

-Of course, love. –Allen didn’t waste any time. He hugged him, cuddling against his left side, squeezing himself as closer as he could; closing his eyes as he smelled the fabric softener Lavi seemed to use without restrictions. He smiled widely at the last word. He knew he spoke like that, but the thought he was the receptacle of a pet name that was that kind only made his chest bubble.

- Is it good? Never took you as someone who was into drama… -A paragraph without context that he didn’t understand but triggered his curiosity. He heard about the novel before, historical fiction not being precisely his favorite for the tendency to inaccuracy.

-Oh baby. – Lavi looked at him and Allen felt his cheeks burning; unable to hear Lavi’s heart regardless of how close he was because of his own, beating on his ears. –I just love drama. –

Chapter End Notes

If everything goes right I will be uploading this 1 chapter a week.

Thank you for reading.

(°____°)
Chapter Summary

Allen has a final to take and a decision to make. After the events of the last night, he sure has a lot on his mind, and what would be better to talk about it over a coffee with a friend?

Back and forth. Movie night and some things that doesn’t need to be said.

At least not with words.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

There was no light to wake him up. No alarm to warn him about the hour.

Yet, Allen was opening his eyes around seven, his final starting an hour later. The walk to the faculty was only fifteen minutes and as he thought about this fact, he stretched grateful for a wonderful night of sleep. Surprisingly, regardless of the incident at the unholy hour of three in the morning.

A few inches away the worn-out book that Lavi was reading last night was resting over two or three folded pages, pressed against the mattress. Allen extended his arm to pick it up and fix it, recognizing it. Confusion appearing as he spotted it. But as soon as he attempted the movement an arm around his waistline tightened.

He stopped. Retreating his hand.

As his sight followed the source of the pressure, he remembered that Yuu was out of town, a sensation of being lost in time washing all over him.

The arm that was binding him was smooth, covered by the sleeve only until the elbow. The hand of this person, lovingly resting on his stomach had two silver rings. One in the index and one in the middle. The wrist also was adorned by three black leather bracelets.

Allen put his hand over that one and the touch brought the memories of last night, when he cried and asked Lavi to at least stay with him till’ he was asleep.

Carefully, he turned on that embrace, facing the redhead. His hair falling over his peaceful face. They were closer than ever; Allen was unable to even look further their torsos. He touched his cheek, moving the strands of hair away to finally see Lavi’s face. It was strange to see him without the eyepatch and he did it only because he was asleep; something he wouldn’t dare to do with him awake. Scared of his reject if he tried.

“How about a kiss?” He lowered his hand a little, caressing Lavi’s lips with one finger, trying not to put any pressure on the gesture. Thinking about it without any real intention to do it. Only a wish. A dream.

The room was still dark and still, Allen indulged himself observing every feature that now gave
him the whole picture of Lavi’s face.

At a restauration class he learnt how beautiful some things were when they were broken or incomplete, the restauration ruining them. But some others, in some cases, ended up as an even much more beautiful piece of art. One that should always be preserved in such flawless state, the beauty of the original not possible to imagine.

That’s how Lavi looked to him without the patch.

Allen bit his own lower lip. The necessity of seeing him with both of his eyes open now. The memory of Lavi covering his eye in a flash when he mentioned it last night coming back fresh, making him sigh.

-I have to get up, Lavi. –The face of the other impassive. –I really do and you are making this super hard… -

“In which way?” The silver haired put his forehead against Lavi’s shoulder.

-Lavi… -He called for him a bit louder. –I have to leave. –Maybe it was because of how close he was to his ear, but Lavi lessened his hold, giving him room to leave. Reluctantly, he got up; picking up the poor, wrinkled book. He closed it, leaving it at the nightstand and turning off the light that probably got forgotten at sometime that night, while the redhead drifted away, unaware.

Dressing up, he chose some navy-blue jeans, some slip-on vans on beige and a white V-neck t-shirt under a knitted yellow sweater that had an ivory stripe running over his chest and some others running around his arms. Picking his phone, he quickly took his bag to leave, going back only to do one thing that he was brave enough to accomplish because of the rush and the fact that Lavi was still soundly asleep.

-Thanks. –He kissed his cheek, running now to the door blushing, quickly checking as he passed that Timcanpy bowl of food was still half full at least. Closing the door, he left it unlocked, only to not leave the redhead stuck in.

Inside, Lavi opened his other eye.

Golden around the pupil, a single green spot that seemed to melt, fusing with the other color like a nebula. This eye closed again, Lavi turning in his sleep, his alarm sounding at least three hours later.

The clock ticked, his advances with every second like a condemn that got him closer to hell. And Allen was staring at the exam trying to understand the questions. Reading again and again the meaningless words, realizing that the thing printed on the paper didn’t look like anything he ever seen before. A part of his brain told him he was only nervous, but the rest was pretty sure the thing was ancient Greek; the letters contorted in weird shapes as it shook in front of his eyes. Just like that time when he had low pressure and took the wrong pills to fix it.

-What the…-The student beside him turn to see him, making him bite the pen instead, trying to hide his anxiety. –

Concentration was pretty easy for him usually. What was happening? It was only an exam! Actually, there were very few questions… Why was he taking all that time?
He closed his eyes.

“Focus!” A provocative smirk that slowly moved in his imagination, letter by letter saying his name. The slow motion of that spellcaster he knew pretty well.

“A-L-L-E-N”

A shiver that forced his eyes wide open.

“I can’t fucking believe this! Come on, Allen! Focus! Just…read the thing!” He stared at the paper trying to read it at least three times more. The first one too quick, the second one starting to panic and the third and last more concentrated in stop shaking. At the other side of the classroom a student got up to deliver his final. Now, the tension was urging him in a repetitive mantra to concentrate.

And, after at least five minutes more of trying, he managed to do it. The sentences getting clear and easy as the traffic signals on the street. The subject mastered; the fear begone. He answered every question, the pen running on the free spaces like it was a matter of life and death as the clock kept its merciless advances.

Soon it was all over. Allen almost running outside the class after leaving the thing over his teacher desk. The man stared at his back as he left, usually always able to talk to him whenever class or the exams were finished; his white long hair in a loose braid moving as he followed with the sight his favorite student escapade.

On the hallway Allen walked quickly, feeling like he was being chased with nobody behind him. He turned left unto a corner, his back against the wall. His breathing quick and short, and he felt how his blood was starting to accumulate over his cheeks.

Why was he so embarrassed about?

Again, the picture of the smirk appeared, and he covered his face, bright red, knowing it was Lavi’s.

-I’m a freaking dumbass. –A sentence to himself. Allen stayed like that a little, looking for his phone on his bag; uncovering his face to find the contact of his best friend.

-Hi…hey are you free today? I’m out of my final and I wondered…-

-If I was missing you? –

He chuckled. Breathing a little easier.

-Yes. Do you want to go for a walk or…? –

-No! It’s super cold today Allen! I know! Let’s go to Church! –

Allen laughed for the irony. Church was the name of a cafe nearby that was named like that because of an old group of nuns that used to go there every single day when the business started.

-I’ll meet you there in five, then. –His friend hung up and he took a deep breath, trying to relax.
-You arrived early. I should make a wish! – Allen looked at her dearly, his face taking an entertained expression with just a pinch of sarcasm. Lenalee was his best friend and more than that, she was his oldest friend. She knew him before he dated Kanda and she knew everything about him. Actually, she was the one whom recommended him the gym where they met.

-Ha-ha. So funny. –He pushed the cup of tea he asked for her and she sat beside him. She was wearing a green velvet overall, two golden buttons that tied the suspenders; under it a long-sleeved blouse in cream. The neck like a loose turtleneck had the edges framed with a delicate, dark green embroidery. As well as the sleeves which also had twin ribbons at the wrist as a delightful feminine detail. Dark stockings covered her legs and a pair of gray ankle boots finished the touches; matching with her small purse that had a delicate golden chain to hang it from her shoulder. Her hair loose, a bonnet that was gray as well over her head.

-Soooo...? –Lenalee said, looking at how Allen was smiling to his coffee like it just made him the greatest compliment ever heard. –What happened? Why are you so happy? Did you win an art competition? –Allen look was so surprised and embarrassed that Lenalee changed her mind immediately. -It has something to do with Kanda, then? Did he propose? –A question she regretted as soon as it left her mouth.

Lenalee loved Kanda. He was a close friend of hers. One that she adored. Yes, he was cranky and moody and almost always was with a frown on his face; but she knew why it was there. She recalled how Kanda used to be nicer and calmer few years ago and was hurt by the memory of that being stripped away from him.

Now, Allen was giving her a worried and fearful expression. Almost the same expression that once made her think Kanda was taking his bitterness a step further and hurting him physically. She loved Kanda, but not for that she was blind to how he seemed hellbent on sabotage his own relationships. Whatever it took to do so.

-I’m sorry… Is everything ok between you two? Can I help you? –Allen avoided looking her in the eye and her heart sunk to her feet. If they had broken up, she surely knew how to pour salt on the wound. But if they had…why was Allen smiling like that only a few seconds ago?

-Uhm…yes. I think you can say so. –He shrugged, turning his eyes to the window; the delicate droplets like an almost invisible curtain that later would be transformed into snow.

-Is there something you want to tell me, then? –Lena put her hand over Allen’s that briefly looked at her from the corner of his eye. The scar looking redder than usual; the weather making his skin paler. Her voice acquired that overtone she got the first years at her job. Patient and empathic, Lenalee studied psychology and used her free time to work as an operator for the emergency line. It wasn’t a well-paid job, but it was one that made her feel that she could help a little. Soon, her major would be over and with her internship and future master she hoped to be prepared enough to at least be able to help one person at a time find their happiness.

Among other things, like her kindness and her love for her friends, it was this what made everyone being able to talk to her with ease. Lenalee having that vibe of being a secure place to be, to talk or to exist. A pillow fort of adulthood where every one of her friends could be whatever they wanted to be.

-I…wanted to talk to you about someone…-A pause she didn’t pressure into, her gift already there. –Someone I…I like. –

The girl tried with all her might not changing her expression. She was almost a psychologist, yes.
But her private conversations with her friends were a thing where her personal opinion was present more than her professional one.

-Someone that isn’t Kanda. –She punctuated. Allen nodded and she sighed, worried about both. Being in the middle of her friends never her favorite place to be. She wondered if it was the wise choice to listen to him. On one side, listening the confession made her an accessory of the crime. Telling or not telling Kanda a moral predicament as she would know. While on the other side, she knew it wasn’t an easy thing for Allen to admit. His choice to speak to her probably a desperate measure that screamed for help. She could always say nothing, after all. It wasn’t her business. Or was it?

“Decisions. Decisions…” All that was left was to listen. There were always two parts of a story.

-Yes. Its… - He sighed deeply and tired; his other hand covering his face like he was talking to his cup instead of her. His elbow resting on the table. – It’s actually a friend of Yuu… -

Lenalee observed. That conversation echoing with another she had the day before. She didn’t say anything, waiting for him to explain. The answer of that secret identity already formulating in her mind. It wasn’t that hard after all…Lavi might had several friends but Kanda? He had only two.

-You see…this guy and I…we…well we are friends? Well…friends. – Allen made a lot of gestures when he got nervous and Lenalee crossed her hands to rest her chin as she listened; trying to keep busy. Her mind ran on a mantra that asked him not to tell her his name. As for that she would be forced to tell Kanda; the loophole of both confessions of never saying each other’s name allowing her space for her own defense in grounds of neutrality.

At first, she thought she would be upset. Kanda was his boyfriend. He was her friend. And there he was, speaking about another guy. As her brother said: “The body isn’t even cold and y’all be dispensing the goods!”

But she found out, she wasn’t mad at all. As Allen spoke, she only could notice the little things: How his face lit up. How his smile was so sincere it was obviously hard for him to even try to hide it. How he put a lock of his hair again and again behind his ear as he always did when he was so happy, that he had a hard time remaining still; just like a kid. How he bit his lips over and over and had his hands rubbing his face like he was trying to erase that excitement he thought wasn’t allowed to feel.

Allen had a terrible childhood. She recalled how hard was to get near to him and how horrible was to stay on her seat and listen every gruesome detail about how his stepfather used him to pay his debts and how his birthparents abandoned him at a side of a road one day on December because of the unusual coloring of his arm that was, more surely than not, only a birth mark.

Lenalee thought in all of this as Allen spoke about Lavi. She thought how she could call Kanda and tell him. But she also thought on how that would not only destroy him, but also her two other friends. It was a lose-lose situation. Everyone ended unhappy. And even when it was true that Kanda deserved to be happy after such a tragedy with his ex… It was also true that he was wasting the opportunity life gave him through Allen.

Her face was serious, and a frown took place on her expressions; a professionalism that wasn’t able to remain at work as the situation was too delicate to be taken lightly. She was just thinking, but with all the paranoid that festered from his insecurities through all those years, this made him regret his decision to tell her that he thought he was starting to have a crush on Lavi.

-Uh…oh there it goes. I said too much, it overflowed…Why do I always spill…? –A frantic
emergency break. Trying to take back the words that were already out there. Lenalee took his hand again, putting hers over it as well. Trying to give him some confidence. She was there for him. Even then.

-Allen…do you really like him? –She didn’t sound upset and surely didn’t sound like she was judging him. The way she said it a sweet and caring tone that made him a bit more reassured.

- I…I think I do. –He gulped, suddenly feeling the room was too hot. Saying it a different thing than thinking about it. You can say you would jump off a cliff to the sea to dive and have fun, but going there and looking at the vast ocean with all its secrets as you felt the wind over that piece of land and actually jumping was something else.

“A sin is only a sin when someone else knows.”

-Then I think you should tell him. –Lenalee smiled sincerely, making her decision. –But first I think you should be sure about what do you feel about this guy. I am not trying to pressure you or making you feel bad…But you have a boyfriend Allen. -He looked away, the shame strangling him. She gently took his face, making him see her in the eyes again. -I’m just saying, if you found out you truly love him…go for it. Just be sure. I don’t want you to regret anything. I want you to be happy. –

Allen thought thoroughly about what she said and nodded decisively. But facing her again deflated every single idea he managed to create.

-You…you don’t think I’m awful right? I mean…You are friends with Kanda and… -

-Hey, I’m a big girl; I can think for myself. –She shrugged and smile at him. -Just make things right. -

He laughed, relieved to not be judged by at least one person. And they started talking about more mundane things as friends do to leave aside the serious mood. Lenalee asked about his finals and being freed momentarily from his burden, he talked. Her laugh and his voice giving that small corner of the place spark and color.

-...And then I was reading, and I swear Leena! I couldn’t understand a thing! It was horrible! –

Outside the window behind Allen, Lenalee saw a tall ginger guy that, maybe because she was looking, and destiny had such funny ways of being, turned to face her. His jaw falling when she wiggled her fingers saluting him. She doubled checked on Allen and as she was sure he wasn’t looking, she mouthed to him as clearly as she could, pointing at the silver haired: I know.

Allen was constantly reminded about marble statues when he observed Lavi for much time, but if he could’ve seen his face at that precise moment, he could’ve sworn he was one. The color drained from his skin. The redhead went around the corner to get in the café, realizing, only when he was already inside the place, that he didn’t have any plan and that his movement was actually, pretty stupid. He was two meters behind Lenalee and could see Allen happily speaking about something he couldn’t hear. What was he going to do…? Why did he even step inside?

-Lavi! Hi! –She turned as he thought of leaving. A single step back that was frozen on place. It was like she was the one with the eye that knew it all. Knowing his position without facing him. Her gleeful greeting a shackles that forced him to join them, no place to run as everything was too clearTheHer gleeful greeting a shackles that forced him to join them, no place to run or hide as
everything was too open. Allen spotting him with her words.

things Lenalee would give if she was able to take a picture of those two!

Allen shut up immediately, curling his lips in the most comical expression she ever seen. The coffee almost slipping from his hands.

On the other side, Lavi was frozen mid-step, his eye fulminating her. His mouth was a complete downside curve and his complete picture made him look just like one of those models that seemed payed to portray a frown.

Allen shut up immediately, pursing his lips in the most comical expression she ever seen. The coffee almost slipping from his hands. Behind her, Lavi stopped mid-step, his eye fulminating her. His mouth was a complete downside curve; his complete picture just like one of those models that seemed payed to portray a frown or a really bad villain. Lenalee’s arm was behind the chair allowing him to turn and see him as well as keep an eye on Allen.

She smiled wide at the redhead, taking the opportunity to look at Lavi’s choice of clothes. Something that always called him out on how he was feeling that day. And in this particular moment, letting her know how much he cared about Allen’s impression of him.

He was wearing a light brown hooded poncho with a pattern in chocolate, conformed mostly of triangles. Underneath he had a black long-sleeved shirt, with some worn out jeans of a faded blue and a pair of dark ankle boots.

Her smile was hurting her cheeks now, realizing he also was wearing not only his regular rings and bracelets, but also a different style of piercings as well as a black bandana with a discreet golden triangle. A shame he was wearing the eyepatch, the golden of the accessory making his different colored eyes pop out beautifully.

Lavi was, for her, the nearest thing to a human peacock. The more he dressed up, the more he was interested. A really easy way to read him.

-Aren’t you going to sit? You are blocking everyone’s path…-He blinked several times, looking like a large angry bunny, standing on its back legs. She played innocent, offering him a seat, which finally made him walk over there.

Lenalee could hear inside her head his voice threatening for revenge, a mirror image from when they were teenagers and played. But the amusement was far too good to ignore it, so she kept pushing, the moral dilemma secluded in a mind chest.

-I don’t know if you two met before? –They exchanged stressed looks that produced twin anxious smiles. -Allen, this is Lavi. Lavi, Allen. –She addressed each other with her folded palm, her pink peach nail polish shining when the light hit them.

-Yes, we know each other. –Both said at the same time. And if Lenalee had her doubts before that moment was what made her sure to step away from the situation.

As their eyes met, both giggled stupidly; looking at each other lovingly for more than ten seconds. Then Allen switched his stare to his cup, the smile never leaving his face, the gesture of playing with his hair back.

Lavi, beside her, was covering his mouth with his left hand. The same smile plastered on his lips making him look like a dork. He looked to the side instead, the chair that was left the most interesting thing on the world by the looks. She waited for them to start talking, too interested into
seeing what she never had a chance to presence from the relationship of Allen with his boyfriend.

-Well then, isn’t that nice! It will be super easy to chat, then! -Lavi looked at her quickly. Biting
his inner cheek. A promise and a threat on that stare that made her smile wider, knowing that he
was beyond embarrassed for being cornered like that. Still, the redhead tried his best to overcome
it and after inhaling to try and keep his heart steady, he tried to start a trivial conversation that
wouldn’t give him away.

-How was the final? –

-Did you sleep well? –

Both asked at the same time. Their inflections the same casual tone that held joyful tensions.
Lenalee wanted to laugh. How adorable that was! They were just like youngsters, a first love that
was discovered at a class, sharing a desk.

-It wasn’t a big deal! Thanks for asking! –

-Great! Finally, the rest I needed! – Again, their words overlapped. Equal laughs that followed a
game of deciding who would speak first that she didn’t care to interrupt.

She stayed as they started speaking, but as the conversation advanced and neither of them
apparently could spare a second to stop looking into each other eyes she stood up quietly and left.
Deciding she would keep the secret, at least as long as the two of them were that happy.

Because they were her friends. And she was sure, both deserved to be happy as well.

- I feel so bad with Lena! –Allen said as they stepped together in the apartment, more than six
hours later.

-I know, I didn’t notice either when she left. –Lavi relived those hours in his mind, calculating how
they passed around two hours talking, stopping only because of the alarm in Allen’s phone that set
off reminding him about his other exam at one forty-five. Then he waited the two hours the exam
took; Allen’s teacher making them all wait until the last student was over, so he could have some
words with them about the grades.

After that they spent an hour and a half eating at a place nearby. Only to switch places, Allen
waiting for him to test his students two hours more; making Lavi regret not asking them for a
written work instead. But time flew by when they were together. And that was something he never
felt with anybody before.

-Do you want to do anything tonight? –Allen was sipping from a milkshake that he got on their
way back; wearing again Lavi’s bandana that he gladly lent him. To his hair away from his face, as
it stuck over his lips when the wind reached him because of the balm he had on them.

The image made Lavi’s soul came out of his body in pure joy, his heart racing on the back of his
mouth as he looked at him wearing something of his.

-Besides babysitting you? –He smirked, trying and failing to not wear his heart on his sleeve.

-Oh, so that’s how you call it? –Allen bit the straw of his strawberry milkshake, a thing he did
when he was having a good time. –If that makes you feel better, sure. *Besides babysitting this beautiful face.* –He ended the sentence cocking his head to the side, closing his eyes in the slowest blink on earth.

Lavi felt his inside bubbling. If more happiness entered him, he was sure he would burst at any rate.

**“Beautiful face, indeed. The fairest of them all.”**

-Don’t you have stuff to do tomorrow? – He licked his lips, thinking on how much he wanted to just run the distance that was between them and lift him, give him a swirl on his arms and kissing him, without his feet touching the damn ground. A cheesy fantasy he would be more than happy to make it happen.

-Nah, I already did my papers. I just need to proofread them. -He was standing in front of his movie collection. A hobby that even when Yuu would argue he spent too much money in, he loved.

-Such a *nice* student! – Lavi teased, dropping on the huge sofa that was almost new, as nobody had time to sit there and watch movies or play games for more than two hours every few months. Back to back to the comfortable couch he used to sleep in.

-Do you like horror movies? –Bending over, looking for a specific title as he asked, Lavi thanked every god he was aware of, for that unique and perfect view of Allen’s bottom half.

-Yeah, who doesn’t! –Allen smiled and chose a title. And Lavi later recalled it was *him.*

He was the one who *didn’t* like horror movies. They always ended scaring him more than he was able to admit.

The movie was on the second half and the redhead was hugging a cushion; pressed as close to the back of the sofa as he could. Trying to hide the cold hard fact that he was scared to death.

That, until something brushed against his leg, making him scream.

 - **WHAT WAS THAT?! SOMETHING TOUCHED MY LEG!** –

Allen, whom screamed as loud as him when he heard him, started laughing. He bent picking something from the floor.

A low meow and two yellow and round eyes that stared at them proudly.

-Oh… it was Tim…-His hand was over his heart, the palpitations too fast to count them. Running a marathon wouldn’t feel as much effort as that.

-Do you want to watch anything else? – It was a challenge and a sincere offer.

-No…-He taunted the ground. -But if you promise I can sleep with you tonight as well! –It was a bold move, but Allen smiled cutely.

-*All night, every night* if you want, *pussycat.* – The words from Lenalee resonating on his mind.

“If you find out you really love him…”

He couldn’t remember how he felt when he was falling in love with Yuu. Only able to conjure the times he was flustered about how handsome he was. But the feeling he had around Lavi?
It was certainly one of a kind.

Allen wanted to kiss him, wanted to hug him. Wanted to follow him to the end. To talk to him forever. To wear that bandana every day. To learn all that repertory of marvelous expressions that incredibly handsome and stylish man had to offer. To wake up daily with that arm around his waist.

And who knew, maybe also having a ring on his own hand.

He chuckled over his own thought. How ridiculous he was being! How terribly exciting it was to like someone like that!

Lavi adored how that sweet face could talk that spicy. He loved how he could feel the air getting flooded with chemistry. How they were like long lost friends waiting to reunite, instead of people that were only meeting for a mere causality.

“More like lovers that finally found each other. Happily ever after, is what you mean. Isn’t it, Romeo?”

-I’ll hold your word to that, Snowflake. –What would come out as insults to someone else were discreet pet names that made them both tingly with all the right feelings.

Was that how love was supposed to be?

A friendship that slipped down the slide of each other names? Was that falling in love?

They stared at each other, the movie playing at the background. Both felt they could be lost in the eyes of the other forever. Allen sitting cross-leg on the left, his hands in the space between his legs, while Lavi was supporting his weight on his right hand, his head tilted to be at the same level than the other. A pair of stupid smiles on each other.

But the spell had to be broken somewhen, the phone deciding that was the perfect moment. Allen picked up, his smile being wiped out and replaced for a frown as he read the name on the screen.

-Hi Yuu. –He remembered when he used to call him sweetie. The pet name long time forgotten. –How’s everything in Japan? –

-Fine. How ‘bout your finals? –

Lavi put his arm over the sofa, trying to get near enough to listen to the conversation. The silver-haired sighed, holding the phone against his shoulder and his ear, grabbing a marshmallow covered cocoa that he made before the tallest got scared by his cat. He pushed against the back of the lounging, getting on the space that Lavi’s arm created, but instead of staying there, he let his body laid on the redhead side. His head resting on his pec.

-Yes, you know me. I think I did well. –Lavi started playing with his hair, making him look up to him, a candid smile there to welcome him. One that he was more than happy to return. So close he could feel him breathing.

-Are you going to go to work? –As always, short sentences that were cold and far from any emotion; mostly said in an implied accusation that sometimes haunt him. Giving his self-doubts a nice place to grip with their claws. Allen recalled, trying to not give any space to such feelings, that he told Jerry about covering his shift. Some students from other faculties that already finished their finals pouring over and some other still on the season but trying to drown their nerves in a shot or two before them. Even one or two lost souls that had given all hope as lost. Partying either if they
passed or not.

-Uhm, can you…wait a second? –He held the device, covering the mic for a moment to whisper to the man beside him. -Do you mind if I go to work tomorrow? I promised my manager I would help him for a while…-

Lavi didn’t know why he was asking him, since he was only there to keep him company. He gave him an ok sign with his left hand in satisfaction, an over the top reaction that made the other smile again in that special way that could light his days forever.

-Yes, I’ll be there. I owe so much to Jerry. –

-Why did it take you time to answer? –His suspicion made Allen nervous but since he was an excellent poker player, his best defense came to his aid.

-I was just trying to know what Timcanpy wanted, he keeps following me and I thought he was hungry. I was only checking on his plate. –

Hmm, ok then. I have to go. -Allen hang and leant on Lavi’s side. Exhaling as the conversation alone demonstrated to be too much for his stress. Lying to his boyfriend a thing that always sent every alarm inside him off; but telling the truth a much more regrettable decision.

-Meow. –The redhead teased, his chin resting on Allen’s head.

-Shut up, pussycat. You have enough food on your bowl. –He sipped his chocolate, a smirk now on his face.

-Am I still allowed in your bed? Cats get very cold at night; you know? –Lavi closed his eye, enjoying the smell that the shampoo got on Allen’s hair. His statement more a joke than a certain hope. The shortest kept sipping, the thought of having him on his bed making him dizzy as a ten hours ride on a carousel.

-If you promise to be good. –

“Oh Allen, I promise to be good and gentle. But only as long as you want me to be.”

-Always. –Allen left the cup on the side table once again, finally looking up to Lavi.

-Liars got to hell, Lavi. –The phrase his mind told him only the day before sounding gorgeously provocative now, being said by him. His mouth saying one thing, his eyes and his tone a whole other.

-I know. –Mentally, he tried to stop the magnetic attraction he had to those lips; listening to the warning from far away. His body moving regardless of his conscience; which slowly died with each centimeter that was lost to him. -But I think I already have a place over there, so… I’ll maybe take the risk. –

Allen felt the urge to kiss him worse, his eyes stuck to his lips.

“A bet is always a risk. Are you sure you want to play all in?”

He stopped, the kiss almost happening.

-Down, boy. –He whispered, pushing him lightly by the cheek so he wouldn’t be looking at him
anymore. He took the remote, turning everything off. Putting everything in place. Then, he got up from the couch, looking like a siren to Lavi. A creature equally beautiful and dreadful.

A walking temptation.

He was losing his mind.

“I’m tired of being careful, tip toe, trying to keep the water warm. Let me under your skin.”

“Hang in there a little more.”

Lavi followed him to the bedroom, not sure what to think anymore.

Chapter End Notes

I am so sorry for the delay! I know its just a day, but I feel bad letting you hanging with this little story.

PLEASE if you have a comment or want to say anything about it, you are SUPER WELCOME to do it (: if you are shy about it, send me a private message. Every single word no matter how short it helps a writer, like me to be motivated and happy and...well you would light up my day, buddy.

Thank you a lot for passing by and keep with the story.
Alphabet Boy

Chapter Summary

Drinking and love have many things in common. Sometimes a sip will be more than enough. Sometimes a bottle would be just a start. A little taste and a great fall.

Lavi just want to know. And maybe, that would be enough.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

“The word "love" can have a variety of related but distinct meanings in different contexts. Many other languages use multiple words to express some of the different concepts that in English are denoted as "love"; one example is the plurality of Greek words for "love" which includes agape and eros. Cultural differences in conceptualizing love thus doubly impede the establishment of a universal definition.”

Lavi read the paragraph again and again. A hidden answer for his simple question out of his reach.

What did that mean?

His eye passed quickly over the letters, until they had sense no more.

He tangled both of his hands with his copper hair, ruffling it up like an exotic bird’s nest; his brain on forced labor, over-working on a puzzle that mocked him with the answer on plain sight. His lips were pursed, and his jaw was clenched in a childish frustration that haven’t seen the light in at least eight years.

-“Love consists in this: that two solitudes protect and touch and greet each other.” -A voice that appeared out of nowhere said, a deep and wise air of mysticism on every word.

Lavi didn’t answer, instead turning to his left to face the owner of the interruption.

An old man that scarcely reached above the table; few strands of hair making a swirl that mixed with the background. A question mark that seemed like an appropriate joke, back when the redhead was a kid.

He smiled, looking at the dark eyes surrounded by darkened skin, just like a panda’s face.

-What’s that supposed to mean, gramps? -His head against his bent arm, resting on the table and the book he was reading.

-It’s a quote from Letters to a Young Poet. You are supposed to know that of course, because I gave it to you around when you were fifteen. -A cigarette suspended on the left corner of his lips; sad and gray, never lit but never left alone.

-Among with other fourteen books...You give me one more every birthday. -He closed his eye, sighing. What was he supposed to do? Remember every single word of every single book he ever
-And you learnt nothing. You, useless lazy brat. -The old man hit him in a flash that he didn’t see coming.

-What do you care anyway! - Lavi rubbed his head in the place where he was smacked, making a pout as he extended his arms over the table, his chin resting on the cold wood. -

-You don’t visit me, you disappear three days from your work here, at the library, and you ask me why I care? Do you even keep your work as a professor? Because you haven’t even stepped in the museum. -

Lavi now knew he was getting slapped again but refused to move. The mental fatigue proving too much for him right then.

-Yeah, why? I get the job done sooner or later don’t I? -Silence that forced him opening his eye. His grandfather there, observing him with severity.

-You surely are dressed sharp for staying all day at the library. -

His lips hardly moved. A gesture that annoyed Lavi to no end when he was a teenager. It was an unmistakable sign of the old man’s *smartassery* commencing; one that later forged him as such a back talker and was the main source of his conflicts with him.

He pointed to his clothes, a charcoal dressing shirt buttoned up and a pair of burgundy trousers that were complemented by his black shoes as well as the same colored jacket.

-I have a lecture at six. -The old man raised his thin, almost invisible eyebrows, making his forehead wrinkle in disbelief.

-You don’t say? -

-Believe or not...-Lavi mirrored the expression, the sarcasm tainting both of their sayings.

-And since when you dress up for your poor students? Or do you have your sight on one of them in particular? -

It was *the tone*. Lavi thought. It was that *damn tone* that had nothing for him but *judgment* without the possibility to argue. His ideas already settled on an answer that played against his blood.

The tone was what let him speechless and summoned the color to his cheeks. It was that what made him stutter nonsense and felt a punch to the nerves like he was falling from a bridge. It wasn’t that it was sort of true, or the fact that the old geezer read him like a book. It wasn’t that he was riding a bullet back to his adolescence where hiding anything was an impossible task and his grandfather outsmarted him...

It was just the *tone* of his stupid voice.

-I-I-I don’t know what the fuck do you mean and why would you think such thing. -

The man in front of him smiled. Slowly and smug. *Knowing.*

-Oh, *really*? Then, why are you looking up for the definition of *love*? -
Lavi felt his face in fire but didn’t dare to look away. He thought on a reply, but his brain was disconnected and replaced by an alarmed rabbit trying to run on a never-ending treadmill.

-Wha...I just happen to read a definition it doesn’t mean anything! -The old man laughed, making him hide his mouth behind his palm as he rested his face against it.

“Please, shut up.”

-Lavi...every time you don’t understand something you are passing through, you go to books. And consulting the definition is the very first step you always do to start on your investigation instead of being a human being an asking someone. -

He waited for a scolding that never arrived. A book being pushed on the table until it touched his elbow, the cover worn out and blue without letters.

-Someone once said...that at the touch of love, everyone becomes a poet. - His lips relaxed in a strange but affectionate smile, a reflection of his eyes. -I don’t think that what you are looking for can be found in a dictionary or a chemistry book. Not even in one of your precious history ones. After all, love is different for everyone, yet, somehow, it is the same. “Love is the voice under all silences, the hope which has no opposite in fear; the strength so strong mere force is feebleness: the truth more first than sun, more last than star.” -

The redhead held the book, his blush receding and letting space to his surprise.

-I know you didn’t ask me. But love sometimes is cruel and sometimes is gentle. And I don’t precisely want to see you hurt by it. It can be a lot of work; not because is hard to love someone, but because is hard to face the consequences of doing it. -

By that point Lavi was convinced he was still sleeping and somehow his grandfather took all the work to appear in there and took pity on his tormented and confused feelings. The idea of removing his eyepatch crossing over his mind.

-Maybe you are confused about if you love this kid or not. But I can guarantee you...if you do... No matter what you do... you’ll always end up thinking of him. Everything would be about him. -He sighed deeply, closing his eyes.

-How do you know is a him? -Lavi swallowed hard, matters of the heart a forbidden territory; his voice an awkward mumble.

His grandfather chuckled, the cigarette moving up and down like a brown and shaky leaf trying to stay stuck to its tree.

-You do know that you murmur when you are too immersed in your work. Right? And unless you have a female friend named Allen, then I can bet my teeth it’s a him...-

Lavi knew shame as much as the next person, but that? Knowing that every single person that worked near him knew what was on his mind? He was blowing steam, as the heat came back with a new wave of embarrassment. His hands flying to protect the last pieces of dignity that threatened to escape from his face, covering it.

-Stop being a coward, brat. Read that and if you can think only in him...then you’ll have your answer. -The elder got down the chair, laughing like a cartoon villain. Disappearing behind a bookshelf.

Only twenty minutes later and finally left alone, he read in less than an hour the entire volume of
selected poetry.

The only reliable resource to learn at least a little, about love.

“Screwed is a regrettable understatement. I mean, I wish we would be screwed in the other sense of the world but...”

-Done. I’m done and doomed; that’s what I am. He was talking to himself, as he fought against the jacket to put it on, the cold air pushing against his skin with little to no mercy.

The book hitting him from the inside of his bag with every step, making Lavi think that it was alive and having the time of its life at his expenses.

-I could use a drink, dammit. -He said as his words were carried away; rubbing his arms and crossing them as tight as he could to get a little warm.

Lavi wasn’t ready to go back to Allen’s place; the thought of facing him while having the knowledge that he was...if not falling, already in love with him, too much to handle. Specially, right after he slept in the same place that him, holding him and waking up with that view...

How were you supposed to confront a friend knowing that? It was different to only liking him!

Liking him was explainable, was even logical. Allen was beautiful and nice; he was fun and smart. He enjoyed passing time with him, talking to him, wanting to kiss his gorgeous, sweet, sassy face...

A face palm, that brought him back to the moment as he wandered around the college. Only to found himself in an entirely different place.

It is said that if you are meant to be in one place you will be.

And this was particularly true for Lavi, who without noticing entered the very same bar Allen worked in; looking only for a place to clear his mind.

The place wasn’t very big, but it managed to have every single table occupied as well as the stools at the bar. The music made everything vibrate with a beat that was a mix of pop and a pinch of jazz, the glasses dancing with it as the liquid in them cried for being consumed.

Lavi walked inside, lured by the warmth that scared away the cold that held to his back; but it was the idea of being heated on the inside what made him get closer to the counter. He pulled out his wallet, making sure he had enough cash to ask for a whiskey or two that left him hammered enough to stop his mind from aggravating him and gave him the soothe he needed from his own troubled thoughts.

The bills saluted him and with his approval, he pushed into the bar, looking for the bartender. His hand was already up when he noticed who he was actually calling for.

Allen was smiling to a brunet man with a distinctive mohawk cut, and a cheap suit. The superior part of his hair brushed back lazily instead of upwards; two twin and faded marks like rectangles in each cheek. The guy seemed about to touch him, Lavi recognizing his own corporal language on him. He wasn’t bad looking and for an instant, the redhead felt the sting of jealousy on his throat.
Regardless, he kept looking; suddenly stuck to his place. His hand was no longer up, and he hid as well as he could behind a group of friends almost at the end of the bar.

He saw how the guy tried again and again to touch Allen. To touch his face. And try after try Allen moved away from his grasp as he maintained his pretty but shallow smile.

Lavi always took pride on being able to notice the little details and at that moment, he felt prouder than ever. Allen was being nice, but you needed to be a special type of stupid to not notice how uninterested he was about them all. Because as much as that guy tried, Allen wasn’t leaving his other costumers unattended. Nor giving him the slightest chance to see who he really was.

-So… if it’s just vodka… does it has a special name? –The eyeroll of the silver haired wasn’t unnoticed by Lavi. Himself doing a face of utter disbelief.

Who said that in real life and hoped it worked?

-No. –The response slithered over his lips like a stranded song. He took an orange juice carton and poured half of it on the glass. A graceful movement that felt like a performance on its own. –But now, mister Reed… -The grey goose mixing with the drink. —…you are screwdriving. –

-You can call me Kaz; I don’t mind.

Allen was smiling. A smile lethal and beautiful. A perfectly planned bait, but a lie in the end. It didn’t reach his eyes and it didn’t irradiate light.

“It isn’t like the ones he gives me.”

-Kaz, then. Come on, get started. –Lavi felt it like a threat. Allen taunting his costumer to get drunk and get lost, the malice that was hidden under his kindness there, at the reach of his hand.

He could understand why Kanda wanted to protect him that much, but again, he was pretty sure by then, that Allen protected himself. As pretty as a bird, as dangerous as a snake.

Allen took another order, leaving the Reed guy to drink alone. The cocktail shaker moving on his hands like an extension of himself, quickly serving another glass, the measure perfect, not single drop spilled.

-Good times. Remedy for sorrows. –He told to a guy that was around his forties. A police jacket hung on the back of the highchair; the badge reading Charles. Allen winked; moving like a dancer over the tip of his toes, a gracious turn. The man raising his glass at his direction, grateful for the attention that the redhead was sure, it was just like he promised.

Lavi smiled, somehow proud of him.

He was not only an excellent student, but an impressive bartender as well as an amazing cook. And an artist, no less; Allen was a catch that everyone would be not only happy but astonished to have.

-Welcome to the club. –A tired voice told him; the source a man munching on some fries that he gave Lavi a bored look. The redhead stared without knowing what to say; a moment that got extended like a rubber band.

-Uh… thanks? –He said finally.

-Did you lose something, don’t know how to ask for a drink or are… admiring the sight? –
And there was *the tone* again, but this man wasn’t his grandfather. So Lavi squared up and in his best polite and serious impression of himself he answered.

-I may have lose something. Does that matter? –

-Oh yes. **It does.** Because if you try to make a move on the cute face that is serving, you’ll have to make a line. –

Lavi wondered if he was always a jealous person or if it was something that he acquired with his crush on Allen. He thought he didn’t doubt about him at all, but he sure didn’t like those guys talking about him like he was a prize to get. He was looking down at this guy at the bar, a serious frown that was a warning, his height pressuring on the matter. He wasn’t keen to violence either, but like Allen; he knew how to play his cards.

His sleeves were rolled up and he was carrying his jacket over his shoulder. He was aware the eyepatch gave him points as some others on the bar nervously looked back at him from time to time.

Now, the guy blinked slowly. A challenge that he was having a hard time ignoring.

It was stupid, and he knew it, but his testosterone was getting the wheel and bad decisions were its favorite stop.

-You think? —His voice with a cocky inflection he barely recognized on himself but filled him with adrenaline. Excitement mixing with pride; a drink that would take the drive out of *screwdrive*, more probably than not, leaving him with the rest.

-**I bet.** –The man said, looking him from head to toe. –Pretty boys like you, all dressed up and trying to flash their expensive clothes and black cards are nothing but a waste of time to him. –

Lavi smirked on the inside, thinking on how this man didn’t know a thing about Allen. Sure, he wasn’t swept over handsome faces or nice clothes, but money? That was the real love of his life.

He doubted he would date someone for it but was sure he would try to take out as much as he could from someone mean and naïve enough to provoke him.

-Fine. –He said, getting an idea. –I bet everything I have on my pretty boy’s wallet that the bartender not only will pay attention *to me*, but he will give me a kiss on his own, free will. The moment I touch him is over and you win, how about that? –

The golden eyes of the man shined under the colored lights and Lavi recognized greed when he saw it.

-You sure like to lose money, buddy. –He moved, his dark, wavy hair in a small ponytail. After some seconds he pulled out his wallet, fat with the paycheck of the day. –But are you smarter than me now? You are the prince of the playground, aren’t you? -

“**Hello.**”

-It’s a bet then. –They shook hands and Lavi walked with the security of a cat on a fence. He stood in the middle of the bar and waited for Allen to see him, his elbow resting on the counter, his hand on his chin.

Allen turned and as he did, he thanked his luck for not having a glass on his hands, sure that it would’ve slipped at the sight of the owner of his thoughts.
-Hey! –He said, his voice cracking a little. A rag on his fidgeting hands.

-Hey. –Lavi answered, raising his eyebrows in a playful gesture. –If you are not too busy, mister bartender. Would you mind getting me a whiskey on the rocks? –

The shorter let his surprise dilute as he took the sight that was the other. He never had the chance before of seeing him wear anything, but casual clothes and the dress shirt was eye-candy on its own. He listened to the request and let a sincere smile appear, the anticipation of that game that never ended between them making him feel sparks of joy.

-Oh? Of course. –He took a glass, showing off the best of his repertory of bartender tricks. –Say when, handsome. –

Whiskey started raining into the glass, both of them never breaking eye contact. Too fascinated on each other. Too engaged with their game.

-I have faith in your good judgment. -Lavi pressed; his eyelids half closed. -I’m afraid I’ll be having you doing this all night. My plans are sipping till’ I’m tipsy, do you get me? So, I’ll be trusting you to take good care of me. –

Allen laughed and cut the flow at the correct height for that glass; forgetting the rest of his costumers, that anyway, were too distracted observing the bet they overheard.

-And what about your job, Stranger? Drinking in the middle of the week? –

He let his eyes wander down to Lavi’s neck, who was just opening his shirt a button or two, letting the skin breath. The idea of grabbing him and kissing him over the counter getting stronger as some sweat beads licked their way to disappear on the fabric. A necklace thin and black that had a small charm of a cross.

“*The x marks the spot.*”

-Baptize me on that; don’t worry about tomorrow. –He went to take his glass, something that Allen used to touch his hand, the rings cold, contrasting against his skin.

A fortuitous event that was not fortuitous at all.

Lavi bent over, getting near to his ear.

-I need your help. – His gray orbs entertained with how the clothes seemed to enhance the redhead’s body like a charm. –I made a bet that you would kiss me to that guy over there at the end of the bar…And don’t get mad, but I’m risking my wallet over here…-

Allen allowed him to make space to see him in the eyes; all his will on keeping it on his face. Lavi moving his head pointing to the guy, whom Allen peeked on, but went back at his favorite face on less than a second. The distance like that too much.

-So…care to help a friend? I think a kiss on the cheek will… -He rolled his eye and Allen could tell he was being honest.

It wasn’t about getting a kiss; it was about the bet.

And he surely was good at bets.

“*Losing is never an option.*”
It was his smiles and his movements. Allen thought as he acted; everything in a blink of an eye. It was about how they talked, how he touched him, how he felt. It was his stupid laugh and the way his lips acted like they knew about his desire. It was his ideas and his jokes. His comebacks and the times he got him speechless. It was his hair like a sunset and a fire flame. His eye like an emerald and his body like a Greek god. His scent like books and fancy perfume.

It was that he loved art and that man right there was a piece of one. It was hardly his fault.

The silver haired let his guard down, letting that part of him that worked on his instinct alone. The one that always won at poker, the good liar. The lustful, the backtalker, the greedy. The dark Allen that did everything he wanted but wouldn’t dare.

And everyone should buckle up or bring an exorcist, because he was loose and thirsty for blood. He never took a no for answer.

Allen grabbed him by the collar, just like he envisioned, and stepped on the tip of his toes, because hell, Lavi was tall even sat down. He closed his eyes and kissed him, his lips crashing in a messy first kiss that got him as high as a kite.

Lavi couldn’t believe what was happening, a gasping sound until everything was Allen.

It was electricity and chaos. It was a blessing and a curse.

Two parts of something that matched. Two dark halves that became a whole filled with light.

“Love consists in this: that two solitudes protect and touch and greet each other.”

And those solitudes founded each other.

And damn, how badly they wanted to touch.

-I would hate you to lose. -Allen whispered, against his mouth, wishing for an eternity together. His hand never loosing his grip. His voice honey with rum. – Don’t worry about tomorrow, I think you said. –

-Night’s still young…Isn’t it? – A shot that become a bottle. The addiction already there.

A mess of eyelashes with eyes that didn’t want to lose sight but wanted to be lost in another kiss. Their bodies shaking at the contact of their lips. The last seal almost broken. Both of them at the limit of their souls.

“So, this is what it feels like…when you become one of the drunks?”

The redhead thought. Getting lost on the taste.

Chapter End Notes

Hi! I am really sorry to be late to this deliver! On the bright side, you will be getting next one sooner? Sort of? I've been bussy, but I'm back!
I hope you enjoy this chapter, the quotes are from Wikipedia, Rainer Maria Rilke and E.Cummings and of course, Plato.

Again, if you have anything to tell me, even if its just a word! Ill be more than happy to read you! If you don't want anybody else to see it, you can send me a PM! I love to read you guys, it makes me really happy and there is nothing that helps me more to keep on with my writting than your nice words.

Isn't this getting hot or its just the room? Have fun!
Chapter Summary

It was just a kiss. It was just a bet.
Some would say Love it's just a word.
It could be wrong, but it should have been right. Let our hearts colide.

Or would it be too much?

A drunk professor and a not so good student.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

-You better buy me something pretty, handsome. –Allen pushed him lightly, creating the space they needed to breathe. Both minds dizzy with fantasy.

There are many myths about the sun around the world, around time.

Myths about how some magnanimous deity decided to share light and warmth over the poor humans, that were terrorized by the dark. And how they grew, how they learnt. How every animal instinct was vanished by the great star.

How life began with the blessing of control and order.

But the night, as we know, didn’t stop existing.

Night it’s still here.

Still waiting for her turn to arrive. With her black mantle and her complicity. Sanctifying everyone with the sight of other astral bodies, with the secrecy and privacy shadows can only imitate.

With her secrets and her madness.

People think daylight is the true way of their lives. Order and control, nothing to show but what it’s accepted to see. Regardless, the sun only keeps the instinct at bay, when he is gone so it’s his influence. At night everything that makes you worried either disappears or keeps you awake. Night either letting you drink of her goblet or covers you with her mantle.

The true merciful goddess is her, letting you be a little freer.

And that night, she poured her chalice over both; letting them get drunk with time. Drunk in the seconds that ticked away the truth: nobody would say a thing about those two.

-Whatever your heart desires… -Lavi answered, staring at how Allen was biting his own lip, the smile still there. His words sticking to the roof of his mouth like butter cream.

Allen thought that it wasn’t in Lavi’s hand to give him that, letting him go as he laughed. But the redhead never said anything he meant more than that in his entire life. He waited as the other
smoothed his uniform and hair, that were already faultless. Allen taking his time turning his back on him, their eyes making contact until the last moment.

Then he raised his glass, slowly sipping the whiskey he asked, his throat burning with delight as he clenched his teeth. Letting the thoughts that strangled him go.

- Pretty nice. – He said, mostly to himself as he left the empty thing on the bar.

He walked to the farthest end; the man that made that bet already going towards him.

-I have to admit, I didn’t see that coming. – He was lighting a cigarette, the small round red light like the burning coals that were living inside his heart after that kiss. – But a bet is a bet, my friend. – The man extended his hand with a simple black wallet filled with bills that were waiting for him.

Lavi smiled pitting him.

-Hey man, I’ll take the money, but the wallet is yours. I see no point having it. - Giving back the now thin accessory, the guy laughed through the smoke, shrugging.

-I guess so. – He took it back, keeping it in a hidden pocket inside his jacket, as he started to leave. –Good luck with that beauty. – A shoulder pat, and he left. The last string that were holding him on place gone.

Lavi stared at the money, thinking on what to do with it. He put it inside his own jacket and walked back to a free stool, near his glass where he could wait for Allen to be done with his work. He sat, playing with the thing. Looking now and then at how Allen’s hands worked with ease.

-So. Are you going to ask me if I come here often? – The redhead asked on one of the moments the other took to be close him.

Allen raised his eyebrows, as he cleaned the space of a previous costumer; a fake expression of confused annoyance on his pretty features.

- Oh, do I know you, mister? –

Lavi leaned on the counter, his face resting on his hands; a smug smile that Allen wanted to either kiss away or punch it.

“ Maybe both.”

-You go kissing strangers like that, then? – He opened his mouth to respond, but a costumer called him, pausing the game between them. Lifting one gloved finger threatening him with a comeback that would not take much time to arrive. An order that was taken, going back to where Lavi was to prepare the request. Quick steps that made him seem like floating to the eye of the taller. A sight precious to his heart.

He started talking as his hands worked with the grace that only the habit can perform.

-Only when they are really attractive. – He winked; the drink ready to take to his costumer. Leaving Lavi hitting himself with the counter.

-That mouth is going to kill me. –
The hours passed and drink after drink Lavi kept talking with him at every chance. He was smiling so much that his cheeks were hurting already, but he couldn’t stop.

-You are a dork. That’s what you are! –Allen called him over his shoulder. A discussion about a book that nobody but they cared.

The bartender was carrying three martinis in a hand and two shots in another when his boss cut his path, almost making him spill them all. A surprised gasp punched out from his guts.

-Oh! Jerry hi! –

Jerry had his lavender hair in a tight French braid that ran along his head to his shoulders. He wore a pair of yellow colored sunglasses and his regular white tank top that had a peculiar Mao collar. His arms were crossed, and Allen felt small compared to the muscles that were always for the showoff.

-What are you doing sweetie? –Allen looked at him trying to understand what he meant, blinking lost. The accusation in his tone bringing back the nervousness all the male figures in his life seemed to like to generate.

Was he in trouble?

-Taking this to some customers? –He raised the glasses a little, trying to make his point, feeling like a kid that was about to get scolded. His own words tasting like an aspirin that wasn’t swallowed at the first try.

-No, I mean, what are you doing with that hottie? –He pointed with his head towards Lavi, who was playing with the stirrer of the Long Island he was having at the time.

Allen looked at the redhead with his lips parted, the confusion and the instinct fear that being asked questions provoked, running through his skin; whispering nothing but punishment.

He spoke, taunting the ground with stuttering words that were almost swallowed by the music.

-With…with Lavi? He is my friend. –Jerry bent enough for Allen to be able to look at him in the eyes, his sunglasses falling to the tip of his nose.

-Really? Well that’s a fine friend you have, honey. –The way Jerry was talking now, made Allen’s skin crawl with something he couldn’t remember but felt before. – If I were you, I would definitely eat him up. –

It heated the side of his head and clawed his chest. It made his fear go away with something similar to the anger he always kept locked inside himself.

-I don’t know what you mean. –He listened to himself, cold and defiant with a man that was not only his boss but his friend. His sentence painted with the sentiment he used only to warn others to fuck off and away.

Allen tried to shove that away, but he felt the weight growing heavier and the air closing around them; his eyes defying him. His own reaction out of his control. Jerry smiled, caressing Allen’s cheek in a gesture that added frustration to the mix that was eating his heart; making him jump a little. The glasses clicking in his hands. He took the drinks from him and sighed.
Go dance with him. The bar isn’t crowded anymore.

Allen felt how the heat spread around his face, the darkness of the place giving him some chance to hide his blush. Everything he felt clashing horrible inside his stomach, like a bad mix of tequila and vodka with nothing to wash away the flavor.

Nothing else but the burn and a terrible aftertaste.

-He is just a friend. –His voice was barely audible, the promised scolding finally reaching him like a slap on the face.

Jerry sighed, wishing the best for a kid he considered his own.

-And I’m not saying anything. Just dance with him. It’s not like me or anybody else here is going to call that grumpy man of yours. –Allen stared back at him, feeling cornered and observed as Jerry delivered the drinks to a group of girls that took them and left the bar for the side tables.

“He is right.” The voice in his mind started. “Nobody is going to say anything. Nobody is going to call up Yuu. Nothing is gonna’ happen. You are just going to dance with a good friend.”

-Take this, so nobody will bother you because of the uniform. –It was a black hoodie, thrown at his face. His reflexes coming to save him.

“…One that happens to be a good kisser as well.”

Lavi thought he was getting drunk already when he saw Allen jump over the bar to stand by his side.

-Well I think it’s time for me to stop drinking. -He was munching the stirrer that danced between his teeth, lost and happy, gazing at his face.

-Yes. Time to dance with me. –Allen took his hand and dragged him to the middle of the dancefloor. Navigating between the people that never bothered a single second of their attention on the pair.

-I am a lousy dancer, Beansprout. –Lavi shouted trying to be heard over the music; the banging of the bass vibrating through his bones.

-Don’t call me that, Oversized carrot. –He pulled the rubber band that held his hair, shaking his head for it to fall in place. The movement happening in a weird slow-motion that accused the ginger of being at least hammered with the booze.

-And in anyway, nobody knows how to dance. It’s just something you say to make others feel…-

The last word was crushed by the music.

Lavi asked him again and Allen repeated himself, but once again the music killed his words. He tried a last time, with no difference; and rolling his eyes, he grabbed him, his hands on his and laughed, giving up.

The redhead couldn’t hear his laugh, but the sight…the sight was enough. Allen was there, being part of the music, being part of some artistic moment of life. And he was there to witness it.
Because life was like that sometimes.

Sometimes the music made sense, sometimes the colors were more than there, sometimes everything moved to a pace that forced your feet into an improved dance. And some other times… You just realized that love never asks you permission to conquer your heart.

It was just there. He smiled as they both jumped like children on a bed, turning and moving with the electric music that punched everything with energy.

Lavi couldn’t say how many songs they passed like that, the alcohol tiring him up sooner than later, traveling to his head. The silver hair of Allen a cloud of distraction; making a curtain around his face, showing in moments his huge smile.

He stopped, panting, holding the Allen’s hand to draw his attention.

- Are you ok? – Allen shouted to him, his hands now on his arms, the hold tight but kind, the smile he adored still there.

- I need to breathe! – He laughed as he pointed to the exit.

The silver haired nodded, walking with him outside.

- Holly crap, I feel like I just ran a marathon. – Lavi rested his back on a wall, his ears pounding, his permanence on Earth a dubious thought.

- If you want, we can go back home, old man. – Lavi stared at him. He was a bit out of breath but nothing that showed he was tired. If something, Allen seemed more pumped up than before, tying his hair again on that small ponytail he somehow managed to make.

- Hey, show some respect to your teacher, brat! – Allen smiled, getting near him.

Love was horrible. Lavi thought then. As horrible as he was. If not more. It never asked if it was a right time to come. It never asked permission to invade or if it was the right person to take.

Love was selfish. And oh, how selfish was Lavi himself as well.

- Oh? I thought you were just my sitter… - He held his arm, curling his around it, pressing his body to his, for Lavi’s dismay.

- I can be both. – He said, swallowing hard the images that came back. His dream happy to overlap with that moment; the drinks doing what they were made for.

- Both? – Allen said in a voice that, Lavi knew, was the sound equivalent to an electroshock collar to his dignity. Allen could say whatever he wanted with that tone, and he would be more than delighted to compel.

"Your wish is my command, Snowflake." The thought pulsating below his chest and running south.

- Yes. – A quiet answer that tasted like a drug over his tongue. A signature over a dangerous deal.

- So, are you going to lecture me or punish me for that, Lavi? I promise, I’ll be good. – His eyes were the stars his life revolved around.

- I bet you will. –

Lavi had his hand over his cheek, and Allen rested against it in no time. He caressed his flushed
and incredibly cold skin and found himself getting closer to his face.

“You never learn, friend. We know what happens inside.” His mind called. The taste of his lips like a crave he desperately needed.

Allen didn’t make any attempt to move, his hand covering Lavi’s softly, his eyelids falling to be half-closed as he got nearer.

“Kiss him. It’s just one more time. Only once, cross the line.”

His lips parted, and Lavi was now mixing his breath with his. The music dimmed in the background, the night sheltering their faces to any passenger curious enough to care.

-I will. –His lips almost touching, Allen closing his eyes.

“If you let yourself trip, you are going to fall completely.” Lavi’s emerald eye was barely open, the warmth of both bodies visible in the cold of the night.

“But what if it’s just lust? Will you risk yourself to fuck up?”

Did that matter? The same phrase on both minds. What if it was lust? Would they risk their friendship, would they risk their love?

- Allen I…-He didn’t have a clue of what he was saying. The words pushing out in an autopilot motion. The sense of everything getting lost in the translation.

-Yes? –He whispered, opening his eyes again to look at him.

“For fuck’s sake, kiss that face. Just once more!”

-I think I love…-

The night is patient but the magic, as many know, runs out fast and washes out rough.

And this was something Lavi remembered, as the cold wind pushed them like a whip of reality, howling like a wolf who tried to warn them for them to leave. He hugged Allen, trying to shelter him from the winter that demanded to be acknowledged. The smaller curled against him, shivering while the wind passed.

-Leaving sounds good for this old man, anyway. –He said as he patted his head. – Let me go for my jacket. -A sense of disappointment over him.

Lavi hold his hand again, taking him inside only to bid goodbye to Jerry, pay the tab and pick up the piece of cloth as well as that book his grandfather lent him.

Allen’s boss waved his hand, smiling knowingly. He waved back but immediately avoided his stare as Lavi put his jacket over his shoulders and kissed him on the temple. The red tainting once again every inch of exposed skin.

They turned to the door and Lavi took his hand again, this time intertwining their fingers as if that was their thing. And not something reserved to couples.

-Come on love, we wouldn’t want you to get sick. Do we? –Allen felt ridiculous holding the hand of that super tall and super handsome guy, wearing his jacket and being all flushed and lightheaded. It all felt like a dream that was too good to be happening; even in his head. Too good
for him, at least.

He was dating Yuu, he wasn’t allowed to feel like that. To be held like that, to be cared of. He was already *owned*.

-Whatever you say, professor. It is you who has the babysitting job. –He quickly said, suddenly tired.

Lavi smiled squishing his hand a bit. A simple gesture that forced him to stick to his side immediately, all his will into not hugging his waist. The crumbles of affection that life gave him enough for him to not complain and take what he could have.

Even if it wasn’t real.

-You promised me you would be good, Snowflake. –He was using the tone he applied to his students when he was half joking half serious and his heart stopped when the other looked at him covering his mouth with the oversized sleeve of his jacket. -Lets…Lets go back, shall we? –

They walked back to the apartment in no time, the redhead opening the door again.

-Allen? –He called as the silver haired ran into his bedroom. –Is it ok if I make some coffee? –

-Yes! I’m just going to take a quick shower! –The door opened and closed again. The water starting to run.

Timcanpy purred as he entered the kitchen stretching, asking to be pet while he jumped over the counter.

-Hey little guy. Do you think it’s ok? –The cat meowed, and he smiled taking it as a yes.-Then… where do your human hides the mugs around here? –Lavi tried one pantry door after the other without success, the alcohol still in his system; not only making him clumsier but also slow and confused.

-Did I try this door before? –

An uninterested murr was the only answer as the stripped cat got bored and jumped back down, in search of his bowl.

Allen got into the water when the temperature was still adjusting.

-Love is a complicated word. –He said as he washed his hair, sighing. Trying to clean away his emotions. Praying for the water to take them away; his heart still racing in that strange mood. Two consecutive and strong beats at the time, each time he breathed. Each time he remembered how his lips felt.

“*It is as long as you make it that way.*” His left touched his mouth absently. Missing him already.

He rinsed his body, taking no more than five minutes being in an out. The guilt the thing he wanted
to get rid of more.

“Love is only complicated when you think much about it. Just don’t think about it.”

-But what if it is lust? I…I couldn’t just…-He brushed his hair, looking at himself in the blurry mirror; already dried and fully clothed. The steam making him feel secure inside his pajamas, like a bird sleeping on a distant cloud. Uncapable of being hurt high in the sky.

“And what if it’s love, and you don’t try?”

-Then…then I guess I’ve already fall… -He said to his thoughts as he opened the door, hugging himself. A sinner who just heard his own confession.

This was possibly the third time Lavi tried the same door.

“You should be trying to open other things…if you get me.”

-Nope. –The voice inside his head sounding disgustedly like Kanda’s.

“I’m just saying, it’s not like that little sinner is going to talk; you know? I mean, I can’t know if you don’t tell me. I’m at the other side of the freaking globe. And I know you would love to fuck him.”

-Goddammit…if you just…! -

-Let me help you. –Lavi jumped, bumping his head on an open door.

-Dude! Not cool! – The shout was instinctive, the fear and guilt that always pushed him around laughing at his expenses. He rubbed his head and was surprised by the warm hands that timidly took his own. Finally, he adventured to look at Allen, who was wearing a onesie that appeared to be of a white cat.

With the hood on, the white fabric blended adorably with his hair and his skin, melting his heart in the process.

-I am sorry Lavi, I didn’t mean to scare you. –He started to think that their hands had truly some kind of magnetic attraction, his left reaching for the free one of Allen as soon as he spotted it.

-No worries. I’m the one who was…Uhm…You…you look…-How hard was going to keep his thoughts straight! How hard was going to be to keep everything to himself!

Was he wearing anything under that pretty thing? Or was just…

-It’s ridiculous I know. -Allen said, interrupting his ideas. –It’s just really comfortable and I’m tired so…-

-Who the fuck said it was ridiculous? –

Allen took a step back, the aggressiveness on the other’s voice taking him with the guard down.

-Uhm… Yuu? Yuu said it once, I think? It doesn’t matter Lavi; I can take it off, I will wear something else. It’s a childish thing and…-

Another step.
-Or you can wear whatever you want… -Lavi kept walking towards him, the change of temperature messing with his already drunk mind. - …because you look absolutely stunning with everything. -

-Lavi? –

One step more.

His back against the wall. The coffee maker purring loudly. His breath harsh against his ear.

-Allen. –He called, pressing him against that small corner between the fridge and the door frame.

The way his name was called like a spell to his lower belly. He looked to the ceiling, trying to swallow as he urged his brain to concentrate in everything else that wasn’t the man in front of him and that horrible temptation.

-Yes? –He whispered, feeling his control slip.

-You said….His words stunk with whiskey, and even when that was something that made Allen be cautious and almost scared with most men, he couldn’t help but shiver with the anticipation of a kissing him till’ he blacked out. -You never said… -He continued, correcting himself; dragging his words. –…what you wanted me to get you… With the money of the bet. –

Allen looked at him, puzzled for a moment.

-Uh? No…I…-

-I mean it; you know? I would get you anything your heart desires. –Allen softened his look and smiled; his thoughts cooling off with such a sweet request.

-Lavi, you don’t need…-

-No. I do. –He interrupted him, supporting himself with one hand on the wall. Now visibly and obviously drunk. –I do. Why did you say that what you are wearing is stupid? God, it hurts me so much to see you like that; you know? –

Allen sighed and tenderly rose his hands to rest them on Lavi’s chest. He figured the man had some resistance to the alcohol, but now that he was a little bit more relaxed, everything hit him like a train. And even when that would make him annoyed with everyone else, he found himself thinking it was terribly adorable on the professor.

-Why? –He decided to play along, used to drunk guys needing to be listened.

-Why? Because I love you. –

His smile disappeared.

There were many things Allen expected. Many words he thought would be said. Many themes that would be talked about with no more sense than a twenty-three pounds coin.

But that? That made him feel like the drunk was he, instead of the redhead.

-What? –He held unto him, staring into that precious eye.

-I love y…-
-Don’t say that! –His heart was running so fast that listening everything else was an odyssey itself.
-Don’t say that! You can’t say that! –

His voice broke as he shook him, desperately, cutting his words. The guilt again feasting with his anxiety.

-Oh, Lavi! No! Why did you say that...! –

But the redhead kept talking, almost as if he couldn’t really listen to him.

- I love you so much, it fucking hurts. Do you know that, Allen? When I see you smiling…I feel like I am going to pass out of happiness. I have seen many things in my life, but… your smile? Damn! And you kissed me! Do you know how hard it is for me to keep living with that? Or without that? –

Allen felt one of Lavi’s hand on his face, holding him a bit tighter to make him look at him. His hold harder than before but never enough to hurt him.

-But I know the place in which I am, my dear Snowflake. –A single tear falling to die into the other’s hand, a twister of dangerous emotions on his soul. -I know. I would kill for another kiss, but more than that… I would pay gladly whatever the price to make you smile everyday like that. –

Allen felt like running, like hiding, like crying. Like calling Yuu and Lenalee and confessing how he had forced Lavi in some way to like him. How he was a terrible boyfriend and a disgusting friend how he…

-Don’t say that...- He whimpered, feeling cornered by his wish. That became real.

“Don’t think so much.” But it could be so wrong. It could mess everything in his life if he didn’t think much about it. He was weak and Lavi was just there, telling him he loved him and…

“But it could be right.”

It could be wrong. They kissed, he confessed…they were alone and…

“But it should’ve been right.”

As Lavi realized he was in love in a moment that was just music and a smile, Allen let himself go with that phrase that he wasn’t strong enough to fight anymore. Never letting himself out of his tight self-control, this single action moved him like a puppet, with the only fuel of his desire.

His only desire.

He stood on the tip of his toes, pulling him with his hands on his shoulders kissing him with his lips parted.

And it was probably a magnetic attraction indeed, his bodies flushed against each other, Lavi pushing him more against the wall to have some support.

This kiss was again messy, the minty flavor of Allen’s freshly brushed teeth contrasting with the bourbon; a horrible taste that would be imprinted in his memory forever with yearn. Lavi grabbed him by the waist, thirsty for any contact he could get from the only owner of his most scandalous dreams.

- Mh...-
Allen let him, opening his mouth only a little more, but giving him the entrance for a deeper kiss. The taller didn’t need to be asked twice and passed his tongue, over those addictive lips hungrily. He met him with his own, feeling like he was just going down on a roller coaster at full speed. His heart racing, his blood pumping, his emotions on that single place inside his pants…

-Lavi…- He whispered, without knowing what he would do.

The redhead moved between his legs, breaking the kiss harshly as he put his forehead against his shoulder; everything spinning for both of them.

-I’m sorry…- He mumbled. Allen hugging him, his palms opened on his wide back. -I’m sorry Allen I… -At first Allen blinked, confused. Trying to understand what just happened. -I’m sorry I… It’s just…fuck. -His voice is harsh and the silver haired moves just a little and notice, finally why is his friend apologizing. –I don’t… -

-If you dare to say you don’t mean to be this horny, I promise you I am going to punch you there, in a second. -

He held onto him by his shirt, letting his breath go between his clenched teeth and the fog of his overstimulated mind starts to dissipate.

-We can’t do this, Lavi. You are just really drunk… -He rubbed his back caringly, and sighed again, petting the copper mess that the other’s hair was.

-Yeah. I am. –Was the tired answer he got; making him smile.

-And I promised you to be good…didn’t I? –

-Yeah. –

-Then… let’s get you a glass of water and a nice bed, ok? Everything will be fine tomorrow morning, handsome. –He pushed Lavi a little, only to make space to try and carry him to, at least the living room.

-Really? –A kid that wants his parents to promise him that no monsters will be found ever under his bed.

-Really. –He promises.

“It’s ok. Even if this is all we get. If that were just words. If you didn’t mean it. It’s ok. Because I think I may love you too.”

Chapter End Notes

Hi! Im not dead people.
Im really, really sorry to have you waiting like this. December was not the best month for me and tbh I am an easily person to get sad or dissapointed on my own work.
But it really made me happy when I saw all your comments and kudos.
I felt really bad to not being able to bring to you another chapter of this story, and I made my best.
Im thankfull for you all that read me and I have to give you thanks for that. You really cheer me up! So thank you!
I hope this chapter make you happy, when I used to read fanfiction my day was awesome when I knew they uploaded something. Also, I am NOT abandoning this. With good luck I'll be uploading more frequently.

My job isn't so good and sometimes I am too tired, but I think I can manage this now. Don't give up on me! I know I'm late to all my writing projects but I'm still here.

If you want to talk to me remember you can always contact me by twitter @noctomata (:  

Thank you again for reading!
A promised date, that came after a failed confession. Will this be any different? Allen hopes for it to be and at the same he hopes for it to stay the same. After all, falling requires only a little push.

Drinking should never be a problem to a bartender. But vodka it's always great for inhibitions.

A dizzy twister dance, can't find my drink or man.

[THIS STARTS THE NSFW PEOPLE]

A soft murmur that lasted a second and no more. The single turn of a page. The light with a cold undertone that contoured a silhouette that towered over him. Lavi tried to open his eye; but the sting of returning to the land of the living was too much, forcing him to blink rapidly what it felt forever; his eye crying in a desperate intent to erase reality and go back to peaceful slumber.

-Ugh…- He managed to grunt.

The silhouette moved, allowing the shadow that casted on him to cover his face. Finally letting him see; a merciful act of bliss in a land of torture and regret. A gentle smile that hurt his heart like a murderous arrow and yet eased every pain that the hungover was punishing him with, was the first thing he could see.

-Hi there, handsome. –His voice was barely a whisper and the redhead stretched as he could, covering his face with his forearm; thankful for that simple consideration that meant the world for him right then. The syllables dancing with soft edges of a tenderness he didn’t deserve.

-Is this a dream? –He croaked, sighing. –

-As far as I’m aware, no. –Allen put down the book he was reading, resting it over Lavi’s stomach gently. –Do you feel like shit often in your dreams, Lavi? –

The spell trying to be broken, the redhead holding to it like a kid to his blanket at painful five am in a winter morning.

-What a lovely way to tell me I look like shit. –A smile appeared over his lips as his hair was softly petted by the other. The charm still there.

A giggle that vibrated through his body even if that wasn’t his own. Like lying against a purring cat.
-Oh, I didn’t say that at all. You look pretty good for someone that basically drank enough to be preserved after death. –He caressed his cheek and Lavi felt that that touch was turning on every dormant light inside him. Bringing him back to life. A string of Christmas lights that slowly woke up after seasons of being forgotten. Light after light, warming up his inside and giving color to life.

-What time is it anyway? –

The game that never ended, going on with simple steps.

Allen pulled his hand away from him and read the watch that hanged on the inner side of his wrist, his eyelashes looking ethereal against the light, as well as his gorgeous profile that made him understand why a war was made over a woman. If Helena was at least an eighth part of beautiful as Allen... Well, he couldn’t blame them.

-About three in the afternoon. –

His words were listened, but not understood.

Lavi observed Allen for at least five seconds, trying to find them a meaning that could be applied to his current situation.

“Three in the afternoon.” The redhead tried to sat up, the adrenaline injected on his bloodstream as a shot of urgency as everything fell on place.

-WHAT?! IT’S SO LATE, IM LATE FOR SCHOOL, GODDAMMIT! –

The book fell to the floor and as his head tried to follow up with his movements a realization came to him between the neuronal roller coaster his brain was taking suspended with the absence of gravity itself.

-Oh wait. I graduated like six years ago, haha… -He was about to lie down again, when his brain decided it was just the right time to remind him about something more important…that he was missing. --NO, FUCK I AM THE TEACHER! --

He fell with a huge thud and immediately after, Allen’s laughter flooded the room.

-It’s snowing, you lost moron! Classes got canceled! –Lavi rolled to face him, noticing how a second ago he was sleeping on his lap; now the shorter elbows occupying his place. -That’s why I didn’t wake you, dummy. -

“Nobody knows what they had until they’ve lost it, I guess…”

-Seriously? –

“What a morning...”

Allen was now in the kitchen, finishing a breakfast he didn’t ask for but was more than happy to eat. He was wearing a baby blue long sleeved sweatshirt and gray pants, his feet making soft noises as he dragged them around the floor in his slippers. He came back with an omelet that smelled like a winner in a chef’s contest and orange juice that felt freshly picked from Eden’s itself; placing them in front of him and then sitting right next to his side.
-I hope this make you feel better. Dehydration is what makes hangovers suck so much, so, don’t be shy to ask for more juice ok? –

-I don’t know what I did to deserve you, Snowflake. Thank you. –

It was a simple sentence. Friendly even. But with what he said last night it stroke Allen like a love declaration he wasn’t ready to take. At least not right then.

-I-It’s just an omelet, silly. –He put a string of hair behind his ear and staring at the table, he wondered if he had the courage to ask what he needed to know. A knot getting tied with the patience of a new sailor.

Lavi ate in a content silence, feeling better and better as the food washed away the alcohol that was still on his system. Yet, beside him Allen was sweating cold under his clothes, his hands in fists over his knees. The breakfast was almost over, and Allen thought as his mouth moved, that he couldn’t do it. The words leaving his body in an extra corporeal experience.

-Hey Lavi…Do you…do you remember anything about last night? –

The redhead turned to see him, noticing how he was already showered, and his hair was brushed. His brain working on the theory that he did that and regardless went back to him in the living room to put his head over his lap to pet him. An idea that munched over the sides of something he wasn’t supposed to acknowledge.

-I remember… most? I think? -He chewed staring at the ceiling, wondering what he was talking about. –Why? Did…Did I embarrassed you or something? I dance like a dog walking on his back legs, I’m sorry buddy…-

Allen finally looked at him and smiled sheepishly.

-No, you did fine. –

“I guess he doesn't remember.” It didn’t have to mean something. He was just drunk. Everyone loves everyone with a few drinks on…isn’t that right? At least, that was what his stepfather would say.

-I’m sorry you had to carry me back here. I’m used to drinking but you sure make your shots aimed to kill. –He finger-gunned him and Allen sighed, resting an elbow over the table to be able to rest his face against his palm.

-Yeah, I’ve been told that. – He wondered if it was a good idea after all. He could let it pass. He could forget it.

“It was just a kiss. “

“Two kisses.”

“Two kisses, then. But none that had a meaning. One was a bet and the other…the other was just tequila doing its thing.”

“I love you.”

The words hit his memory in a way that made him feel that he was the one dealing with the
hangover.

-Hey…- He was careful with his words. He kept inside what he had to control. He always knew how much, how many. What tone, which phrase. But with Lavi? Lavi pushed everything out of his brain, like untranslatable words that came out naturally when the machine couldn’t work them out.

Lavi was the tequila of his life. He couldn’t place if it was his eye or his smile. His easy-going aura or the fact that he knew how to keep secrets. Maybe it was the torrent of flirting pick-up lines and the never-ending stupidities he adored that came out of such an intelligent person…

Nevertheless, whatever it was…Allen couldn’t manage what to say and what to keep to his own.

That was his biggest bet with him by then.

“What am I going to say?”

-…Do you remember what you were about to tell me yesterday? It seemed important. –Lavi looked at him, drinking his third glass of orange juice.

He stared curling his lips until they were practically invisible.

“Why did I ask?!”

-What do you mean? –

It was like he was a balloon that someone was blowing…until that second. Deflating in a respiration that took away everything that kept him on place.

“Why are you so disappointed? Were you expecting he put down that glass and said: “About loving you? Yeah, of course I meant it. Actually, I love you.”?!”

-Oh, it's just…you said you think you loved…-Lavi blinked and Allen suddenly felt self-conscious. A schoolgirl in love asking to be confessed in the most embarrassing way; halfway of her hypothetical sentence realizing that the guy didn’t meant to tell her he loved her. –…Something…

But then we left the bar and you never said what…-

Lavi remembered that. He remembered that clearly as day and he thanked his luck for not finishing the sentence that would fuck him up, whistleblowing himself. Ruining the only thing that kept him from being the most terrible friend on the face of earth.

Few words that would break the already tired seal of decency and sense.

- I…bet I was talking about your drinks…hahahaha. Those are amazing! –He covered his face, hiding it on his forearm; pleading for his movement to be interpreted as tiredness and not the embarrassment that was truly there.

“I bet not.”

His conscience getting Yuu’s voice on permanent shift punched him harder in the gut.

“I bet you were going to tell him you love him.”

-Oh, right. Thanks…-The disappointment in Allen’s voice was almost palpable; and filled with guilt, he looked at him, stirring the coffee that most surely than not, was already cold.

-But it’s not fair. –He said, the plates far from them. –You already saw me drunk! It’s a common
courtesy to let me see you the same way, Snowflake. –Allen laughed in a worn-out way that made the inner representation of his boyfriend snicker at the redhead; mocking his defeat.

-Oh no, I don’t think that’s going to happen. –Lavi reached for his hand, noticing he was about to get up and avoid the talk again.

A simple but effective gesture that controlled everything, giving him earth to be tied to.

He wasn’t transparent about what he wanted or was about to do. You needed to pay a little more attention to know it… but as a librarian and historian, Lavi knew where to look for a clue. For the words that wasn’t there.

For the secrets that were part of the plot.

For the parts that would later define the course of history. If it wasn’t just their own.

- Come on. You promised me a date, cutie. –Allen felt his soul drop to the floor. His entire body replaced with a screaming teapot that needed to be taken out of the fire, threatening to explode and consume everything that was left. He let his hand to be taken. His fingers intertwining, kind brushes that electrified the pores in his skin like a subcutaneous lightning. The fresh memory of the kiss that haunted his dreams in problematic situations filled with personal space neglection from last night.

-I did. –He whispered, his voice a child-like tone that melted Lavi’s heart; the liquid playing inside his chest like a glitter baton.

-Then…how about we go to the club tonight? A night on the other side of the counter, a little bit of another embarrassing dance with me, maybe some sing along with some drinks and we come back home? –

Allen smiled at him calling his apartment “home” like it was a place he wanted to come back with him forever. A place that made him feel safe and happy.

A place that they could share.

-Are you going to make me beg? –Lavi said, dragging his hand to stroke his face like a demanding cat, the faint sensation of a beard he never once saw before tickling his pale skin.

-Maybe. –Allen answered as softly as before. His gray eyes shaded by his eyelashes, the light hitting them forcing his pupil to contract, giving him a god-like appearance. His true feelings sealed away in his divinity.

Lavi locked his eye with his. An intense look that made him feel that if he asked him to do anything, he would do it without complaining. An order in a look that disarmed him faster that a blink of an eye. Pushing his poker face to the limit. He slowly climbed down his chair and kneeled before the silver-haired, never once breaking eye contact neither letting go his hand.

-Please, Allen. -He said, clearly. –Please, go in a date with me. I promise, with all my heart, I will make you happy. –A pause that stopped his system. His name the chain that tamed him in a way no one ever could before. His pink lips moving only a millimeter. Trying to give him away. -I will make it the happiest day of your life, if you let me. –Allen barely controlled the shiver that destroyed his nerves as it passed through his spine. –I will give you everything your heart desires.

He could bet his face was as red as a beet again, but he breathed, trying to keep his cool. Unaware
that his features stood impassive.

-You could regret saying that Lavi. –He bent, getting closer to his face, the taste of the kiss from last night already transformed into a pleasant remembrance that was not only wildly missed, but desired intensely. –That’s a heavy promise, after all. -

-I never meant anything more, Love. –

Lavi didn’t move. He let him get closer and he let him stare to his lips knowing it could mean nothing; but requiring all his might to control himself from kissing him at such simple provocation. Was it there or was just his wish transformed in a misinterpreted impression?

-You said the same last night… -Allen whispered to his ear, his free hand supporting his weight on his shoulder, quite close to his neck. His breath tickling his lobe, his lips too close.

“Just turn your face and…”

Allen moved his hand slowly, letting it touch the redhead’s neck on his way to run his fingers through his hair, just enough to push him just a bit.

-And I stand by my words, Allen. –His words came out shaky, the position now making obvious his vulnerability.

He didn’t answer. Instead leaving a kiss so slow over his skin, right beside his ear that, in order to not scream right there, he bit his tongue so hard another piercing was starting to sound like a great idea.

-Then I warn you I don’t make refunds. –He then got up, and without giving him another look he went to pick up the table, leaving him there as the water ran while he washed the dishes.

-At eight. We will leave by then. –

Mostly talking to himself, Lavi stood up and still feeling like he was dreaming, he picked up his stuff and went to shower.

The plate on his hand was already clean, but Allen kept passing the sponge over it absently.

“What the fuck are you doing? A date?!”

-It is not a date. It’s... just a playdate I guess… -

“You right. And you are going to drink there? And what? Also confess that you think you love him?”

-Do I? –

The voice kept silent.

Did he love Lavi? Lenalee asked him the same and he said he thought he might. But how could he be sure? Love was really complicated.

Was he in love because he liked to see him, to touch him? Was it love because he could see himself
beside him? Was it love or was it not?

Was it about the caressing touches? Was it the words? What was love anyway?

Wasn’t him in love with Yuu? Was that feeling dead already?

And if he didn’t love him anymore… what gave him the right to love someone like Lavi?

He wasn’t just anybody.

Lavi was a handsome, well positioned, wealthy and successful professor. He was smart and skillful and if that wasn’t enough, he was the best friend of his current boyfriend.

“He’s said he loves you.”

-Whom could be lying. –

The words echoing with spite from a not so distant past. His own thought accusing him with cold indifference for his intents to fix it.

It wasn’t his intention to blame him. He didn’t mean to call Lavi a liar; but life taught him that if someone said they loved him; it probably was more likely that they wanted something from him than really feeling it.

Allen learnt with time and situations, that he was lucky enough with the brief moments he managed to have with Kanda. When he kissed him the first time, polite and doubtful. Like he was shy about it…like…

The kiss that Lavi gave him last night, the kiss over the bar at Jerry’s replacing that first memory with the intensity of a fire blast. The heat traveling to his ears like a complimented nun.

He dropped the plate, flustered, the thing shattering as it hit the sink.

-Fuck…-

“You can’t even wash a freaking dish without ruining it, now. Aren’t you ashamed, brat?”

The voice of his stepfather called with the accuracy that only his corporeal presence could beat.

-Allen! Are you ok? –

He turned and Lavi was there. Still dripping and only with a towel around his waist, his hair over the eye he wasn’t allowed to see.

And it was maybe that he was feeling like a traitor or the realization that his heart slipped from his iron grip. But the moment he arrived, with the honest worry on his face, with the fact behind his steps, that he ran over there, out of the shower for a simple plate; just like he woke up for him and his stupid nightmare and stayed up until he was able to sleep…It destroyed every fortress he ever built around himself. It was just that man and that face.

Big tears dropped from his eyes without permission. Every blink letting more came out, a dam that finally broke; a storm with only more rain to come. A pouring penitence that he had to touch to realize that was happening.

He couldn’t even understand why he was crying, feeling like he wasn’t even the one doing it; unable to stop.
-Allen! –Lavi ran to him, and he thought, far away from there and his tears, that he could slip and hurt himself. He thought he was also wetting his floor and that he could catch a cold. He thought many things that didn’t make sense to the moment, his hands still up, trying to avoid dripping the damn soap everywhere. Trying to at least do that thing right.

-Did you cut yourself? Are you hurt? –He took his hands, checking him. Carefully he turned the water tap and rinsed them, cautiously looking for blood. Something that only made him cry harder, the care of his touches too much.

-Allen, sweetie. –He called him lovingly, forcing him to look him to the eye; moving some of his bangs out of his face. –I need you to tell me if you are hurt. Try breathing, please? –He nodded and did as he was asked, consecutive sobs being the sound of his respiration. -Ok, that’s good. -He smiled a little, but Allen could still see the worry inside his pupil. –Now, did you cut yourself or are wounded in any place? Nod if you did, shake your head if you didn’t. –

Again, he followed his instructions, shaking his head.

-Great. –Lavi sighed, straighten his posture, more relaxed. –Does this have to do with Yuu? –

Allen nodded feeling like crying horribly again. What an annoying person he was…pouring his feelings into someone to the point he pulled them out of the shower for something that stupid… Everything for a broken plate.

-It’s ok Snowflake. It’s ok. –He grabbed him by the wrist, pulling him for a hug. Allen immediately let him do, hugging him tight and letting the warm of his skin sooth his growing headache. –Do you want to talk about it? –

-No… - He mumbled, closing his eyes.

-That’s ok, too. –

Some moments passed as he rocked him from side to side softly. His chin resting on top of the silver-haired head. Allen managed to transform his sobbing into a quiet hiccup. Being that what was left from the tempest, leaving him tired like a three hours swimming practice.

-Do you want to shower with me? –The redhead asked after a while. Allen looked at him, still letting him hold him. Lavi was giving him his trademark lopsided smile; a joke and a real question in the middle of another bet.

-You are a dork. –He smacked him in the shoulder and Lavi giggled as his smile changed to a loving one.

“Was that a yes?” The same question that remained unanswered in both minds.

-But I did make you smile. –The smallest put his sight on Timcanpy’s little ball on the farther left corner of the kitchen floor, trying to concentrate in everything beside the naked and chiseled chest that he was resting against. Finally aware of his position.

-Sorry to make you jump out of the shower for a…a tantrum…-The headache was still there palpitating in a way that demanded a nap or death. The price to pay for letting his emotions take the wheel for a second.

-Don’t say that, baby. –He called him, running his hand over his back, once again. –I’m here for you. I’m just glad you ain’t wounded. –Lavi finally let him go and holding the towel, smiled
brightly. -How about you take some minutes to rest and when you wake up, we see how you feel? We don’t have to go to the club. –

He did want to go to the club. But his head and the rest of his messy, ran over feelings…well…they had other plans.

-Only five minutes, I’ll be up when you come out the shower. –

Naps are the best lies we tell ourselves. They are compromises we never really mean to do, promises we always break and of course, the easiest way to drift away peacefully: making you think for a second you will do things when you wake up.

But you never do.

Allen woke up around nine. His mouth dry and his understanding of time feeling like being scammed by his own brain. Everything was dark and he felt as confused as a newborn kitten. Looking around his room, the mirror greeted him with his reflection: his hair a mess like a white cockatoo’s head feathers and his face crossed by the marks of a great nap over a wrinkled pillow.

As he tried to identify what did just happen, he spotted Lavi, fully dressed and with his hair in a magnificent wave, away from his face by the grace of his black bandana with discreet silver accents, against the wall near the entry. A huge shit-eating smile, his arms crossed over his chest.

-Hello, sleeping beauty. – He blinked twice and sat, kneeled on the bed.

-Uhm…Lavi? What time is it? Why didn’t you wake me? – He rubbed his left eye and the redhead walked near the bed towards him.

-You looked really cute… -Their noses were brushing and Allen, still sleepy, supported himself with his hands over his chest. The redhead talking to him softly in a quick payback for his early generosity to his hangover.

-Ok, mister sparkly vampire. – He muttered, making the other laugh. – Are we going? I really wanted to go to your fancy club that’s sooooo much greater than my bar. –

-And, I thought you did need some rest. – His words overlapping Allen’s. – Yes, Love. We can go, if that’s what you want. I never said it was better, by the way. –

-I really like it, when you call me that. –

Sleepiness, on the other hand of the nap spectrum is a double-edged sword. It may drive you high on easiness, but it also acts as a truth serum, sometimes impossible to avoid. And as regrettable as a three bottled night with all the big boys.

-Love? – The tallest asked, trying to contain the smile that threatened to crack his cheeks for such and adorable sight.

-Yes. – He answered, letting Lavi brush his hair as he petted him.

Lavi wasn’t a great liar. Maybe a good one yes, but a great one? Not even close. And as that day
developed it was getting harder to keep with the act. It was getting impossible to keep being blind to the small things, to the little truths, to the words that were there.

He was good already with being in love with Allen. If he was or wasn’t, maybe he would never know for true, but as far as he was feeling then, he was ok with it.

When he heard the crash in the kitchen and went running, when his soul was crushed the two times he saw him crying, when he was dancing with him… Or was it the first time he saw him, waking up like then, opening his beautiful gray eyes…? Whenever it was, he was now convinced that he was in love with Allen. And that was ok, because no one could be hurt by loving him quietly. By loving him distantly. By loving him secretly.

But with that said, he couldn’t keep it a secret when Allen whispered between movements… that he loved him back.

-Well, Love… - He said once again, forgetting all about his other friends with him in front. – … it’s just what you make me feel. –

He kissed his temple, abusing the fragile seal that held together his resolution of not kissing him like he did in his dreams and make everything about just them.

*With no one* else to consider.

- Anyway, if you want to go, I suggest you get ready. –

-It’s this ok? – A pink angora sweater in a tentative size that forced a huge cleavage, the v neck showing his collarbones and a bit of a scar that ran along his right side. Black jeans and high ankle boots, the same color. Allen was just picking his coat, a gray piece with huge buttons and tall neck, letting his hair fall loose inside the fabric.

-It’s perfect. –

The redhead smiled, observing this time Allen was wearing only one glove as he reached for his naked hand.

He was wearing a graphite shirt with only a denim jacket, the inside covered with white soft fabric that looked like sheep wool. A copper scarf, some black jeans and some surprisingly perfect white vans. He sported a three pieces collar in silver, as well as different black piercings and multiple bracelets. His rings on place, he squeezed Allen’s hand a little, kissing the back of it, adoring his exposing skin without shame. Feeling he was rewarded with the highest honor of his confidence.

-Your rings make your hand feel cold. – He complained, letting him do and pressing towards his side as they left the apartment. The shadow of a blush over his round cheeks.

-Do you want me to take them off or do you want to warm me up, cutie? – He winked, forgetting the eyepatch and Allen rolled his eyes, smiling regardless.

-I’m sure you can do that fine without my help. –
They arrived quickly, the car leaving them at the entry. The place was big and crowded, making Allen starting to get nervous. Unused to that many people in one place.

“What are you trying to prove? Just leave.”

He rotated, ready to flee. Crashing with Lavi.

-Everything ok, Snowflake? -As he was about to excuse himself a girl dressed in an elegant black uniform greeted the redhead. There was a table already booked at their name, and they were guided there, the feeling of being lost getting dimmed against the familiarity Lavi offered. He thought it would be a shame that the taller went all that way for him to fail him and asked to be taken home. Then, Allen breathed, and still holding his hand they sat together at the small corner.

The music was loud, a constant beat that made his bar look like a joke for newbies. An almost personal space.

-Do you want me to order for you or do you want to do it yourself? –

Allen looked at him, the happiness of the man so contagious all the anxiety goes away.

-Surprise me, date. –He teased. Trying to keep playing, without showing his cards.

And drink after drink, Allen feels perfectly fine with the toleration of someone who has to taste everything they make. But as the drinks passed and his confidence grew, his precautions got forgotten in that beautiful green eye that promised nothing but joy.

And he let go, one more time.

-If I drank half of shots you had; I would be dead! –

-If you drank half of the shots I had, you would be telling me you love me. –

As the words left his mouth the reality punched through his naïvetés.

“Fuck, I’m drunk.”

“You think?”

-I... I didn’t… -He started muttering, his phone vibrating over the table. –Oh wait… - He read the name over the screen, and as it made sense he sighed, a strange and growing anger at the edge of his nerves. -Oh great, fuck! -

Lavi listened, hammered already.

-What is it? –

-Who’s it, you mean. –Allen answered, not really sure where to move to take the call. His drunk judgment deciding that place was as good as any. –Hello? –

-Hello? –
-Hello, baby? –The word tasted weird and he wondered how many months ago he decided to stop pet naming Yuu. The name an apology of a mistake he was yet to commit.

-Right…I’ve been trying to reach you. Where are you? –

-You called? –The music blasted through the speakers, listening and being listened a task already hard on the same place, resulting almost impossible by phone. –I can’t hear a thing. –

-I asked you, where are you? –His tone was starting to get more upset, but Allen found out it was difficult for him to care now.

-Ah, I have got no service in the club, you see. –He got up, his head now spinning; the vodka and his famous invisibility hitting him like a truck. He put a hand on the table, Lavi getting to his seat, ready to catch him if he ever lost his floor.

-The club?! From all places you are in a club? What the fuck? With who? We agreed you wouldn’t be in such places Allen! –

-You called me on the telephone, you feel so far away. –Lavi had his arm over the seat and Allen felt his hand near him, barely touching his sweater, now that he was without the coat; just a step away from the table. –But you always feel like that; you know? –

-Allen stop that. I don’t know what you are playing Walker, but whatever it is, it’s over. Do you hear me? –

-Wha-what did you say? –A hiccup interrupted the sentence. –Are you breaking up with me? –

-I said…-

-Sorry, I cannot hear you. I’m kinda busy. -And with that, a quick turn that stirred every milligram of alcohol inside him, he hung up on the last string of self-restraint he had. He took Lavi’s hand and biting his own lower lip he moved from side to side like a kid that just did what he was explicitly told he shouldn’t.

“Are you being naughty, Allen?”

-What was it, Love? It’s everything ok? –A part of the redhead wasn’t sure if that clubbing night was a good idea, but whatever that part was, was disappearing against the music and the idea that that was indeed a great date.

All they were doing was talking and dancing and playing and having fun and...

-Just a second, it’s my favorite song they’re going to play. –He said, his gloved hand resting on Lavi’s shoulder as he got close enough to be face to face with him.

-Hmmm. –He observed as the silver haired reached for the last of his drink to chug it like a champ and while he put his glass on the table again, he smiled to him with all the danger over his lips, the knowledge of superiority plastered on them. –Allen? –

-Yes, Lavi? –His eyelashes moved slowly as he blinked. His lips pink with all the biting they endured. Lavi pulled him a little closer, wanting him to listen.

-I think it’s time to leave, gorgeous. –They were so close that Allen could smell the discreet perfume of the redhead and as well as his fruity breath after so many flavored drinks. An absolute piece of candy.
-You think? But I do love this song. –His voice was pleading and Lavi felt arousal starting to take control of his already drunk body.

Clearing his throat, he shuffled his options; the other moving with the music as he waited for his answer.

-And I do love you and making you happy. So, we have a problem here. –He tucked a lock of his hair behind his ear to see his face better and Allen smiled like he never did before. Like he was the most beautiful thing in the universe. Ice building around his ribcage as he froze under his sight.

-You said you love me. –Tired, Allen sat on his lap, letting his hand go only to put his arms over Lavi’s shoulders. –You said it again. Do you? Do you love me, Lavi? –

Lavi knew he wasn’t supposed to say it.

He knew everything would be fine as long as he lied. As long as he kept the secret.

“Love him secretly, and no one would be hurt.” His phone vibrated, but as he saw who it was, he turned the screen down. Trying his luck.

Betting his fate.

-Oh Allen, why do you ask? –The alcohol pushing again the right buttons to every wrong decision in a delicious absence of higher self. He supported him hugging him by the waist, his face so close.

How deliciously dangerous was playing that game. A Russian roulette where losing was winning as well.

-I want to know now. Do you love me? Because I think I do. I think I love you. I think I love you like a shouldn’t, but I can’t avoid it. I think I love you so badly I could kiss you. –

Allen listened to himself like he listened to an unrelated stranger; too busy wondering about Lavi’s other eye and how handsome he would look without the patch, again. How nice would be to kiss him again. To feel him again.

At least once more.

-I do. I love you. I love you Allen. Even if you are dating Yuu. Even if you are never mine to take…-He pushed forwards, trying to say something more, but Allen met him in a kiss that wasn’t as messy as hungry; the shorter grabbing his face with both hands to move into the kiss until they both were out of breath.

-I’m no one’s to have. But if you ask nicely, professor, I think I can be kind enough to let you take me home. –

Panting, Lavi stared at that vision, unable to pinpoint if it happened or was just a daydreaming of his.

Then again, he cleared his numbers; the roulette spinning once more.

-Angel, would you let me take you home? If you are so kind, I’ll treat you right. – Allen smiled pleased and kissed him again, long and poisonously slow.

Intoxicatingly.
-Yes. -He said against his lips. A kiss on its own the slippery movement of temptation. -But promise something, professor. –

-Your wish is my command, Love. – Lavi said immediately, already drunk with his flavor.

-I don’t want you to be nice, because if I’m perfectly honest with you... I am not really nice myself. –

They stumbled to the apartment, not turning on one single light as they fell into the coach where they first met.

The coats quickly discarded on the floor, together with their shoes. As well as Allen’s only glove.

He was again in Lavi’s lap, flushed against him, the pink sweater falling by his arm, showing his shoulder, provoking the redhead to bite him, to taint him. His teeth scratching his immaculate skin as the desire to mark him grew stronger.

He kissed him from there all the way up to his neck, biting here and there, obtaining gasps and heated, strangled moans.

-Lavi...don’t. –He held him tighter, pulling him a bit closer, not getting enough.

It was the feeling of his skin against his lips, the glorious smell of a strange but fresh flower, the taste of ambrosia whenever he kissed that particular spot. It was everything and more; the knowing guilt of breaking every rule, spoken or not; that stung behind his tongue with a buzzing delicious numb.

The sound of Allen’s voice was wrecking every ounce of coherent thought he ever owned. He knew what he was saying, but the tone he was using, his body pushing towards him and his hands refusing to let him go, relieved him from believing him.

-We can’t do this... -The redhead felt as if his veins were filled with gasoline instead of blood, the way Allen spoke the only spark that was needed to light him in a never ending, abrasive piece of fire.

-Why not? –He didn’t understand how he could be talking.

His lips never once leaving Allen’s neck, obsessed with taste every single space that was available to him.

A foreign hunger that was taking his sanity away from him.

Allen tried to remain silent, his sentences only dragging his current relationship in the middle of what was happen.

He couldn’t say he didn’t want it or that he was actually fighting to resist it. Whatever was speaking for him, surely wasn’t him.

Because everything he wanted to do right then was...

“You talk too much. Put that mouth to a better use.”
-Because...mnh...B-because...-A part of him was screaming to hear him moan for real, to keep going until he was pushing him to his very edge. To force those cute pure lips to say nothing more but begs and his name.

To make him scream of a pleasure words would be short about to define.

His remaining logic fighting for him to stop, warning him about the growing pain between his legs, that would be helped if he submitted to his wish.

The last he decided (with more than little effort) to listen to.

-**Because?** –Allen on his lap, his arms again over his shoulders; letting him do as he wanted.

“*Why did you stop?*”

One hand was grasping his hair while the other surely was leaving his perfect mark on his back, holding him that strong to keep him on place. There was little to none space between them, and as he pulled back relentlessly, just enough to face him properly.

A mistake that would regret sooner than later.

His eyes were clouded with a feeling he knew well; his cheeks flushed pink and his lips partially open, breathing heavily in a provocative manner that was forcing him to concentrate into being those inches separated from him before everything was too fast and too late.

-Because… -Allen grabbed his jaw with his right hand, leaning even closer so their lips would be brushing at every movement, the desire of passing his tongue over them and then kiss him so he didn’t have to finish that sentence. –Because I’m dating Yuu, and you are his best friend. –He licked his own lips, touching Lavi’s on the same way.

“*Fuck me.*” A plead, more than a desire.

-I guess you are a pretty *lousy* boyfriend, buddy. –It was a strangled whisper. Suddenly everything felt like he was in the hottest day of summer and the only way to get a bit of freshness, a bit of water so we would not die from dehydration were those pretentious pretty pink lips.

-Oh? – It was small motion; the movement wave his mouth acquired. Like a stone that broke the water surface; a natural motion that drew you closer without any second chance.

Allen, without all his inhibitions and without everything he built to keep up with the people around him, not only liked risks. He *adored* them.

Risks, bets and challenges. Whatever allowed him to prove, without a doubt, he had the control of the situation. The Allen who cheated, who won, who *played*.

And there was Lavi, asking...no, *begging* for him to show him.

“*How much you care?*” He breathed deep and long and after torturing him enough with that longing distance, he finally kissed him. And what a hell of a kiss that was! Lavi was sure his mind shut down for at least an entire minute of pure ecstasy.

He was surely giving his whole.

The kiss was open mouthed, without any other thoughts. Without any shame or guilt or anything besides passion.
A flaming shooting star made of passionate fire, intending to consume everything it touches to ashes.

His tongue was looking for his as soon it arrived, touching sweetly and with all the security in the world. A kind invitation to sin.

A deal with the devil himself.

Because after tasting that, Lavi was sure, he couldn’t just say goodbye.

Whoever Yuu was once was already doomed.

As he pulled back (much to Lavi’s demise), he bit his lip playfully. Making the redhead try to follow him again to keep the kiss going. A skilled lead to surrender your heart.

Nevertheless, he got apart again, and as he looked down at him from his privileged seat, he smiled in such a malicious way that Lavi thought if in reality that innocent face was nothing but a trick.

Didn’t the church warn him about such wicked ways?

-Not as lousy as you as a best friend, isn’t it…buddy? –The sentence a melody on its own. A siren call that started as a purr and ended as a poisoned dagger, decorated with a teasing laugh. Lavi felt again that sting of embarrassment, knowing what he did. His hands now slithering over his shirt, slowly in every right place.

What a horrible friend he was, indeed.

Because behind all, he couldn’t wish a better place to be beside under that demonic angel of god.

He closed his eyes for a second and his lips were taken again, banishing any other doubt.

“You are here now.”

It was the movement of his body. The curvature of his pushing need. How he knew they would touch as he rubbed against his legs and pushed towards his chest.

-Ahh…! -Lavi moaned loud and uncontrollably. The heat taking the best of him. –God fucking dammit…Allen…! –

He covered his face, feeling a blush hitting him out of place.

-Let me see you, Lavi. –He held his hands softly, forcing them down gently. –Please. – Pleading eyes and a million dollars pout. Touching the string of his eyepatch with his different colored hand that mesmerized the redhead, until he was uncapable understand why he would ever cover it. –I want to see your face. -

-If you say please like that again you are going to break me, Allen; for fucksake, I swear. –


He smiled like a devil and moved again, their now obvious erections brushing through the fabric as he hung from his neck and moaned on his ear.

-Mhn, ah…Lavi, please…nh. –

The three brain cells that were left for the redhead tried to think through it. Was it a good idea?
Probably not. Did they care? Not at all. Were they making already bad decisions that made them feel more than pretty good? Absolutely.

-Yes. Oh fuck, yes. Whatever you want, yes, yes. –A shiver ran through his body, electricity that turned on everything on him. The shadow of an orgasm that would make him blackout if it arrived like that. –Forever. Always. A million times yes, my Love. -

He closed his eyes, not daring to move a muscle with him over and Allen separated just enough to take the eyepatch off. As he dreamed about it many times. As he wished forever. As he always imagined since the very first time they met.

And Lavi braced for the worst as he opened his eyes.

Finally seeing the face that made him the worst sinner in the story of hell.

Chapter End Notes

Hi, you beautiful readers! I am really grateful and happy about your messages. All your comments have been a delight and you have no idea how excited I was to upload this chapter!!

This starts the mess and ends the preparation and I hope you are ready for it! Everything starts to fall in place and I couldn't bargain with myself anymore so I bring to you this super long chapter that it's almost twice as I usually write. I am really proud of this and I wanted to share it with you. As I explained in the first chapter this is an absolutely self-indulgent fic. 8 years ago, I wrote a super messy chapter about a song that if you ever heard Lady Gaga you will recognize in the lyrics. It was out of characters, it didn't had a clear plot and of course it end in nothing. Regardless, this bothered me to no end as I grew as a writer and I promised myself I would fix my mistake and I finally did.

Telephone it's a great song and even if this whole fic carries single sentenced lyrics and names of the album Crybaby; Telephone from Lady Gaga was always it's core. I couldn't be more satisfied with the result. The dialogues I built over the song as well as the grow of the characters... not to mention how beautifully you perceived them, how you understood them! You made one of my dreams come true. Being able to communicate a character to the point that people even if they didn't identify with them, understood them. You even asked about Kanda! And believe me, he still has a run in this race, don't worry! You'll be seeing him soon. I bet he isn't happy with all that calling stuff.

I love music as much as I love writing and I hope I also translated it well. I'm not much a fan of giving you the songs which I write with, but I'll do an exception with this chapter.

I chose Beautiful Trauma by P!nk in the first part, were Lavi wakes up. The songs at the club are totally Lady Gaga albums and the song that Allen asks to listen because it's his favorite? Just Dance, from the album The Fame Monster.

Anyway, I'm not doing much better with my job but I have a plan now and feeling all better. Thank you all for your encouraging comments!
I hope I really hope you enjoyed this as much as I enjoyed writing it.

Please! Keep leaving me comments, how do you feel, what did you think, what did you like! Even a single worded comment can make my day. Thank you for reading and being in this journey with me, that has barely started!

Oh, heads up. Next chapter will be full NSFW.
Chapter Summary

Its cold outside baby, but not inside of this room.

The final seal barely unbroken, abused by its creators. Will be finally be destroyed this night?
Everyone its someone else without inhibitions and this boys are about to found that out.

More than one kiss, the original sin and surely... A night hard to forget.

"I wanna ride my bike with you. Fully undressed, no training wheels left for you...I'll pull them off for you"

[NSFW PEOPLE. I REPEAT THIS WHOLE CHAPTER ITS A NOT SAFE FOR WORK! FROM THE BEGINING TO ALMOST THE LAST LINE!]

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Slow-motion movement. A suspended moment.

Lavi opened his eyes; cold sweat running through his back that decided to remind him that outside the snow was constructing a kingdom of white, deserted loneliness.

A sentence to the be bound to the same feeling.

He remembered the last time someone else saw his naked face.

He had a mirror close by back then; and painfully, his brain delivered the recollection in perfect state. Preserved to be replayed.

One time after the other.

-You don’t understand! I can’t control it…it’s just…! -

-It’s ridiculous. You are just a monster, Lavi. -

The echo of his own voice breaking in desperation, trying to justify, trying to stop the world from spinning one millimeter more. To rewind time before everything happened.

Allen, now, was just staring; his gray eyes big and his face with a frozen expression that didn’t speak to him.

He started to get nervous.

Since the last time some years have passed, and the scar of the situation palpitated inside him with terror. A gross mark that crossed his heart in the reminiscence of an earthquake that threatened to
kill him from despair. But he was barely a teenager then. Recovering was par of the youth. Yet now…with him…

“You put your neck out there, pal. If he hates you now, it’s going to destroy you. Was this worth everything you ever built?”

Lavi didn’t want to acknowledge it, but he knew his mind was right. If Allen hated him, if he refused to look at him, if he thought he was the monster that he was…He couldn’t stand it. Death was a more merciful fate, than his despise.

-Please…say something. –He whispered, lowering his sight. The night and the room silent. His words thundering with his fear. The sound of a firework that whistles into the night until it explodes. Yet, instead of colors, he was sure all that would come out from him would be suffering.

-No. No, don’t do that. -His hands were warm and his voice soft, quick to answer. -Don’t do that, Lavi. Look at me. –He took his chin, making him face him. The redhead obeyed, still shy and regretting lowering his defenses. The defeat of exposing himself leaving him compliant.

It was twice as hard reading the other man. Not only Allen was someone whom always tried to hide what he felt, his face always a perfect poker face; but now that both of them were drunk, his face was displaying a sphynx vibe. All answers neither wrong nor write. Only fate.

His eyes met, his lips delivering the answer he needed:

--You are so handsome, dear heavens. –Allen exhaled; the same amount of amazement reserved only to the first time he saw the process of restoring a painting. -You are so incredibly fucking beautiful. –His fingers glided from his cheek to his hair, moving slowly near his face; his pupils dancing around it, trying to fix that moment into his memory. Detail to perfection.

A frame of glory.

Lavi let him do, his eyes traveling to his parted lips.

-Not as much as you, gorgeous. –He murmured; finally breathing.

It was a secret. Whispers in the dark that would be permanently just theirs. Afraid to burst the bubble they managed to create around themselves.

Where there was nobody else.

Allen studied art history because of love.

He loved how something could transcend time. A look, a smile, hair moving in the wind, a fruit, a dream…an idea. A concept. He loved how artists would pour their soul in their work and how the feeling would be there a thousand years later. He loved how beauty could be, not caged, but summoned into pieces of cloth, of marble, of stone. How someone could get something completely plain and transform it into something wonderful.

A simple man that was really a god.

The embodiment of love. And Lavi there, under him, chiseled to perfection with uneven eyes like two precious stones; was surely what could make anyone want to become an artist. A sudden feeling of crying that he swallowed with the effort of not wanting to be embarrassed in front of his greatest desire; overwhelmed by his beauty.
He understood the men and women he studied in every class. How they were capable to spend hours and days and years in something that many people would consider useless or banal. They didn’t want the fame or the recognition. They didn’t want to pass the time or even to work... They needed to show what they saw the moment they had a peak of heaven.

That was art. And art...art was him.

-I don’t think you understand what I mean. –The redhead snickered, his hands now on Allen’s thighs.

-Baby...I don’t think you understand. I would sell my soul to kiss you again. –He moved his hands slowly, his pace firm and obvious as they went up his soft skin.

-Well...isn’t it good you don’t have to? –He answered, closing the distance. His lips caressing each other. Allen’s were now plump and red and Lavi adored the smoothness of the touch. He pushed to kiss him and again, the shorter leaned away.

-You are such a tease, Allen. –His laugh was dark, easy to feel for Allen, now with his hands over his chest. It was a warning and a promise. But with his face without the patch, the silver haired got distracted; the alcohol slowing down his thoughts, the words escaping his tongue.

“Are you sure you want to do this? There’s no way back. If you touch Allen...You will not be able to st...” His mind was silenced as he grabbed his ass, firmly enough to make him move towards him; a craving that bothered him since he saw Allen bend for a movie a few nights back. A gasp that was cut with an open mouth kiss; his tongue entering without waiting for permission. He would have been gentler, or more patient, but alcohol was pressuring him; the adrenaline pumping, and the wait was more than enough. Allen’s hands flew to his biceps and he payed the attention he could to be aware if he was trying to push him away.

But as he tried to break the kiss to ask, those fingers grabbed him tight.

-Don’t you dare...! –Allen pushed again, throwing himself at the redhead, whose mind went blank as once again, his erection rubbed against the other.

The kiss, the movement, the small noises. The alcohol, the temptation, the desire. It was that and the lack of interruptions. Two solitudes that managed to not only touch each other but demanded to be merged.

The seal was finally broken. The demon caged inside both free.

A bite from the forbidden fruit.

His hands moved quickly under the pink, soft sweater and as he traced his back, the kiss was getting hotter and somehow hungrier. Until Allen broke apart, grabbing without a question the edge of his shirt, pulling from it until he was able to throw it away. An act of magic on its own.

Now you see it, now you don’t.

Lavi blinked, surprised by his skill; an opportunity arising as the other tried to kiss him again. The part of his brain that was still on the game talking.

-Oh no, sexy. This a one for one. –Allen’s eyes were filled with a lust that made his mouth dry and thirsty. His skin crawling at the sight of such energy in those silver orbs. A wolf dressed like a lamb.
The urge to let him do was strong; Allen’s pink tongue showing between his lips, like a plead. Regardless, he resisted; swallowing.

—You took my shirt; I’ll take something from you… —Allen nodded, his hands now on Lavi’s collarbones. The fake innocence returning as it never left. He lowered his eyes, the aura of submission back there as bite.

—Get this off, beautiful… —Lavi requested, pulling playfully from the other’s pants.

But Allen wasn’t like that at all.

He wasn’t nice and he wasn’t obedient. And now, with all the restraints that sobriety gifted him, gone… Allen was who he was.

A player.

Without a word he stood, in less than a second letting his pants drop, his legs soft and pale, milky porcelain. Lavi was about to say something, pleased, but as he dropped his underwear as well, his face changed.

Allen knew the sweater covered enough and he gave a step closer to the redhead. His eyes glued to his face, step after step, the movement of a feral cat. His skin reflecting the moonlight that poured through the window, the darkness inside the only protection against any curious eyes.

Not that he could care less.

—I think, professor… that you forgot the house play by its rules. —His accent was heavy and slow, his homeland in every word. Lavi never noticing it as clearly as then. He bent to rest his hands on Lavi’s knees, separating them enough to make himself some room. Then, he moved his hands to his inner tights, pressuring a little as he went up, stopping right before his dick. Knowing exactly what he was doing. His eyes still confronting Lavi, whose lower lip started trembling in excitement.

The sudden explosion of sensations proving to be too much.

“That mouth…”

—Ah… Allen I… —He heard his zipper getting undone, a faint touch over his boxers. —Fuck…! —

—Yes? —He kissed his jaw, making a path until reaching his ear, nibbling his earlobe.

“…It’s going to kill me.”

—If you do that… I… I won’t be able to stop… —

—Then don’t. —Was the answer as his hand slithered under the fabric to cup him.

Later, Lavi wouldn’t remember how or in which moment he did it; but he pulled Allen again onto his lap, his members meeting for the first time without anything in the middle.

—Mh…! —A restrained panting that preceded Allen’s free hand scratching his back as he tried to hold to him.

Lavi held him by the waist, his palms sweaty and his heart racing in a nervous state close to
frenetic. Was he doing that?

Allen moved against him, rubbing himself with his already stimulated member; his right over Lavi’s shoulder and his left brushing his hair so delicately that almost seemed a spiritual experience.

-Allen…Allen I…-It was getting hard to think. Hard to speak. The very definition of heat.

-Yes, Lavi? –His answer a taunting a request for his command even when he didn’t mean to follow it.

“You know he is drunk, right?”

A terrible timing of a last-minute responsibility.

-I…I need to know if…if you really want this. –His eyes were heavy, and the round and perfect face of Allen looked almost as another realistic dream as he smiled; thrusting his hips again, a slowly and burning movement that was in absolute control. A shiver ran through his entire body, a shaky breathing punched out of his lips.

-Oh, Lavi. You are so sweet. –Was the condescending and almost threatening answer of a man that was made of sin and pleasure. Allen pinched his cheek, moving again. His body flushed against his naked chest; the defined feeling of his dick against the other sharp with an implausible sensation of hyper-reality, his body shaking. -Isn’t it a little late to be asking? –His mouth moved, trying to answer. But Allen was now over him, their lips with little to no distance. –I really want this, handsome. –

His eyes went from his mouth to the other eyes slowly, and Lavi swallowed realizing that if someone was in charge there…it wasn’t him at all.

-Now, if you may, there is a bottle of something you could use in the side table drawer. That’s of course…If you want to get inside…professor. -A strange feeling, tingling at his fingertips as his arm moved; like he was only a puppet and Allen was the master mind moving his strings.

It was a flash, the lamp over the table fell making a crashing noise that he didn’t hear. All that was there the bossy dark words of the silver haired. Lavi vaguely thought about the first time he tasted wine and liked it. How it was true that you could taste the sweetness in the sour. How it moved in your mouth with consistence and body. How the color was a special shade to each taste. And Allen there, was just like that. Moving and living like perfectly aged wine. His words like the body of the drink, his eyes like the depth of the liquid, his entire being like its taste. And by then he was aware that even if he wasn’t as drunk as he thought…he was truly intoxicated by that man.

Blindly, he reached for the item, understanding what he was asking for without bothering to mention the thing. A bottle that appeared him as weirdly new, was the first thing his hand could grab; his content clear as Allen rubbed once again against him, making him hiss with anticipation. Hiding himself as he kissed him again in the neck, trying to concentrate in not biting him, afraid of marking him and spoiling the fun.

-Lavi… -He didn’t know if Allen knew the power of his name gave him. –Lavi, don’t make me wait. –

Or maybe he did.

Whenever he pronounced it a discharge for him to obey. To surrender. A master calling his pet. A place he would gladly fill without any hesitation anymore. A proudly seat for him to yearn. A
sweet tone that evolved into an order. And as he said before: His wish was his command.

-You make me sound like a blasphemy… -He told him, squeezing his cheeks with his free hand; an impulse that tried to take the wheel again in that cataclysmic downfall of his last crumbs of pride. Allen looked down on him, challenging. The privileged seat on him allowing him to tower over the usually taller redhead. His words slow and charged with energy.

-You are. –Allen said. Danger running through the letters. He took their members together, squeezing just enough for Lavi to shut his eyes, holding him now by the arms, his hands leaving a mark that the silver haired didn’t mind.

-Ohhhh…fuck! –His head back on the sofa, Allen biting him on the curvature that his exposed neck and his shoulder made, not caring about how it would look. Lavi reincorporated, looking at him, squirming on his hand. The power of his will surrendered to him. His dick already prepared by a generous layer of lubricant.

“If I die for this, I will die happy.”

-Tell me if it hurts? –He tried to whisper; letting him guide him to his entrance; Allen kissing him as he let himself fall without anything else.

The instant he was completely inside him suspended, the noise absent in a void that halted the picture like antigravity.

Allen’s mind was a mess that worked by only one thing and one alone.

Lavi.

It was all that it said and all it wanted.

There wasn’t anything else but the redhead, and as he stared at him the arousal inside him raised higher and higher. Making almost unbearable to breathe. Kissing him the only way to survive in the heat. Making them both only to want more.

His weight and warmth made hard to keep up with reality.

-Yes…nh…! -Allen moaned on his mouth; moving time after time, slow but sure, a pace that was progressing fast. Up and down, harder every time.

Lavi was holding him by the hips, letting him guide; the control way out of the redhead’s hands by now. Whenever he sat, letting himself fall, driving him crazy. A conscient and almost painful resistance to not cum after each thrust. It was a job on its own to keep his own moans down, not mentioning the amount of control that required listening the other do it.

-I don’t think ah, I can resist nh, much longer, ah Allen…-

-Mhn…D-don’t say that…! -He moved again, faster. Lavi having a hard time either having his eyes open or closing them. His own moans loud, leaving only some space to his harsh breathing and panting. Making him realize those would be the last words he would be able to say coherently.

–Don’t say that, I still…mh… –
Lavi nodded, letting him move. His hands trying to follow him, already leaving long marks as his nails traced the pale skin. He didn’t understand how he could be still talking. His voice a sensual moan that had him submitted to his desires. A particular move that curled everything inside him into stars of pleasure, his hips thrusting back without a thought, without him doing it.

From reasoning to instinct, he could only want more.

As the climax got closer and the pace got faster his mind went away once more to leave him only with what he would call the worst part of himself. The words coming out and letting him understand them as he heard himself speak; Allen holding to him, pulling his hair with a hand, balancing over him as he held with the other by his shoulder, so close to his neck that will leave a bruise like a collar the day after.

-I love you. *Fuck, I love you, Allen.* –

It was an impulse.

-W..what? –

A mistake.

-Uh? –

A mistake?

He stopped, a lock of hair and some strands falling in front of his face, sweat drops running through his cheeks and getting lost after running by his neck. The light hit his back; his silhouette contoured by it into the darkest night. His red lips like rose petals parted, allowing him to breathe through his gasps. He blinked several times, his brow furrowed, waiting for him to answer.

Lavi ordered his last brain cell to face what it have just done.

-What did you say? -His voice had nothing, but the effort of the situation and he feared the inflection for its missing emotions.

-I…- He could still lie. He was on time to say anything else. What was more pathetic than saying I love you the first time you have sex with someone?

*Nothing.*

Yes, he said it at the bar, but there? It was an entirely different thing. He told Allen he loved him because he was almost sure he wouldn’t remember. But now? Having worked out at least a part of those drinks? He couldn’t be that sure.

“Too late, cowboy.”

-I love you. –He said again, swallowing. The high of still being rode by that fallen angel still pumping adrenaline to his heart. A little shot of bravery for the way.

Allen smiled, his hands on each of Lavi’s cheeks, his pupils wide as he stared at him; not allowing him to lie about his feelings there. He kissed him, slowly, starting to move again. Whispering to his ear.

-I love you too, Lavi. *I really do.* –
An orgasm that arrived too early for Lavi wishes, wanting only more as Allen kept going as fast as only the instinct could move. Getting there with a whimpering moan that was almost unnoticeable beside the scream of pleasure of the redhead.

The room filled by their panting as they tried to recover breath. The silver haired hugging him lightly, his head resting against his right shoulder. Lavi tried to support him, his arms too tired to be faithful; still inside him.

-We…we should…we should move…-He managed to say, his eyes closed. Riding down his orgasm a numb and exquisite sensation that refused to let him do anything but stay put. Opening his eyes; a dizzy fast car drive in which he was only the highly drunk passenger. Like the first time flying in an airplane. Like his tallest rollercoaster. A tingling feeling that ran by his skin with small electrical sparks. Only capable to speak because of his worry for the other.

-Mh. –Allen agreed, sighing. –

Some moments passed as they recovered, the shortest creating space to face him.

-Didn’t I ask you not to be nice, mister? –He traced with his finger the bridge of Lavi’s nose, until he touched his lips. His chest still touching his skin, conscious about how it curved in the right places; his sweater covering him like a crop-top yet allowing him to touch the other.

-Yes? -The redhead managed to open his golden eye, a mischievous and pleased smile rewarding him for the effort; making him held his breath as he imagined again how delightful was to kiss him. A vision that seemed like a wet dream or a succubus work.

-Then I think you owe me. –Allen kissed him on the cheek, slowly standing up, his sweater covering again in a teasing way that was almost painful to the taller. He started slowly walking to his room, stopping at the corner of the wall that was the bathroom to support himself and see him.

Lavi stared all the way, every step he took; and cursed as he felt the imminent boner that was threatening to appear.

-Are you going to come or was that too much for you? –He was a champion at bluffing. After playing god-knows how many games it was almost a requirement and now; as his legs trembled slightly and he held to the wall, he used the best of his ability to not let the redhead know how tired he was.

“Go big or go home?” He smiled, a battle of egos with a playful undertone. Lavi stood up, his eyes on Allen’s; who bit his lower lip as he got near, waiting to escape into his room.

When Lavi reached the door, he found Allen already on bed; sat almost in the middle of it. His beautiful long legs were bent as he supported his weight with his arms, his hair pushed back and held now with some bobby pins. The light of the nightstand on, flooding the room with warm, yellow light.

-You are a piece of work. –Lavi said, resting against the door frame, still tired from what he could
only call love making.

-I am. –The other answered. A naughty smile that Lavi tried to avoid passing his hand through his copper hair, pulling it back as it was still wet. He crossed his arms and Allen observed him provocative. –Are you going to make me beg you to come here, eye candy? –

-Eye candy? Do you even listen to yourself? –Lavi adored the compliments. Even if they were from a drunk teasing devil like that and not the sweet only spicy Allen he was used to. - I’m thinking about it. –He smiled as the silver haired let himself fall dramatically on the mattress. –Do you even know how to? –

-Oh baby, do I? –He crawled to the corner of the bed like a stretching cat, the sweater barely hanging from his shoulders, his neck still asking to be marked. –I can plead, I can beg, and you can put me a collar and make me call you however you wish. But only if it’s you. –

He rolled facing the ceiling and Lavi felt the urge to start again what they just finished.

How could he do that? At the couch he was an entirely different person. Bossy, controlling, dominating. And there? He was speaking about being bounded like Lavi’s heart to his beautiful face. How could he be both and none when the sun hit the sky?

Before he knew it, Lavi walked and kneeled in front the bed, caressing his cheek as Allen opened his eyes.

-So…you have a collar? –A mix of curiosity and lust. Another secret whisper to share only by them both.

-I do. –Allen whispered back, his eyelashes moving slowly as he blinked; the redhead entertained tracing his scar lovingly.

-And are you going to show it to me or is this just one of those things you use to tease me? –The other giggled, raising a hand to pull him for a brief kiss that left him like standing up too quickly from a resting place.

-Maybe I will, but I surely want those pants away as exchange. One for one, Lavi. –

Lavi rolled his eyes, already too excited by the idea.

-I don’t know. How do I know you are not lying to me, Love? –It was a useless argument, as he was already getting rid of his last pieces of garments.

-You don’t. –Allen murmured as he left for a drawer. And as Lavi finally stood naked, he turned a moment, shaking hands putting on the accessory he only wore once before.

-Then how about you tell me…how come you got one of this? -His touch was faint as he helped him move his hair away. Later letting him pass the strap through the holes to seclude the collar.

He faced the redhead, a glorious statue worthy of any god and some temples.

A sculped body that no one held a candle against. And weirdly enough he felt a blush make his way to his cheeks as he ogled the piece of heaven that he was sure could never had enough about.

Lavi was self-conscious around him; but as he saw Allen open his pink and beautiful lips as he observed him, he couldn’t help but smile proudly. It was probably that they already had sex or more surely than not, the fact that his last brain cell was long dead.
-It… I got it… from… -A moment of silence as his eyes were entertained by the redhead’s body, until he ended up on his face again. His eyebrows up as he silently asked him about it with a smirk. -W-what was I saying? –

-You were telling me… -The shortest was still sitting at the corner of the mattress allowing him free access to his back. The mirror in the wall in front of them reflecting the blushing face of Allen as he let Lavi got closer, his hands on his arms as he talked to his ear. -How did you end up with this…? -He touched the collar’s ring at the front and his partner shivered. A shaky breath as answer.

-I… got it at shop on my way to school… I thought… It would be nice but Yuu said… -Lavi regretted asking, kissing his neck and following up, trying to keep the mood. -He said… it wasn’t… it was for a pet and…-

-How about a teacher’s pet, my Love? -He pulled from the ring and Allen moved, letting him pass his tongue on the exposed skin. It was the sheepish look in Allen whom, not even twenty minutes before, was a hungry predator ready to subdue him; but now was all small and fragile, the collar around his neck an open invitation to defile him as he nodded. Lost in his eyes.

He extended his hand and Allen was quick to grab it, letting him take him to the center of the bed, where he allowed him to lay with his head on the pillows, pinning him down.

-You said you knew how to beg. –He whispered against his ear, kissing him just below his earlobe, slowly. The closeness something he wanted to keep with him for the rest of his days.

-Yes. –His voice quiet, his arms over his own head. –Do you want me to? –

Lavi felt a slap of heat with an express ticket to the south freeway; accusing him of getting excited to early in the game, sure that Allen could feel his member against his naked open legs. Regardless, the shortest said nothing, waiting for his answer; his eyes completely focused on him and nothing else. Just like he wished them to be. Forever.

-Show me. –His hair started falling on his face and Allen thought about Greek gods and their always messy hairstyles. Was he in the position to refuse to such a kind god?

He thought he wasn’t. And even he was, he wouldn’t want to.

-Please. –He mustered in the most enchanting voice Lavi ever heard. The sound of an ocean weave and the color of liquid gold.

-Again. –The redhead asked, uncappable of ordering him. An angel to his eyes. A present his mere presence.

-Please… - Allen repeated, a soft but audible breath pushing out of his mouth that contorted the plead into a poetic moan. The song of a celestial violin in his solo. The taste of a single drop of the wine that he was on a dry tongue.

-Is that all? –He listened to himself. His voice was firm, but never rough; amazed by his display of control, already destroyed inside him and his throbbing dick.

-Please, Lavi. Please…- He squirmed below him, moving his face just enough to show how the collar hugged his snow-white neck. –Please take me. –

His mind erased, his body moving on its own.
The redhead grabbed Allen’s wrists with one hand to keep them on place, lowering enough to kiss him as much as the collar allowed him to do.

- I thought you were no one’s to take… - He whispered against the skin, already wishing to switch his hand to touch his chest under the piece of cloth that he was already fond of.

-Please…- He pleaded again. A ghost hand around Lavi’s heart in that moan. – Mark me, take me… fuck me. -

And in a single moment of arrogance, completely out for an instant of the guilt and regret that always chased him he asked:

-But what about Yuu? He is going to notice that, don’t you think? – As the words left, a faint sting started growing inside him. That…until the flower that gave his life sense opened again his twin silver pools.

-Mh, please professor. I don’t think he cares anymore…He said it was over, didn’t he? -He moved against him, raising his hips to touch him, the only incentive the other needed. –Take me, please I want you… I need you Lavi, I…AH! –

He bit him below the collar, a red mark forming under his lips. He took one of Allen’s thighs bending it a little just to enter him in a single movement that teared a loud moan that was tried to be eased with a kiss on the bruised skin.

-I’m sorry Love, that was a bit rough. - He called him against his shoulder, hard breathing. Only to start moving painfully slow. The sensation of being inside like the orgasm itself. -It’s just…when you talk like that…-Words were lost as he kept moving.

Allen was biting his own lower lip, an expression of pain and pleasure all the same. He nodded as Lavi moved, his hands on his shoulders to pull him closer.

-Do you want me to stop? –A question sneaked as he finally touched him under the sweater, gently rubbing his nipples. Quickly Allen shook his head, a provocative little whimper.

-If you want anything more, I’m afraid you must ask, beautiful. –

-Please Lavi, more. – His eyes were heavy lidded and as he opened his mouth to speak the redhead could only concentrate in how it moved asking for him to take him once again. –I need more…-

Happy to please, he kept going. Supporting his position, slowly rotating Allen to be able to go deeper, his growing pleads driving the last string of sense from him. Biting and marking the neck he dreamed about, making sure it was more than obvious that he was taken if it wasn’t before.

“Finders keepers.” A move that would regret later, when alcohol wasn’t an issue and the sun was out to shame their lack of restraint.

That stupid leap of faith.

It was hard to keep his eyes open, but his wish to engrave the image of Allen pleading and crying for him was on its own an energy boost. Because even if he wanted to ignore it, maybe that would be a one in a lifetime chance for someone like him.

The man who stole the fire from the gods.

A lifelong punishment for reaching heaven with the tips of his fingers.
The adrenaline was fading as he was near the climax once again, incapable of listening to his own moans of the other’s name. Grabbing him by the collar as he came, kissing him desperately longing for that to never end; an interrupted scream of pleasure as the silver haired retorted his affection. His nails running at his back to leave a mark as well; arching his back as he followed and came.

Lavi fell beside him, pulling out. Worried to hurt him if he fell on top of his petite frame.

-Are…are you ok? –He asked as his mind tried to keep hold of the moment.

-Mh-mh. –Allen murmured, letting himself be dragged to the redhead’s chest; gladly hugging him. Weightless in his arms.

-I wanna make you mine, but that's hard to say. -A silent pause that worried him a little as they recovered. -Is this coming off in a cheesy way? –

-It’s not. –He sighed, nuzzling as close as he could; unable to care about anything else, happier than he ever was. Letting his eyes finally close, Lavi resting his head against his as they both fell asleep, tired and luckily drunk.

“Ignorance it’s bliss.”

It was near five am when the phone rang.

Two hours too late. Two phones out of battery and only one more to call at the other side of the world.

-Lenalee? – A tense voice asked, thick Japanese accent present in the name.

-Hello? Kanda? –She was asleep, and he knew it. She deserved to rest, and he tried to feel regret as the fire of the jealousy and anger scorched inside his heart until it hurt his ribs. Not able to do so.

-Do you happen to know where Allen and Junior are? – His tongue tasted like bile and blood as he pronounced the question, the anxiety of something existing out of his grip making him hate the decision of leaving his beautiful and flirty boyfriend to his own. Out of his sight. Out of his control.

-Allen? –Lenalee barely managed to understand what his friend was asking, not even awake. –No, I don’t. Do you want me to check on them? It’s a bit late tho...-

-Don’t bother. Thanks. –

The call was over and as the girl stared at her phone the pieces of the conversation started to make sense.

-Oh…fuck! –

It was five with seven minutes when Lenalee tried again to contact with the two dead phones. Their
owners submerged in sweet dreams, already sleep in each other’s embrace.

It was one in the afternoon at Tokyo where an airplane ticket was being bought.

Chapter End Notes

Hi my favorite readers! Did you miss me?
My apologies for leaving you with such a cliffhanger. I bring to you the first and longest NSFW that I published.
I hope you enjoy it! I surely had fun writing it even if it was hard for me. I tried to find the balance in the narrative so I hope it came out right.
I must say I truly had fun making their roles out of the norm. I didn't want to make Lavi the classic iron fisted tops or Allen just an innocent bottom that knows nothing. I mean...that isn't what they are. I tried to use their personalities to the max.
Is there anything you particularly like about this chapter?
Thank you all for keep reading and your comments about the fic! But I have to give a special thanks to Somnus_35 who not only leaves me the most beautiful and thoughtful messages but also recommended me the song Want by Taemin which plays a huge part in this chapter! Thank you so much! I specially wish for you to like it.

Im excited for the next chapter already and since I have no more compromises beside going to school Im confident on being able to write more.

This is getting interesting don't you think? I told you Yuu was about to appear! Any thoughts?

Again, if you like, share, comment on this you make me as happy as I can be! It's always a treasure to be awarded with a comment no matter how small it is. You make this writer day!

If you feel like this isn't privite or you want to talk to me in a more personal level this is my twitter @noctomata you can always follow me there and contact me. I promise I'll be updating there some details about how everything is going.

Thank you for reading!
Mad Hatter

Chapter Summary

Dealing with the aftermath its what makes a disaster one. After a night that was perfect, the magic fades, leaving them only with the cold reality of their current lives. What is the right choice? To be or not to be? Questions seems to be the only thing that is constant for this two. Would everything be alright?

Next morning, a car and a pretty lovely tearoom.

"I'm peeling the skin off my face 'cause I really hate being safe"

[Edit as the fic arrived its end: From this chapter further the editing job is barely noticeable as only some details were added. So if you already read it, and don't have desire to revisit it, you can skip to the last chapter from here!]

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Dreams were always like fog to Lavi.

They moved in soft, shady clouds, all of them close to the ground. Sneaking like vipers or ropes made out of smoke; making impossible for anyone to follow their tracks. Making impossible to know if it was a beginning or an ending. Impossible to catch. They didn’t make any sense and if anything, they made him wake up with a confusing feeling at top of his stomach. Like the faint sensation of being lifted from your seat when the car goes too fast at a downside road.

If he could choose, he would definitely take the “non-dreamer” option. If videogames stats were a thing among flesh and blood human beings. But life is never that easy…isn’t it?

Either way he couldn’t really say he dreamed.

More often than not, this “dreams” would disappear the moment he woke. Everything out, like a disconnected tv in the middle of a transmission. And then real life would crawl into his system like a radio that struggled, but finally found a station to transmit.

[ Hello this is your daily dose of normality. Have a nice day being ordinary! ]

Eyes wide open, dreams forgotten.

But there was a type of dreams he could remember. Actually, make that two types.

One, were no mere dreams, but as Lenalee called them, premonitions. Horrible flash-forwards into the future that he would be not only anxious about but also feel obligated to share. Terrified every time of their accuracy. Glimpses that subjected him into being the barer of the worst news.

“Don’t kill the messenger.” They weren’t always bad, but that didn’t make them pleasant to the redhead.
In his opinion, the future was better as a mystery. Knowing just...*forced* him to feel miserable as he stared into the inevitable.

And the other, were the dreams that nobody wanted to have. The dark sand of the dream man, the terror, the cold, the regret.

The others...were the *nightmares*.

Vivid and with the ability to get engraved in his skin; he hated his nightmares even more than the premonitions. He couldn’t know how to tell them apart; and a nightmare will always haunt him as his life passed, making him feel on edge and scared of every single thing that was out of place. Never knowing how or when would arrive, not a single sign of something that would tip him off to recognize them coming. Their shadow lurking always close by; a laugh in the darkness that will have fun at his expenses for not knowing they were only a charade. Since what truly made Lavi’s nightmares worse than his premonitions were the perfectly normal situations they were installed in.

They weren’t about monsters or falling after walking through the sky. No. Lavi’s nightmares were made of the people he loved hating him, a moment of his past repeated in an unescapable loop, about his home, about his life. About what scared him every day on a normal basis. An invisible line that twisted around his life and told him about what was on other people’s minds. True or not.

They were about *him*.

And as he opened his eyes, he begged that that was a nightmare. Because there was absolutely no *chance*, that he was going to survive after that.

-Did you sleep well? I mean, you surely look rested to me. Is it the bed? –

It was like a vacuum absorbed every single organ. Every cell from his insides. Every lasting drop of blood. There was nothing left but a weak carcass of the man he once was.

-I...-

A mere shadow of existence.

-Or is it my boyfriend? –He didn’t seem upset and that was exactly what sent Lavi into the next life as his ghost stayed there, trembling in fear. –Because I can tell you, he is one *hell* of a partner. Warm and loveable, always ready to take you in...But I bet you already knew that...right, Lavi? –

His dark eyes were daggers and Lavi gulped as the tall man stepped into the light that seeped through the window. His words poisoned in a calm sarcasm.

-Yuu... This is...-

-Mhp? Let me guess: “This isn’t like that”, at all. Is it? –

Lavi pursed his lips and stared at him. Yuu still had his gym bag hanging from his shoulders, his arms crossed over his chest and his long hair falling like a black cascade. He was wearing a black sweatshirt and pants that matched. Twin red lines across them, the brand name too small and anyway, out of his sight.

The sweatshirt zipper was open and the red in the last part of the sleeves as well as the collar made him look paler in the moonlight, more menacing. He could see how his collarbone merged with his tight muscles and even when he wasn’t a weakling, he was aware of the huge disadvantage he had against his high school friend, who was now, not only a trainer, but also a champion in his field.
And what was he? A teacher and a librarian whose last workout session was banging someone else’s boyfriend...

-Not much to say? That’s new. –He got closer, making him flinch. – You know…I could still think you were just sleeping with him because of his stupid dreams but… I think you are missing too much clothes for that to be the case… -

He pointed at him; his body barely covered by the duvet, which fell on his lap. His mind ran at the speed of light, trying to give him something…anything to grab into.

- I’m…I’m sorry Yuu… I didn’t mean… -

- You didn’t mean it? Couldn’t you see that with that magic eye of yours? It’s ridiculous. You are just a monster, Lavi. You just take whatever you want and don’t care who gets destroyed in the middle. You knew this would happen and still went along with it. Just like with Alma…-

One was the job of his trachea. Regardless, this seemed to be too much for it, as saliva took the wrong turn into suffocating him with what was supposed to go to the other way.

He coughed as he sat in the mattress.

Allen was still asleep, the black leather collar still around his now tainted neck. His breathing was a rhythmical buzz, his hand touching his.

There wasn’t anybody else in the room but Timcanpy; who slept placid at the corner of the bed. Bathing in the afternoon sun that entered like a rumor among the curtains. Stretching as the redhead observed him.

-This dream… is a killer. –He muttered, coughing again in the middle of the sentence. –

He sighed, his body reminding him through a pulsating ache in every muscle that he wasn’t built for such improvised parties anymore. A faint dizziness that vibrated from his soul. His twenty-six years passing a bill he refused to pay.

-Man… I hate dreaming. –

He rubbed his eyes; his free hand being touched again by Allen’s. Lavi observed him. His mouth barely open as he slept. He caressed his cheek and Allen smiled at the touch, still in his dreams.

-Lavi…-He called him, making him smile as well.

-What am I going to do with you, Love? –

Reluctantly, he forced himself to stop looking at the most beautiful face on earth, finally getting up and walking to the bathroom.

As he stepped inside the shower the nightmare started to fade, washed away by the water. Extinguishing its trace from his gloomiest fears.

The liquid ran cold at first, the sensation burning on his skin to slowly transform into a warm apology. His sore body beginning to relax against the heat, a clean and fresh sensation of the peppermint soap he used.

Now, he breathed deeply, a tranquility of existence he forgot it was possible to achieve. The reverie
forgotten within the things he chose to abandon in the dark; the thought of dealing with them delayed into a non-existent forever.

A placebo and a narcotic on the idea; getting dressed with renewed spirit that for many years longed for a single ray of sunshine.

Everything was in silence when he walked bare foot to the kitchen.

He was wearing black jeans and a white t shirt that has a loose neck, small holes in it for the sake of fashion. His hair was combed sideways; and even when he doubted, he wore his eyepatch were his hair fell heavier.

Small and simple accessories in black and silver, made from silicone.

The soft murmur of the coffee maker pouring in the place while he turned it on was the only noise in the flat. He waited patiently; a content smile plastered on his face. Last night wasn’t as clear as he would want, but as the minutes started passing in this new day of his, there were blurts slowly merging into details. Wasn’t that a magical night?

“Yes, thank you, very much.”

The redhead took the mug as the small red light announced the end of its labor, walking back to Allen’s room. A melody stuck in his head, making him feel as if everything was a paradise of clouds and he a blessed mortal among the Olympians gods.

No more fog to hide traps with his qualms embroiled on them.

Just clouds.

However, Lavi wasn’t too keen to positivity. He would always act like he did; yet, no matter how hard he tried, applying that same positivity that he offered to his friends into his life was nearly an impossible task.

“Practicing what you preach was always your greatest fault. Easy to say, but it’s always way easier to sin.”

Every time he tried to be happy, to feel fulfilled, to feel lucky…it was a time that life would punch him in the face with a reality check that smacked so hard, it would knock him out. That is why, even when he realized he loved Allen; he was so against believing his feelings would be reciprocated.

It simply wasn’t worth the risk of such a damage intake.

But that day, as he walked to the room that they shared the night before, he allowed his heart a small window of hope.

A tiny bit of faith.

Maybe he was worthy of an hour of happiness. Of a day to be who he was.

“Maybe…”

Inside that chamber, Allen woke up with the sensation of the Sahara inside his throat, the sand burning all the way up to his nose. Making breathing a painful experience he was willing to leave aside.
He sat, his knees bent and the sweater hanging loose from one of his marked shoulders.

“Fuck…”

He stared at the nothing, trying to swallow the dryness.

Blinking was work, and as his eyelids fell over his eyeballs, he regretted everything he did before to be alive at that point in time.

“Do you realize what have you done?”

-Fuck. –He croaked; this time out loud. Trying to comb his hair with one hand; his body screaming for the exercise from yesterday.

A creak on the floor alerting him there was someone at the door frame; already too tired to even turn his head and see who it was.

There was a knot in his stomach, replacing the tissue inside him with more fabric to twist to his demands. A blend between feeling like floating and felling from the last invisible step from a stair. The music still palpitated inside his head, throbbing with strange undertones that made it feel like a distant hazard.

Allen recalled Lavi saying he loved him not once but three times. He remembered how his mouth moved when he said it; and how not just his green eye but the other shined as the words were said. How the gold was like a metallic sea with a single, blessed plant in it. A nenuphar in the Egyptian sands. A green planet swimming lost, fusing with a waving nebula.

He remembered how beautiful it was to be consecrated with the sight of Lavi’s face; how he never felt so special before. How much he adored that he trusted him. That he let him see him, taste him…have him.

That he loved him.

-I seriously fucked this up. –

A sentence that was more like a groan to the redhead, who smiled as he drank from a red mug that he was carrying, pleased to see him awake.

-Hello, pretty. –The tone a cheerful one.

Allen finally allowed himself to turn and see him, his neck screaming in a restraint that he forgot. He watched; and as the other pulled the cup from his lips he observed a dark mark on his neck that seemed too familiar to ignore. How he supported himself as he rode him still imprinted on his mind.

The sight a shame that he would usually receive with an accompanying blush, but instead, a sensation of desolation that came along with the disappointment in no one but himself. He bit his lower lip harshly, again turning with his eyes fixated to the wall.

-Is something wrong, Allen? –Lavi gave another two steps towards him and as he got closer Allen’s face transformed into a mask that even when he hated it, he couldn’t help himself in pulling it up. It was a graceful and polite smile that executed in all the right places, his eyes almost closed, his body language a simple and humble shrug.

One that warned Lavi exactly of what he wanted to avoid. That everything that came out of that
mouth…would be a lie.

-Not at all! I think I just need a bath. I’ll be back soon. –

He got up before he could touch him and practically ran into the bathroom, the door closing behind him, leaving a very confused redhead that started to think that maybe…he wasn’t meant to be that happy.

-Whyyyyyyyy? –Allen asked himself, looking at the sink as he blinked rapidly, feeling like salt crystals were behind his eyes; absorbing all the tears that were supposed to come out. –Why did I do that? And to Lavi of all persons!... Why did I…? –

Finally, he faced his reflection. The leather collar there, a salute to his transgression and the worst part of himself that, for at least five minutes, he forgot he let out.

-Really?! –He asked to the mirror, touching the accessory. –Oh, please! – He unfastened the thing, putting it over the sink. A silent moment as he listened to the water run, feeling the tub. –What the fuck, Allen…?! –Sentence tight as it exited his teeth.

“You surely make some terrible choices when you are drunk.”

-You think?! –Getting near the glass, he could observe the red spots that decorated his left side as well as the biting mark on his shoulder. He got rid of his sweater, dropping it on the floor.

-What is…? –Thin red lines were running over his tights and as he gave another incredulous look at his reflection, he spotted some other scratches at his arms. –Oh Lavi…! –He complained.

“You weren’t precisely against it last night…”

-Don’t you start! Fuck! – After a few minutes of self-pity soaked in frustration he turned off the tap, getting lost at gazing upon the water. –What am I going to do now? –

His voice a strangled and tired whisper.

“How about you have two boyfriends?”

Allen didn’t answer to the sarcastic voice inside his head. Instead, he let himself into the purple water, lavender essence filling the room; a drop that cut through the silence as a repetitive chanting.

“Mea culpa.”

He thought about Yuu and how he wasn’t sure about anything. He thought about how they started dating and how everything deteriorated. Like a wallpaper infected with humidity; slowly peeling off from the walls of his heart.

But…was that enough to forget him? Was that enough reason to be sure he didn’t love him anymore?

Yes, Kanda had his issues but so did he.

“Regardless, you never been yourself as you are with Lavi. Are you going to keep lying to yourself or are you finally going to face that it was not just lust?”
Allen held his breath as he submerged in his bath. Few silent seconds suspended in lilac, perfume and oblivion.

When he emerged, he changed his mind to Lavi.

He was kind and handsome. Funny and tender. Lavi was just the perfect quantity of everything he ever wanted. But he abandoned his right to even be able to tell him he liked him the moment he knew he was Kanda’s best friend.

-I’m such an asshole… -He muttered to himself.

-That’s a little hard on yourself, don’t you think? –

Allen closed his eyes, knowing full well who was beside the tub. All the colors turning to gray.

-Nah, it’s the truth. –The water made a clear waving noise as its density moved with him while he sighed.

-I’m sorry. The door was open, and I was a little worried. –Lavi apologetic smile was seen by him even without opening his eyes. His hand putting a lock of his wet hair back, so he could see his face.

-It’s ok. –Their voices were a neglected secret. Too far into it to care for someone else to listen, but still hushed enough to be a murmur. –I’m sorry you had to see me like that last night. –

Lavi didn’t answer. Instead he moved from his crouching position to seat on the floor, his arm on the border of the tub. A heavy sigh of his own as he did, his heart a cage with wild birds demanding to be freed or to die.

He didn’t know what to answer to Allen’s confession, too afraid to say something unappropriated or too dismissive about it.

-I am usually not like that at all…I don’t know what happened. –It was a categoric excuse and the redhead decided to turn to the door and not face him as he listened; feeling like someone just bumped his car and that was the lame ass apology for not knowing how to parallel park. He hated every word, but understood it came for someone who just cheated on his significant other with who was supposed to be his caretaker and his partner best friend.

-Don’t worry. –He listened himself speak. A light undertone that sounded asphyxiated by his misery. –We can even act as it never happened if you want. -Lavi heard the water move again and closed his eye in fear of his own sentiment. Allen didn’t reply right away, hanging his head back, trying to breath among the steam that suddenly seemed to be suffocating. -I mean…- He continued. –It doesn’t have to mean anything. We were drunk, we made some choices that may be regrettable… -He shrugged, his own words like a choker made of thorns; with every new one a tighter hold on his neck. –We…we can forget it…nobody has to know. –

Interrupted with a swallowing mess of unexpressed tears and quiet.

-I didn’t say that. –Allen murmured after a while. –I…just don’t know what I’m supposed to do. –

He sounded like a scolded child and Lavi was hurt with each term as if they were arrows straight through his heart.

“You have to decide.” Allen’s mind tormented him. “You have to confront what you’ve done.”
I have so many thoughts and...I’m so sorry...I...

We don’t have to talk about it, Allen. –His reply was hush and rushed; and the silver haired felt nothing but pain and fear. His name lost from his former enchantment and now reprocessed as a terrible curse. What if he hated him? He couldn’t handle that right then. Knowing that Lavi hated him was ten thousand times worse than knowing he loved him. Because with the later at least he could do something.

How about we go to get something to eat and then...I don’t know...then we find a place to be. Where we don’t have to talk or think about what we’ve done, and we can only...be who we are? –

Allen felt his heart hanged by a thread of yarn. Suspended over the emptiness inside him. Alone in the terrible dark of the uncertainty.

He pulled out of the water a little and was about to hug Lavi when he froze.

“You don’t deserve that, buddy.”

-I...I think that would be nice. –

-Perfect. I’ll see you in a bit lov...Allen. –

It hurt more than he could imagine. Allen wasn’t never that fond to his name but right then it hurt him like an exorcism to a demon. Listening to Lavi cut halfway through the most affectionate way he called him, cut him deeply with a wound that threatened to never heal. He held his wrist against his chest and saw him stand up, without turning to face him, leaving in a noiseless reverberation in his bones.

Lavi sat in the living room staring at a book that said nothing to him. His eyes didn’t dance among the letters but were fixated into a word that lost it sense the second time he tried to read it.

He tried to stop thinking about what Allen said. But the more seconds passed the more he felt like he committed an unforgivable mistake by letting his feelings guide him. The look on Allen’s face all afflicted and worried...all soaked in regret...gnawed his soul with despair.

“What have you done?”

Time passed and a gentle push over his book was the needle that busted his bubble. The ticking of the clock back to his usual song.

-Sorry...I’m ready to go if you want...-His smile was another fake one. The realization wandering inside him just below his collarbones, under the skin.

Allen was wearing a black turtleneck sweater. It was quite loose, but it accomplished what Lavi supposed was his goal; hiding the hickeys from curious eyes. A pair of khaki jeans and what seemed to be an incredibly extra-large white hoodie, that extended like a coat until his knees. Matching Nike air force sneakers without a single drop of color.

-I’m always ready, baby. –The redhead grabbed his green parka, the brown fluff around the hood tickling his neck as he put it on. He walked to the door having to restrain himself for reaching for Allen’s hand and wondered...if that was what it was going to be his life around him from then.

They reached the parking floor of the building quickly and Allen wondered why they were there at
all. Without a word, Lavi reached for a black cabinet were other tenants kept their keys, choosing one with a trident engraved. Looking more like a digital remote than a regular key.

He had his bag on his shoulder and Allen feared that that was a trip in which he would be back alone.

Trying to keep his mind off this particular topic, he watched him do, trying to wrap his mind around Lavi owning a car. The redhead clicked on the key, a quick intermittent of yellow lights that alerted him were it was.

-You have a car? –Allen finally asked, still behind him.

-Yes, how did you think I came here? –

-I don’t know…I thought you took the bus or the Tube. –Lavi turned to him with a shadow of the smiles he used to offer to him, making his heart skip a bit.

-Please, that would take years. –

He opened the door to the most superb car Allen ever saw. His lines curves that weren’t for the faint of heart, fading into almost invisible corners. A painting of a landscape his mere shape. Like valleys and eroded mountains; or a rumor of northern air that traveled among the world in an untamed howl. Its silver paint a mirror in its perfect and unpolluted surface. He recognized it as he got near, the flashback of a photo that his stepfather had on a calendar time ago.

A Maserati Ghibli.

-Are you coming? –Allen jumped, startled, quickly getting inside the car; thanking for Lavi closing the door instead of him, too afraid to be too harsh at smacking a 65,000 piece of a car he couldn’t even imagine owning.

-Yes! Sorry! –He sat on the perfectly adapted seats that appeared to hug you; curving at every part of your body like an extension of yourself. The inside smelling like leather and Lavi’s perfume. –It’s so pretty… -

-I wanted it in red but my old man said it was “Too much”. – He started the engine. A purring sound that vibrated on the concrete, but never inside the machine. Every light inside in a red neon that made Allen feel in a private booth.

Lavi moved the wheel and the gear lever, his hand a temptation that called for Allen, who had to restraint himself as they sped up to their destination. The music filling the white silence.

The car stopped near the river, few steps away from a slope that hid what Allen thought was a house.

-What do you want for breakfast, then? –

-Isn’t it late for that? It’s around five…- Lavi smiled at him again, his hands deep inside his parka pockets.

-Not where we are going. –He moved his head, asking him to follow. Allen obeyed and soon
enough they were in front of a blue door that sounded with a sweet bell the moment it was opened.

-Welcome to Timeless Clock! How can I…Lavi! –Allen peaked behind the redhead as a thin, brunette woman jogged to hug him, a clean rag and a strong but warm smell of coffee with her.

-Hi Miranda. I’ve missed you too. –He patted her in the back. The woman had a troubled look, the smallest thought, but her eyes were infused with the love and the patience of a saint in a baroque painting.

“The virgin of the Annunciation, from Dolci.” Allen thought abstractedly. His profession rooted in him.

-What can I do for you? The usual? Your table is free if you like, we can chat after I… -

-Thank you, but actually…I brought someone today. –Politely interrupting was surely a gift.

-Oh? –Lavi moved and the woman stared at Allen as if he was a specter. He tried to give her a reassuring smile, but she only blinked nervously as her hands moved drying them over and over with the rag.

-This is Allen. –As he heard his name, he offered his hand politely, thinking Miranda wouldn’t take it. –Allen, this is Miranda. She is a friend of mine. She owns this tearoom and the best pancakes in all this country. –

Miranda, against what Allen assumed, took his hand immediately with both of hers. Her skin rough and cold, with her shake a little weak but with a kindness of the mother that Allen never knew.

-Lavi, you are too kind! –She smiled at him; time stopping in her tired features to transform her into a lovely maiden. –It’s very nice to meet you. Lavi never brings someone here. My husband and I started to think we were a secret to his friends. –

Allen looked over to Lavi, who rolled his eyes affectionally.

-Don’t tell him we are here. I bet I’ll die before Marie stops teasing me about him. –The brunette laughed guiding them to what seemed to be Lavi’s favorite table. A two chaired piece that was against a window, where it was visible the water was a line that parted the sky, the boats resting on it. A short bush that remained green against the elements; contrasting with the small houses with white walls and orange roofs. A painting waiting to happen.

The redhead asked for their pancakes and as she left the atmosphere was once again got charged with the cautious movements of two lovers who didn’t know how to proceed after they knew each other bodies. Sharing the same air.

-So…You never brought anyone before? –

-No. –The spoon making soft circles that sometimes tingled against the porcelain. Lavi contemplated his drink and prayed that Miranda kept his request, the fact that Marie was Kanda’s family making him as nervous as a murder suspect.

-Why’s that? –

He dropped the spoon, both hands on the rustic table that was painted in a cracked white. Like the rest of the place. The only spots of color the wooden beams in the ceiling and the inked floor like a big splatter of diluted coffee.
-Because I come here to think. To be alone. It’s my special place and…I never wanted to share that with just anybody. –He locked eyes with Allen. His gorgeous gray ones like snow clouds, a clear color that reflected the sky outside the window.

-And what about me? –

Lavi couldn’t understand why he was asking, but as he prepared to sip on his coffee, he kept the eye contact, trying to be sure that this time, his words were not only listened, but understood.

-What I said yesterday it’s true Allen. I love you. And I mean it. –He sipped on his drink; the other squirming on his seat. –We don’t have to talk about it, but I want you to know I’m being honest. I’m not asking for you to answer me, I just want to put the cards on the table…you know? –

The pancakes were served, and Allen thanked whatever was up there for that, as Lavi started eating without saying anything else.

“I love you too…” Unspoken.

The minutes passed, a silent breakfast with emotions hanging over like mistletoe. Waiting for them to recognize them.

Before they left, Lavi took a moment to disappear into the restroom, the silver haired waiting for him at the door, patiently.

-You must be very important to him. –A quiet and paused voice said behind him. He turned, the woman in the black dress there, a timid smile with a special light to it.

-You think? –Allen smiled back, trying to keep his feelings at bay.

-The way he looks at you. And…I don’t mean to chime but…he really never brought anybody here before. Not even his grandfather… and we know him as well. He always comes alone and leaves that way. Sometimes he chats with me or Marie, but… with you… I don’t know. He smiles at you differently. –

Swallowing was never that difficult to him.

-I guess he does. –

-He loves you. –A rumbling voice said, his steps impossible to hear. –But that you already knew. –

Marie was an enormous man for Allen, who felt like kid against him; the step he gave back now making him crash against him.

-I don’t know about that. –He whispered, a tired smile on the other man dark lips.

-Your voice is waving. –He stated; his eyes clouded with a fog that called out his blindness. –And your heart as well. –He paused, listening. –I don’t know you, but I can hear it. –Allen pushed his back against the wall, both of his hands against his chest in tight fists. Feeling cornered by a truth he didn’t want to acknowledge. –And I know Lavi. I can’t tell you what to do, but I can tell you this: That guy never told someone he loved them before. So, whatever you do… please consider his heart. It’s being a long time since he used it. –

Allen closed his eyes, everything in him being crushed like a glass sphere from a Christmas tree. A fragile decoration crashing on the ground and disappearing in a million pieces after it fell from its branch because someone passed to close to it.
“What should I do?”

-Ready to go, sweetheart? –

The tears were accumulating on the corner of his eyes as he nodded. An almost unnoticeable thanks, getting beside the taller to leave. Letting the redhead say goodbye, he waved as he walked, following him to the car. The pet name burning through his doubts.

“A word and he has you around his little finger. Oh, you really love him, don’t you, crybaby?”

-Where are we going now? –Allen asked, fighting against his thoughts. Lavi’s mind thousands of kilometers away.

-A place you are going to love. –

Chapter End Notes

Hi! I hope you enjoyed last chapter. I don't have much to tell you but I do have a lot of references I'll be dropping on my twitter, if you wondered how their outfits or some places really looked.

Also, do I like cars? Yes. I love them.

Anyway, always glad to read your opinions not only on the chapter but also on the story! I'll be answering some questions on my twitter as well soon. If you want to let me know anything but don't feel safe commenting here, I finally figured out how my DM's work over there. @noctomata

Thank you as always, precious readers for passing by and enjoying this story with me! I'm forever grateful everytime you give me a kudos, comment or even sharing it with your friends! Sometimes you are what make me keep going and I appriciate that 3000.

Hope you like how this is going! And if you are here for the drama don't worry...it's very close to our boys.
Chapter Summary

A secret place that’s a feast for the right eyes; thousands of pieces of arts but only one that held each other hearts.

Was Miranda and Marie right on what they say? Allen has everything made a mess and if he could only found one day more to think everything would be great.

Lavi can’t say no to those eyes and silence its accomplice of his secrets. Nobody else that could know...right?

A Fairytale house, a lot of art and two hearts that play the same song.

[NSFW near the end!]

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

White light shined against the seal in the corner of the card. A rainbow emerging from the hologram; a single “beep” when the redhead passed it in front of the laser lector. The car rode the curve to enter the parking lot like a surfer a wave; the movement barely noticeable. They parked in a subterranean floor that Allen couldn’t identify; the cold in the shadows of the place making him want to cuddle against the taller, his mind a mess of guilt and shame that tangled with his wishes.

Walking out of the car, he didn’t notice when they took a lift, following Lavi like a lost duckling, too busy trying to figure out where on earth they were. It wasn’t until the steel doors opened when he recognized the place. The sound of the arriving floor resonating in his mind as the cartoon idea of understanding.

Walls white with a marble finish, golden strips that guided into the exhibits as well as the unique smell of what’s been stored within the dark and the precaution of centuries.

It was the Black Order Museum.

The elegance of the place only overcame by the exclusivity of the pieces it handled.

A dream place to work for someone like him.

-You…!- His voice came out louder than he meant, the echo in the halls present. -You have a staff pass?! – He whispered harshly. A mix of excitement and disbelief. A toddler in Christmas morning.


Lavi couldn’t help himself but smile honestly. How that little nothing was making Allen so excited, made his tiny world keep rotating. Made him breathe again.

-Not a big deal?! They…they have an original Alexandre Cabanel painting! – He motioned to the piece of art, the redhead savoring every second of the sight.
-Good eye, nerd. But they have an Alexandre Cabanel exhibit. Not just a painting. –He corrected, smiling. Allen’s eyes wide as his mouth tried to articulate his ecstasy.

-Nooow! –Was what came out of his mouth, his smile threatening to part his cheeks. Small jumps in his place like a parrot among a fruit bowl. –I’ve never been in here before! It was too far of my place! -

-Go see it, Snowflake, no one it’s stopping you. –He gave him a pat on his shoulder. The only incentive the silver haired needed to launch himself to get as near as possible to the canvas.

Lavi saw him go, slow steps behind him. He thought again in what was around his mind since he heard Allen apologize. Was that a life he was willing to live? Acting like nothing happened and he didn’t love Allen and Allen didn’t love him in return at least for a few hours? Like he didn’t taste his lips or his skin? Like he didn’t mark him or let him do with him as he pleased? Like his smell or his voice wasn’t branded on his skull, impossible to get rid of?

"Yes. As long as I can be beside him. As long I can keep seeing his face light up like this. As long as I can make him happy. A million time yes, because loving you is far beyond my control. And being apart would only destroy me more than being beside you even if you don’t love me back."

Allen rushed to a painting, his eyes running from a corner to another, trying to absorb every brush, every color, every drawing of the light. As if he could somehow become one with the artist. His story right there for him to know. Never realizing that, for Lavi, he was the only thing in that whole museum worth admiring.

One perfect piece of art.

After he caught up with the smaller, they remained silent observing the exhibit. One after the other, with Allen trying to get everything he could of observing real pieces without touching them, while Lavi got lost in his own thoughts, sometimes finding striking resembling to the love of his life in those frames.

“Coincidence or fate?”

The evening Angel was the portrait he spent most time on, his eyes tracing the profile as he remembered Allen against a window. The similitude like a reincarnation myth that appealed to him like a love legend.

“You brought him here knowing what it would do.” The voice of his former friend accused him inside his brain. “You knew that this would only increase his doubts. Didn’t anyone told you to mind your own business instead of acting like the son of Judas and a thief?”

A silent answer as his sight kept glued to the canvas. His brave façade to the Kanda that lived in his consciousness, far more insignificant that the one in the world of tangible things.

“Someone told me ‘Stay away from things that aren’t yours’ …But was he yours, if he wanted me so bad?”

Would he have that courage to say that in his face, when the moment arrived?

“What a big mouth.”

On his left, the source of his thoughts and dilemmas was (not for the first time) staring at him, the painting already overlooked. Sure, he did want to seize the time when he had such an opportunity to be so close to Alexandre’s work but…right then…being so close to Lavi and yet feeling so far,
was making him feel like he was lost in the middle of the ocean.

He saw his free hand, hanging against his side; the other in a loose fist over his lips. He only needed to touch it once. To feel it. To hold him.

“Really normal to want to be his other hand so he would be kissing you…”

Just once and they could be back to the act of being only good friends.

Once, and he could stop being adrift without him.

**Once…**

-Allen! What a nice coincedence! I was just about to call you about the exhibit. Thought you would appreciate it. Even that whenever I call you, you either blow me off or don’t even reply…–

Suddenly a frozen chill that pulled from his neck attacked; his hand so close to grab Lavi’s finger. He turned his face to see the owner of that cheering voice that stood between him and his goal. The negative on his mind on doing it, his body betraying his better instinct, regardless.

A blond man was standing right behind him, an intelligent pair of dark gray eyes that drove from his face to his hand and back again, accusingly. He had a tight ponytail that made a line by his back. He was wearing a perfectly white uniform, not a single wrinkle in the fabric. His Chinese features a dissonant against his European palette.

-B…Bak…Hi. –The smile that crossed his face was enough to make him blush. The mischief highlighted like an orange signal for danger; bad omen plastered on it.

-Oh sorry. Is this a date? –Bak held a clip board on his right, tight to his chest, and with a pen in his left he circled in the air, his point being made about both. Allen wanted to push him away; Bak was his friend, but he knew perfectly well he was still dating Kanda. And since they couldn’t get along, he knew what he was doing right then was nothing but a naughty teasing that let his feelings clear about it.

Bak didn’t like Kanda as his boyfriend as much as Yuu didn’t like him as his friend.

Lavi turned when he listened the distressed tone in Allen’s voice, observing the silent exchange between them, a staring contest on its final showdown. He decided to intervene as the silver haired shifted in his place, cornered by what was for him just a simple question.

-Maybe. –He said, reaching to touch Allen’s hand, locking his pinky with his. Assuring him with a simple gesture that if he wanted him, he would be behind him to support him. Respecting his space.

-Maybe? –Bak asked back, addressing him in a confused tone that swept him off his feet, vulnerable to what Lavi did best. Trash talking.

-Yeah. Why? Do you want to ask me out? –Lavi smiled. A terrible lopsided grin that had all the troubles in the world but also, all the wrong decisions to heaven. He got closer to the blond’s face, making him flinch backwards. –You don’t have to be shy man; I don’t always bite. But I must say, I have a thing for silver hair and no offense, but this tone of blond takes you points down on my list. –

He touched his hair, Bak blushed to the ears. The man pulled out of his touch, trying to brush his hair franticly.
-What?! No! –Tears began to fall as the flustered blonde agitated the board on his hand. Break outs on his pale skin that appeared like sorcery. –I…I’ll see you later Allen, I have to go! –

In a second Bak disappeared, quickly walking through the hallways, his shoes clicking with every step, his hand trying to cover his face.

-Is he ok? – Lavi bent down enough to speak this on his ear. Allen turned to hide his face on his shoulder. A smile with the heat of embarrassment still on it.

-Yeah, he just cries about anything. You scared him. –

They were holding hands, his fingers intertwined. A missing touch that both felt it took forever to arrive. Allen adored the sensation of the silver rings touching his skin and how his hand fitted with his.

-And you? –Lavi wanted to touch his face, the proximity making his heart race, making him afraid for the other to listen to it. The faint smell of an almost invisible fragrance that he remembered more than his own address.

“Touch him? More like kiss him until you pass out.”

-Yes. –Allen balanced a little from side to side, his voice a childish mumble that vibrated on his neck. –Is this a date? –

Lavi finally dared to touch his cheek, his face sided enough so they could see each other to the eyes. The redhead smiled, sweetly, captivated. His soul hung on that gorgeous and lovely smirk. His heart tied to that query, that he wanted more than anything to be true.

-This is whatever you want it to be, Allen. There’s no rush. –He traced the line of his silky and round face. -You don’t have to choose right now. –

Allen thought as he listened to the tallest talk with that patient and devoted voice, in how Yuu was away for another week. He thought in how he would still stay with Lavi if he wanted and how that made him feel alive. He nodded, squeezing his hand; refusing to let go the parka with his other, feeling close to his chest. The memory of lying over him after their second round before sleeping, there.

So close, he thought, that they could share a kiss. The idea crossing the other’s head, the silence of the room an accomplice of their hearts reaching to each other.

Until a voice crushed the place with its iron-fisted inflexion.

-That boy thinks in nothing but himself. -The rusty and grumpy voice said. -I don’t know why we still have him on the board. –

-Come on, sir. –A tired, younger and afflicted woman retorted. -He is your grandson…and he do know how to do his job. –

- And? There are another fifty people that know how to do it, too! It’s not like he is the last historian in the world! –

Lavi was scared of horror movies. Of his premonitions. Of fate. Of probably Yuu and his probably horrible reaction to know what he was doing. But what Lavi was scared most was his grandfather.

Specifically speaking, his very upset grandfather.
And as he listened and put a face to that voice, his mouth was inundated with an acidic flavor that came from a further place of his now anxious stomach.

He tugged Allen’s wrist and with the speed of an Olympic champion, shoved him and himself into a tight and dark corridor, away from every prying look. His heart now running like a knocked bell of a broken game of test your strength. Up and down it went, playing drums on his ears making hard to listen to anything.

The voices got closer and the panic in his face was so obvious that Allen stared at him with the fear of a fat rabbit that just heard a rumble in a bush while it was drinking in an open pond.

-Wh-what is it? -

-Shhh! Don’t! –

He was flushed against his chest, the corridor designed for only one person to fit. He covered Allen’s mouth with his hand, listening to the steps nearby.

-I’m just saying he could be more responsible. –The old man walked so close to the hall that the redhead could spot the back of his almost bald head.

-Maybe he is busy with his teaching job. Or with a student? –He almost felt bad for his new assistant, a girl with twin braids that was worryingly and obviously trying to makeup excuses on his behalf.

-Oh, I bet he is. –

If he turned his face another degree, he would be able to spot him, a tremor in his now cold hands.

He waited like that, immobile with Allen for three whole minutes, the silver haired following his look to the source, without much more understanding of the situation.

Allen could see a small old man talking with a girl, his conversation senseless.

Three agonizing minutes in which Lavi prayed for his grandfather to go away; every moment that passed feeling more identified with the guy with the hat in that dinosaur movie that asked them all not to move, so they wouldn’t be seen. Finally, they started walking again, and as the conversation moved and the steps disappeared, he let his partner go, with a relief sigh that pumped his lungs to keep functioning.

-What was that for?! –Allen murmured, clinging to the redhead’s coat.

-I’m sorry! It was my grandfather! –The apology painted with the anxiety of a teenager that skipped classes. -Remember when I said I do some work for them here or there? –

-Yeah? –

-Well, it’s because my grandfather donates some bucks and art pieces to the organization now and then and well…. that was him and…-Lavi started gesticulating in that small space in a nervous way that was contagious to Allen, susceptible to secondhand emotions.

-What do you mean “some bucks”? -

-I don’t know Allen, half a million pounds? –His exasperated sighs corroborated by his furrowed eyebrow. -Who knows, I don’t care… the point is…-
-Whaat? –Half a million was more cash than he could imagine in real, physical money; the idea of someone owning that kind of riches and thinking of them as “unimportant” unbelievable.

-God, focus! –He grabbed the shortest cheeks, distressed. -The point is that if he sees me here, with you, he is going-to-flip. -He was too close, a comedic zoom as he explained himself. -I will never endure the sentence he is going to put me through! He is going to be all: “Ugh, brat I told you to come to work and you are what? Playing house?! You can mop your drool, you lovesick bastard, and get moving because I didn’t bought that car for you to drive undergraduates across the city like Aladdin in his magic carpet…” Why are you laughing?!

If the bad imitation of Lavi’s grandpa wasn’t enough, his face and gestures did the trick. Allen was finally laughing; all his stress leaving through a muted laugh that shook his whole body as he tried to keep it down.

-It’s not funny! –

-I’m sorry! –He kept silently laughing. Lavi exhaling and letting himself go as he smiled as well, defeated.

-It’s not! –

-Yeah, I know…-His words interrupted by his outburst. -It’s just that you…-The redhead started laughing now, unable to keep his upset façade.

They laughed until their sides hurt. Their ribs like two guitars in the middle of a serenade, their eyes tearing with the joy they missed by an unspoken agreement into the grief of the guilt. It was just a moment stolen in time for them, in a clandestine passage. A place for them to be who they were…with no one else to judge or see…or know. Face to face, they were close with no space to pull back, and as Lavi’s arm was beside Allen’s head, pinning him gently against the wall to support his weight, the youngest decided that he could decide a week later.

He could forget.

A kiss that he pursued as he stood on his tiptoes, his hands grabbing on Lavi’s shirt. He closed his eyes, letting himself fall with the confidence that the other would catch him.

Lavi grabbed him by the waist, getting him as close as it was humanly possible. He closed his eyes tight, thanking for the chance of kissing him again. Wishing to never let go. His lips had the unmistakable taste of blood, but he didn’t mind, after all, it was his own fault that Allen had chapped lips that day.

The kiss was broken too early, and Lavi felt like he was being ditched in the middle of the space floating in abandonment; he tried to kiss him again, only to be stopped by his hands on his face.

-Let me see your face, Lavi. –He whispered, his fingers touching the strings of the patch. –I can’t get it out of my mind, this is like…seeing just part of you. It feels…incomplete. Please…Just one more time, let me see you. –

-I don’t think it is a good idea. –He whispered back, so close he could feel Allen blink, tenderly stopping him. –I don’t do well with other people and my eye… -

He then realized he didn’t tell Allen the reason why he wore the thing.

-Your eye…? –The other traced, trying to understand.
He didn’t know.

-I’ll… tell you another time, ok baby? –He put his hand over Allen’s who let him do. He pulled it away, kissing it lovingly with an apology that was enough for the other to understand without further explanations. For now. –If it’s ok with you, I think we should go, my Love. –

The last to words creating an earthquake on his core.

How terribly honest they were! His heart on his sleeve, his soul naked to his touch! All of him exposed to his will.

-I don’t want to go home… -Allen mustered, afraid to be confined again in the predicament he was running away from.

-We can stay at my house. At least until you want to leave. –

-And if I don’t? –

-Then we stay. –

The ride to Lavi’s place was uncomfortably silent in a way that made Allen restless. It wasn’t awkward, per se, and he had his hand over the redhead’s as he drove, satisfied his previous wish; but the desire of kissing him until the moon came out and hid again, was so strong, it made him wanted to ask him to pull over to have only one more kiss.

“Or a whole make-out session.”

After what it seemed a penitence for Allen, the other parked outside a very peculiar house, trees hiding it like a fairytale scene. Distracting him for a moment from his needs.

In front of them, as they got down the car, was a huge cylindric shape in white; a single wooden door with crossing metal pieces for guard. Three steps were required to get inside, a tall spiral staircase in there, that seemed to never end; a mix of wood and dark metal, like the door. Beside it, there was an overflowed bookshelf that had more books than a small library, the entrance clicking as Lavi closed it behind him. The walls were painted in a warm sand color and at the top a skylight like a flower made of glass triangles, letting the light disperse from the black chandelier that hung from the middle of it.

-You live on a princess tower? –He asked, his eyes still on the ceiling.

So funny. But I’m sure you should know since you are a princess. –

Allen stuck out his tongue, mocking him. Climbing the stairs with the owner of the place behind his back.

As he reached the top another door was there, this one a single chestnut piece made by hand, the handle a dark crystal sphere. He opened it, inside a living room in white with burgundy seats and a small fireplace on the wall, framed by tiles with a beautiful and intricate pattern in gold and black. Nearby was a small window, its shape like a leaf in half, a tree outside that protected it from strangers. Every corner inundated by different sized books. A bed with white covers hidden in a nook by a screen with no drawings. The color matching the couches.

-It’s…it’s so…wonderful. -
-Thanks. –His keys clicking as he pushed them down his coat, only to take it off and hang it later at the door. –I’m sorry for the mess though, I recently got another bookcase and I was moving them when…well you know. –A pause that started to become awkward. -Do you…want me to take your coat or…?

-Please. –He turned to let him do, the touch gentle and his face close as he got near. Glad to keep away that conversation. Lavi pulled the cloth, slowly separating it from Allen’s body, the atmosphere of something that shouldn’t happen again now in there.

Like coals getting scorched in the chimney.

“Adding more wood to the fire?”

-It’s this ok? –His voice was husky, and Allen felt his will to keep his clothes on dropping by every exhalation he made.

-Mh-mh. –Agreement. Allen turned just a little, his eyes finding Lavi’s green one.

In a second, a quick twist and a kiss they were eager to continue; the coat falling silently.

He held onto him by the neck, his hunger back for his lips. Lavi’s hands steady on his waist, letting him do more than doing himself.

-Alen…- He whispered in a pleading warning. Allen’s fingers slowly pulling from the eyepatch strings; asking with a look and unhurried movements. Lavi’s hands not leaving their place.

-His eyes were sad as Allen observed the mismatched beauty on them.

-Don’t let me go, please. –He told him, his palms over his cheeks, his forehead against the other’s. –I don’t want to leave. I don’t want to go. I don’t want to be just his boyfriend and for you to be just his friend. I…-

-Don’t say it if you don’t mean it, Snowflake. –The redhead silenced him. -You are going to break my heart. I can’t stand one more blown with those lovely eyes of yours. If you don’t mean it…Stop lying with those words. –

Allen looked for a sign in the gold and the green. Thinking truthfully as he contemplated his options. He could stop…but Yuu was far away and whatever choice he had to made could be delayed a little longer. Another day. Another kiss.

-I want to be myself when I kiss you. –He continued. Touching his lips. –When I love you. And I’m sorry Lavi…I’m so sorry for doing this to you. –

-Doing what? –Afraid to ask, he still pushed, his need to know his ground stronger than his self-preservation.

-I mean… I seduced you…You are Yuu’s best friend and I…I took advantage that you were with me alone and drunk and made you betray him and…and I’m so sorry. –His voice stifled as the tears punched for his way out. Shifting the mood. –I don’t know what happens to me around you I just… -

Lavi held his wrist firmly, making him face him. A rush of fire on his veins.

-Baby. I’m a grown ass dude. You didn’t make me do shit. You didn’t take advantage on me. Whatever I did I did it because I wanted. –
Allen blinked rapidly, trying to see between his tears. His brows furrowed as he tried to understand that someone, for the very first time in his life, wasn’t blaming him for what happened. That someone was doing the opposite thing. As if such thing was the most normal to do.

To take the culpability.

-But I…-

-No. -He cut in. -You didn’t do anything. If I wouldn’t want that I would’ve say something. I was the one who flirted with you knowing that you were dating Yuu. If there is someone who blame that’s me. And more important…I also can’t control myself around you. You have something that drives me crazy and god knows I want to be with you until my last breath. –

-Lavi…- They weren’t drunk, and they weren’t tired. Everything he was listening was just as it was supposed to be. And to Allen’s amazement it was just what he dreamed. Just how he honestly wanted everything to be.

-Let me show you how much I love you, Light of my life. –

He pulled again for a kiss, his lips parted, taking him with tenderness and asset. His tongue asking for consent as it wandered; his hand traveling to caress his back under the clothes. Requesting a contact beyond their mouths.

One that wasn’t denied but welcomed.

The fireplace cracked near them, the cold arriving as the twilight fell demanding it to be lit.

Allen was bent over a daybed; his outfit on the floor as well as Lavi’s, whom was holding him as he moved, patiently slow. His hands with a pressure over his skin that made him melt at his touch.

He arched as the redhead was completely inside him, an almost perfect position that required little effort to reach into his sweet spot.

The flames cracked, their heat making them forget about the snow outside.

-Everything good? –Lavi whispered as he kissed his shoulder, Allen’s balance supported only by the redhead left over his chest. –We can stop whenever you want. –

-Nh…Ah…I’m good. –He traced his hand over his exposed nipple, making him push against him in a movement that was beneficial for both. Lavi now semi-sat over the daybed. –Ah…! –

-I’m…I’m going to move now, ok? –Allen nodded, letting himself be embraced by the toned arms of his now lover. He could listen and feel him breathe just above his neck; a trail of kisses as he moved in deeper. A sweet request for forgiveness that wasn’t needed but indeed appreciated. Nothing but pleasure as the waves of his perfected movements filled him with expertise and fire. A mewl that bubbled out of him as he was pleasured with caring hands and an excellent aim to his goal.

-I love you so much…- Lavi told him, right beside his ear, his heartbeat strong, pulsating over his skin; making Allen move a little faster as the words pushed in all the right places. His hands now over Lavi’s arm, supporting himself on him. A contrasting difference to the first time he rode him,
letting himself being moved by the taller now.

Both moved at a unison, a compass that only they knew. Nothing else on their minds, no one else on their hearts.

“So, this is what making love means…”

-Say it ah…again. –He managed to ask as he hung his head back, supporting it on Lavi’s shoulder, his neck exposed to him without any more shame.

-I…I love you. Mh…ah…so…so much! –

Allen wasn’t one for talking in bed but listening Lavi saying that he loved him as they did that…was like being in heaven on earth. His words between the moans that he was earning, that he was provoking. Thinking that he was the receptacle of such an intense and sincere feeling just fuel for the passion that he felt for the redhead.

-Snowflake… -He affectionately called for him; Allen grabbing his arm strongly as he felt himself close to the edge. Hating his idea of not fronting Lavi so they would last longer, as he already missed his face.

-I…ah…I’m…I’m gonna-ah…-Allen held even tighter, his hands branding his skin. Lavi kissed all the marks he left the night before; moving tortuously slow. Trying just like Allen to last as long as they could; time their precious gift.

-Just a little longer, my Love. –His words interrupted by his panting. His voice dark and infused with a nature that made everything in Allen go in a riot for some more contact. Claiming to see his face. Barely managing to twist to see him. His features and his smile the only image he needed to reach an orgasm that he would remember with nothing but clarity. The pressure as he contracted pulling it from the other.

“Just a little more with you.”

-It’s getting late. –Lavi said petting Allen’s hair who rested on his chest, the younger feeling like it was his rightful place to be.

-How do you know? You don’t even have your phone. –He played with his necklace, secretly taking the opportunity to trace his collarbones. Both were covered by a navy-blue blanket, so soft that Allen thought he wanted to transform it in a pajama for himself. To sleep beside the man below him…or to not sleep at all.

-Because it’s getting dark, kitten. And anyway, I left it at your flat. –Allen closed his eyes, unable to look at him as he called him by such a pet-name. The idea of never leaving and elope with the redhead, a fantasy that called south.

-I think mine died after last night. –He said, trying to keep his mind on the conversation and not it the magnificent body of the sculptured Greek god under him… That was more than happy to hold him like that. -I probably spilled something over it. –He sighed, rolling enough to hug him. Thirsty once again to hear him say that he loved him, like no one did before.

-We can stay here, and I can call him if that’s what worries you. I’ll make up some excuse until you decide what do you want to do. -The mention of the predicament enough for the silver haired to open his eyes. -If you want to be with me, if you want me to tell him…if…if you want to stay
with him. –

Allen looked at him, sighing heavily. The flames lighting Lavi’s face like a painting of the summer dusk. His gesture a worrisome and adorable pout that he wanted to kiss the affliction away. The only thing that stopped him the knowledge that the kiss would lead to another round he wouldn’t be able to stand.

-You talk too much; did I ever tell you that before? –

-Only like a million times, yes. –A nervous smile that he kissed quickly and gently, the temptation defeated with speed.

-Can you drive without your eyepatch or that’s also off limits? –He traced with a finger where the piece of cloth would be, fascinated by the unique trait of the redhead. His eyes a wonder that he was unable to understand why he would ever decide to hide it.

-I can. If I focus on the road and nothing else. –Lavi held his hand, kissing the back of it and then the palm. –Why? Does this handsome face have your attention, or do you have a kink for disgustingly striking men driving? –

-You wish. Maybe I just like to feel like you can see the street for sure. - He pushed his face playfully, giggling.

-Come on, my Love. Let’s get going then. –He held his hand, the other in his waist as he rolled them over; the position like the lead of a tango. He pinned the shortest down, Allen’s eyes looking for something in his face that Lavi couldn’t help but wonder what it was.

“How can he say that, being on top of me with that absolutely stunning smile?”

-Okay. – Barely audible.

“A million times, Lavi.”

A decision that was even harder to make.

They arrived when the sun was disappearing in the horizon. Both as tired and contempt as their hearts allowed them to be. Holding hands, talking about the simple things of life. Like they didn’t have the weight of their actions over their heads. Happy steps around the apartment that had nothing but an allowance to start over, forgetting the main reason of their morning torment.

Lavi had fresh clothes from his house, choosing a garment for the night after he left the bag in Allen’s bedroom. The pants of his pajama were now around his hips, loosely hugging the fruit of his routinely efforts for getting at least a visually delightful physique. His shirt oversized on Allen’s petite frame, the sleeves a little too long, but forming a treat to the view.

They reached the bed, cuddling in the middle without thinking in closing the door. But as the lights went out and they prepared to sleep, the redhead found himself twitchy, something on his mind that insisted on being attended. A single bee that flew in circles against a clear window. Uncapable to rest knowing it could be on the other side, without knowing what it was that restrained it to do so.
So close, yet so far.

-Love…about my eye. –He let the sentence flow. Trying to connect logic to his sense of uncertainty. -Do you remember I told you I can’t take my eyepatch off with more people…? –A nervousness numbed, stumbling in the dark of the pressing matter of his confession.

-Yes… -His eyes were closing on their own, his head resting on his arm. Feeling more at home than ever.

- About that…I have to tell you something. There is a reason I started using it…- Allen tried to pay attention, his spirit tied in happiness with the redhead. -Some years ago Yuu had… -

-Lavi? -He interrupted. The mere name of his actual boyfriend a poisoned dart on his emotions. -Can you tell me tomorrow? I…want to keep with this…Of you and me…at least a day more. Then…we will talk. I promise. -The taller complied, holding his partner against him. The idea pausing on that matter appealing, sharing the desire of spending at least that day like they were what they weren’t.

Only the two of them. Together.

Nothing that couldn’t wait until the next morning. After all…how much time could it be just another day? The secret wouldn’t go anywhere. And they were right where they wanted to be.

“It can wait.”

-Of course, babe. Sleep tight, Snowflake. I love you. –A kiss on his temple.

-Goodnight, disgustingly striking driver. –

A laugh that lull him to sleep. One satisfied embrace for those who were blissfully ignorant of what was to come.

Until three am. When a demon roamed free in the mortal’s realm, chasing after the sinners that didn’t want to pay for what they did.

The door didn’t cry, and his steps didn’t sound as he arrived. The bag didn’t make a noise as he left it in the coach and even when the cat was also his, he didn’t go near him to welcome him to his own house.

But as he was at the foot of his bed, he wondered how much time more he would be able to be silent.

As his best friend was there, top naked with the only thing that belonged to him that he asked Lavi not to touch.

His boyfriend.

-Well…isn’t this a lovely picture-perfect situation? - His voice waking him up as it cut into the dark. A curse hidden in the sarcasm that filled the room with a threat.
Yuu Kanda, was home.

Chapter End Notes

Hello dear readers! I’m glad to have you again over here. I was planning to upload this on Friday, but honestly I fell asleep basically all day. However, here it is! I hope you like it.

The drama is approaching, yes it is! I enjoyed this chapter a lot, a lot of research was involved, but super fun to do. I still have to change the tags when I have the chance.

Remember I’m always happy to read your comments, see your kudos, know you shared my work. You all are super amazing and I’m grateful you gave this fic the opportunity and that you are still here, reading it!

We enter in the later half of this story! Do you have any thoughts in what’s to come? I’m a little nervous for the next chapter!

Anyway, if you ever want to talk, I’m always on twitter, but I’ll be trying to keep answering here as soon as possible.
**Crybaby**

**Chapter Summary**

The moment is finally here. Kanda came early and our boys are in deep trouble. Will Lavi have the courage to say what he wants? What was that that he wanted to talk about before they fell asleep?

And Allen? What will he do when everything collides?

Decisions require strength. The past is something you can never run away from.

[Violence & cursing ahead.]

**Chapter Notes**

See the end of the chapter for notes.

Yuu Kanda didn’t enjoy traveling. In his opinion, it was a terrible waste of his time; and boy, did he like to exploit it when he had it.

For being raised as a Buddhist he didn’t do well with basic parts of the doctrine. Like being patient and serene or being in places where he had little to none personal-space.

A plane flight of eleven hours plus connections was both of these things.

He thought he could have tolerated being in the stomach of the metal bird if it wasn’t for the stupid bitch at the airport, whom not only didn’t speak well Japanese, but he could swear was making fun of his English.

It took him at least two and a half hours to buy the ticket, only to wait another three hours for the thing to arrive so he could leave. As if the day he wasted putting everything in order before bailing on his seminar wasn’t enough.

Kanda was already upset when he boarded, his nerves threatening to explode when he sat and the person beside him rested his head on his shoulder, like he was a free personal companion. A mask over their eyes and headphones; impossible to talk to.

“Absolutely fine, go and sleep here. I insist.” He thought, stiffening.

His leg didn’t stop bouncing the first seven hours, the flight attendance looking at him fretfully now and then. His impulse to scream at them tied down with a tongue bite of his unique brand.

The bad feeling started two days ago, at his usual night supervision of his boyfriend, way before he made the call. Allen didn’t answer again, and the stupid Rabbit told him, nonchalantly that he was once more, sleeping.

Some people would call him over-dramatic, but he knew Allen as he knew the palm of his hand.
He was sweet and distracted, perhaps always tired since he had his job and college... But he was also an anxious mess forever needing attention. Sleeping at the afternoon when he could be studying, two times in the same week, could only mean one of two things: either he was sick... or Lavi was lying to him.

And just like he knew Allen he also knew the redhead.

Lies were easy to him since they were in high school; and with time, he only got better at it. After the accident it was hard, even to him, to notice when he lied sometimes. It just blended with his personality like a fine morning gradient.

Paranoid maybe, but he didn’t like the odds about a flirty and beautiful boyfriend with a liar and charming best friend. Not that he had any other option to leave him with, every other friend he had were decent, busy people.

Perchance Lavi was being honest, and Allen was sleeping. Or perchance he was being a wingman and covering his escapees with some other guy at the bar.

It wasn’t until he called Allen again that he was convinced. The brat was about to do something among the lines of sleeping with someone that wasn’t him. Specially as drunk as he sounded.

Yes, he was a jealous person. But it was only because Allen was that good-looking.

He recalled how it was when he was dating Alma, and his heart shrunk making everything hurt; acid over cotton candy. His fist closing under his chin.

Alma was pretty with a prettier soul, a sunflower that was made from a drop of sun itself; but she never drew predators’ eyes like Allen did. And in any way, she only had eyes for him and only him. Allen looked to other places, to other things...to other people. And that rubbed him in the wrong place like poison ivy. Wherever the kid put his look or gave a smile...he would get it. He would have the world.

There was no one that could resist to that angelic smile and treacherous aura; it didn’t matter that Allen did it on purpose or not. Bad habits die hard, after all.

It just happened and he hated it.

It started with small things, like saying “thank you” in that British accent to a handsome waiter or letting a particularly attractive schoolmate talk to him so close he could see the pale and few freckles he had here or there exclusively over the nose. Looking someone over the glasses he used when he helped restoring a painting and smiling, biting his lip when he listened to the assholes at that forgotten place he worked. Small things that grew inside him like belladonna, poisoning his thoughts until he couldn’t bare it.

Allen was his and no one else’s. They didn’t have the right to see him or to talk to him, let’s not talk about touching him. And he wouldn’t allow anyone else to have it. Not on his watch. He could see it didn’t matter anymore if they loved each other or not; but he once had a lover taken away from him...and he wouldn’t allow that to happen again.

The clouds passed under the wing of the plane, unnoticed while he was reflecting.

He had loved Alma with everything he had and doing so only destroyed him. So...why would he commit the same mistake with Allen? He didn’t want his boyfriend to see him vulnerable or broken. He didn’t want to let all what he worked to bury, came back to life if he as much as talked
Kanda dealt with things that way, leaving everything else at bay. Everything in control. And when everything wasn’t under his control…well…nothing was right at all.

“He was at a club. Of all places. A club. Is the Rabbit with him? I bet he didn’t answer because he is covering for him. Always messing in other people business. I bet he couldn’t say no to that face.”

When he called Lenalee he was far beyond desperate. Try after try to contact either of them; a morning for him that arrived with the crankiness of not being able to sleep. Imaginary men parading into his house with his partner.

He knew Lenalee was sleeping, but the anger that boiled from his feet to the crown of his head screamed against any remorse. And when she said she didn’t know where the two of them were or if they even were together, well…that launched him into a rushed journey back to London.

And there he was, on a plane with a total stranger over his shoulder.

“At least they don’t drool.”

Since he arrived around midnight on a weekday, the jetlag over him like a backpack; it was hell to get a car that accepted to take him to his flat from London’s airport. And if that wasn’t enough, rain started to pour, mixed ice that made the driver go at the speed of a tranquilized sloth, his questions a tiring and persistent intent to establish a conversation.

Yuu lastly arrived at three am to his house, the key soundless like the only good thing of that horrible voyage, a whole day passed since he had that dreadful conversation with his drunk boyfriend. Time an abstract concept that he didn’t understand anymore.

He didn’t try calling them at the plane, a respect for the rules one of the things that truly was iron branded on his customs. The idea was discarded when he landed, his apprehension scrunching his stomach like he was a student on a final he didn’t study for and would determine if he graduates or not.

It wasn’t that he was afraid of conflict, after all, he was a champion in martial arts…but getting robbed of what he owned…that punched the air out of his lungs.

Silence was the first thing that he noticed. His suspicions shifted like oil over colored water.

He knew Lavi for at least ten years and in those ten years, he learnt that every single time that he slept on a couch he snored like a huge, congested cat. That sound absent now. And as he walked into the place, he noticed also was the redhead from his assigned seat.

He let his bag fall onto the couch that his friend was supposed to be occupying; observing inquisitively that the lamp that was in the side table was broken on the floor. Its pieces scattered and untouched, the drawer badly closed and one of Lavi’s eyepatches on the arm of the sofa.

A break-in never entered his mind, a puzzled and disdained look that stopped him there for no more than five seconds, taking the piece of cloth like a clue of a crime he couldn’t pull together, with him. Kanda kept walking; his steps inaudible as he reached for his bedroom. He walked past the door, his heart beating slowly while he thought in how rare was for Allen to leave it open, the
nightmares and his uneasiness to sleep alone restraining him to do so on a daily basis.

He crossed the frame, the silence starting to spook him in a superstitious way.

His eyes were already used to the dark, the two figures in his bed detailed like in plain sunlight.

When he left, he told Lavi he could take whatever he wanted from the house. Blankets, food, drinks, shampoo...nothing was off limits. **Except** Allen.

Yuu stared at the two sleep for longer than he intended, the image working on his mind and trying to click, two engines dented by the time, doing their toil with force and weight. He noticed that Lavi wasn’t wearing a shirt, his ridiculous muscles that were a wasted joke on a librarian, showing exactly like in Allen’s paintings of naked, winged men. He traced his look over his abs, the anger gyrating inside him; an extinguishing star that decides to explode in a nova that would cease every nearby life.

Allen was beside him, his head just below Lavi’s burly left arm. He had a smile on his pretty features and breathed rhythmically in dreams, something that he only remembered from the firsts months they slept together. Before he reverted to his taciturn behavior that only got worse with his work and the times his stepfather called him.

His mouth started spitting the words before he realized it was him who was talking, the scene tainted in red at his eyes. Fury taking control of his body, his consciousness only a passenger of the conduit he became.

-Well…isn’t this a lovely *picture-perfect* situation? - His voice waking him up as it cut into the dark. A curse hidden in the sarcasm that filled the room with a threat.

Lavi sat quickly on the bed, the nightmare of the night before coming back stronger. Making him feel like he was in a damnation torture loop.

-Yuu? –He whispered. A terrified look that Kanda wanted to erase from his face for the hypocrisy.

-You *surely* are a **piece of work**, Junior. –His arms were crossed, his hands sweating cold. His voice a steady, a bare sword ready to cut him into pieces.

The professor wondered if that was real and closed his eyes tight, only to open them again to the same picture. Slowly he got up from the bed, still careful to not wake up Allen, who remained peacefully nested between the sheets. Unaware of the danger that existed at less than ten steps from him.

“Didn’t you say this was worth dying for? Time to pay the price for the broken plates, amigo.”

-Kanda, *listen*… -He knew his friend didn’t like his name much, at least not after Alma. So, he played his cards close to his heart.

-All this time…all this time I thought you were taking care of him. And what do I find when I come home? My *best friend*… **IN MY FUCKING BED WITH MY BOYFRIEND!** –His tone was getting louder as the sentence evolved, and Lavi listened at Allen shift in his sleep. The tension skyrocketing inside him.

-Kanda, come on… -He whispered, trying keep everything quiet. –I just…let me explain it to you…-

-**EXPLAIN**? That’s **rich**. –A crooked smile appeared on his usually stoic face, making the redhead
flinch, knowing what it meant. He turned uneasy to watch Allen, which annoyed the other more. – Do you think I care about **WAKING HIM UP?** –

Higher the volume, Lavi with his hands up in a defense that only pleaded for Allen to be out of it; even when he knew it was impossible.

“**Where did all your bravado go, bookman? Didn’t you want to tell him that Allen wasn’t his since he wanted you so bad?**”

The reason of the argument finally woke up, immediately clicking on the light on his nightstand; rubbing his eyes in an oversized top that Kanda recognized as Lavi’s missing shirt.

-Lavi? –Was the first thing that departed his lips, only giving more fuel to the Japanese anger.

-I think I need no further explanation, Junior. –Allen opened his eyes, facing him. Only fear and a revolting regret that Kanda hated intensely as it changed to a worried desperation when he turned to look for comfort in who was supposed to be his friend, not Allen’s.

-Kanda, please… he has **nothing** to do with it, look at me. I was who… -He recognized the teacher tone, used to it because of his adoptive father. A skill to calm him down even in his worst times. The attempt to use it on him by someone who knew this, making him furious. He refused to address him, his eyes fixated on Allen, noticing what the redhead meant to do. - …I took him to the club and…Yuu, look at me…-He tried to continue.

Lavi touched his arm, his sleeves up making the contact skin to skin. It burnt in the special way of the ice over a warm surface and pulled the last string that tied him to a civilized man. Destroying his composure.

It wasn’t fair, he knew it. Even if Lavi worked out, it was nothing compared to his years and years of training. But he didn’t care. His best friend **fucked** his boyfriend. What he did was not only justified but needed. Almost like an **obligation**.

In a flash he threw a punch to the taller. The fist directed to his face.

It hit him on the left cheek, the blow making a smacking noise that blended with the satisfaction of the fair skin of the other on his knuckles. As close as he was, he could listen to the crunching murmur that could pass unnoticeable to someone that didn’t pay attention to it; his years of expertise on fights letting him know what happened inside the redhead mouth that deserved such an exquisite sound. The mark that would leave, the pain it would cause.

Allen didn’t make a noise and that was what, beside hitting Lavi, he enjoyed most. He later would say he felt sorry about it, but it would be a lie.

The silver haired was just there, sitting on the bed, his eyes with an omen for tears, his eyebrows almost together, his lips parted in a distressed expression that moved in a precious slow motion. He didn’t get closer, he didn’t scream.

He just stared in the petrified disbelief of someone that can’t understand that he isn’t dreaming anymore.

-That was **nice**. –He stated, shaking his hand from the impact. His friend on the floor, blood starting to pour out of his lips. Those same lips that tasted his man.
He addressed him, cleaning his knuckles on his sweatshirt. Thinking about the cut he managed to do over the redhead’s skin as well as the wound that (now he was sure) existed inside his mouth.

Lavi was glaring at him, the back of his hand trying to clean the blood on his face, smearing it over his jaw. Two different eyes, like an alley cat, piercing him with a feeling he couldn’t recognize. One was green and one yellow; just like he recalled them to be the last time he saw them, back when they were eighteen.

Back when everything vanished.

There was no patch covering one of them, no hair dramatically over his right side, no twisted bandana to cover that profanity he hated with the intensity of a thousand suns.

Nothing was there, but his nude face.

His stare endured, the question popping slowly like a lazy soap bubble that took all the time in the world to form. Why was Junior looking at him with his two eyes? How he dared? That, until a whimper interrupted the delight the experience was being.

-Lavi? –A shy and preoccupied tone now.

Tragedy, as Allen knew better than anyone, stroke at the most arbitrary times in life.

Regardless, it didn’t matter how many times he lived through it. It always found a new way to hunt him down. A damsel obsessed with the wrong man. In fact, at this point in his existence it was so recurrent, that whenever it arrived his mind would fast travel to odd, but familiar places. Places in which he found a brief solace, the eye of the hurricane as a defensive mechanism for him to keep living.

They were unimportant, almost insignificant things to think in the verge of misfortune; but for him were what attached him to a life where everything was ok. Wherever things had an order.

A routine.

And at that moment, when his heart threatened to brake by Kanda’s hand; gazing over a bloodied Lavi, his mind went quickly to his favorite painting that just hours before, he had the luck to see for himself at the museum.

One that had nothing in particular for him to love, except for the emotion it emanated.

“L'Ange Dechu, Alexandre Cabanel. Oil in Canvas, 1846.” His mind whispered where time never passed, keeping him breathing. “From morn to noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve, A summer’s day.”

The expression of Lucifer overlapped on the face he kissed right before he slept. The face he loved. A controlled and deep temper that raised up, breaching the surface. Disconnecting from his recollections of an always smiling redhead. The other side of the coin that he never thought that existed.

It was a wave that pulled his name from the shore that was his essence. Trying to bring back the man he fell in love with; wasting a useless prayer for that to be a dream, that didn’t work and
wasn’t listened.

Yuu only stopped at the staring contest with his high school classmate because of that whisper, his fleeting savory of gratification vanished. His pupil, indistinguishable from his iris, moving slowly towards him. Lavi’s unequal eyes not leaving his face, attentive to his actions.

-Don’t worry, Snowflake. –He answered, the black eyes of Kanda immediately going back to him in a murderous stare that even when he knew he was wrong, he enjoyed. –I’m fine. Hell, even I can agree I deserved that. –

Spitted blood over the floor, his mouth with the metallic flavor disappearing as he kept bleeding; quickly getting used to the iron taste. He recognized the sensation of his feelings taking over him. The single thing his grandfather always asked him to avoid, the family name in the game.

Feelings a special brand of troublemaker’s drug.

Lavi understood why Yuu hit him and he indeed agreed it was the cheapest bill to pay for what he have done. He didn’t mind if it was for Allen.

His life was filled with riches, with stories, with experiences, with connections; but in all that time nothing was remotely similar to what he felt for him and if it took a punch to the face to love him, he would gladly receive it like the gentleman he was not.

It wasn’t the blow what had him so upset.

It was the look in Kanda’s face. It was that he arrived there, like he cared about Allen. Like he loved him. It was all the things he made him pass through. The anxiety, the phone messages, the scene at the bar, the jealousy, the blame, the fear he submitted him through. He despised that he was there, like a prince in a shining armor, when the time he called him to take care of his boyfriend he actually called him “a bit of a slut”. As if Allen was nothing more than that. A rogue brat that needed discipline.

Nonetheless, his thoughts were his own and for the sake of Allen, he would keep them to himself.

-He calls you “snowflake”? –Yuu said, his arms again crossed in defiance and superiority. –For what? To make you feel special? –He sported a sneer that mocked the redhead as an answer to his comment. A fight that didn’t drag him yet was all about him being in the middle.

Allen got closer to the edge of the bed, finding his ability to move back; managing to make Lavi look at him for a quick split second in which his anger fell for his worry. Mouthing something he couldn’t decipher.

-You have nothing special to him, Allen. You mean nothing to him. -The explanation in such an aggravated tone that made him weak in the bones. The few crumbs of confidence he had gathered, blown away. -Why would you? You are just a pretty face that doesn’t know when to draw the line when it’s about men. You just whore your way out in life, getting whatever you need from it. Just like you used to do with Cross. –

-Hey, this is with me, not him. –The tallest called, still on the floor.

A knot created in his throat. Easy summon for his tears, that came out like a charm; Kanda’s speech hurting his frailest point.

-Why won’t you tell Lavi? Your old man trained you well. With that face and that smile… Quick
hands and quicker to say yes to whoever asked. Wasn’t that useful for rich imbeciles just like him?

He gestured to the redhead, his voice sardonic and solid.

Kanda wasn’t good with feelings.

When he was a kid, he had troubles with them, but after what happened in his teenage years, everything was a mess that he hid with endless hours of training and ill-tempered answers to keep away everyone with a pinch of sense of self-preservation.

What he was doing to Allen right there, opening his mouth and letting out everything what achieved to intoxicate him, was the only way he knew to deal with the failure that he felt inside him. With the frustration of being robbed right under his nose.

Truth or half-truth. He didn’t care. The point was hurting him more than he was hurting. Whatever to feel ok again. To soothe the pain.

-Stop…-Allen muttered with his tears flowing like rain over his reddened cheeks.

-HEY! –An angrier call out that Yuu decided to ignore, knowing that he would still have some time until the other got on his feet.

-Why? Because it’s true? Because you don’t want him to know who you really are? I think it’s a little late for that, considering that you already fuck him. It’s your responsibility that he is aware of what’s he is getting into. -He gave a step away from Lavi, who was trying to reach him. -I just want to know, did you get bored with me or it’s plainly for his money? Cause if it is…Believe me you hit the jackpot with him, Cross would be proud of you. Congratulations. –

Every blink just brought more tears, his visibility a fish tank. His arms dead at his sides, letting him at his luck with getting rid of the crying. A doll that was useless on a shelf.

Broken.

-FUCK, Yuu! Stop that, this is between you and me! Leave him be! –Lavi tried to stand, a subtle dizziness that forced him to look for support for getting up. The sensation of being buzzed like few nights back scornful on his misery. His voice cracking, letting Kanda know how much time he had left before having to deal with him.

-I can explain…Lavi…-He stopped, facing Allen. He was crying rivers, his lips trembling in a pain that pierced and unsheathe him without mercy; making him lose his ground in a frustrating attempt to run to his side. Instead, the redhead stared at him, the blood submerging again his mouth, whenever he talked draining the wound like an emergency flood contingency. “What?”

His heart with a fissure that would end pulverizing it. A transform fault that shook with the force of a tsunami, questioning its integrity.

-That isn’t true. I’m not like that…what I said…I meant everything I said to you! -

A sob that demolished him in a way that Kanda couldn’t help but take advantage of. He wasn’t trained to offer his hand, but to take the higher ground when he could.
And that was exactly what he was going to do.

He saw Lavi trying to say something, the blood flowing from his open lips. A cough that would take some precious seconds to recover of.

“I know.” Lavi thought, unable to respond.

-You seem to replace your brain with your heart. -Yuu started again. His voice a tranquil and cold statement with no place for debate. -You take things so hard and then you fall apart. You try to explain, but before you can start, those crybaby tears come out of the dark. Do you think everything gets fixed with crying? Did that worked with your previous clients or this is a one time show since I was stupid enough to think we would be dating for real? –

He was closer to Allen now, and Lavi did the only thing he could think of, hating that he kept hurting the silver haired. So, he kicked him, slowly crawling by the wall the second after. Decided to stand. Having his attention even if it was nothing that hurt more than what Yuu did to him.

-Shut the fuck up, Kanda. –He muttered, spitting more blood onto the floor. The wall supporting his weight, pushing his hair back to try and set his steadiness right. The room starting to stop shuddering on his eyes.

His friend was already pissed, but having been caught with his guard low, Yuu decided it was enough chat; being able to prove his point in other, less creative, way. Infuriated.

-What a rude mouth, Junior. Let me fix that for you, buddy. We don’t want the old bookman listening to you talking like that. –The word dragging all the bitterness in his being, sarcasm the cherry on top.

His arm transformed into the spring of a trap, contracting only to reunite the necessary impulse to fully impact once again on Lavi’s face. A change of route that was a last second decision, ending on his right eye. The pain exploding like colorful stars that tickled even on his fingertips, the floor now cooling the skin that burned with the previous blow as it once again hugged him from his fall.

-There you go. –He sighed with satisfaction. –Fixed. –

Kanda was about to leave it like that, but the redhead started moving again, his naked torso smudged in red like an abstract painting.

It was then when the beast that he kept years taming with every resource he could put his hands on, broke his chains at watching him struggle to defy him again.

-Why would you this to me, Lavi? –He got closer, his shoes making a viscous sound as he stepped on his blood. –I trusted you. I mean…I knew the beansprout would do this sooner or later…but you? –He towered over him, Lavi’s groans of pain annoying him to no end as he saw him cover that stupid golden eye with his right hand.- You, Junior…that I forgave. -He sighed. - After what you did to Alma…and you come to my house…- A kick firm and pointed to his ribs that made him fall the few inches he was managing to lift himself. –…to my bed…-Another that pulled out a louder complaint. The redhead staying down as he tried to protect his head with both arms. – …and fuck my boyfriend? Don’t you think that’s a little bit shitty? HUH, FRIEND? –

-KANDA, STOP! –Cold hands that were holding his arm and pulling him backwards. A scream in a high-pitched voice that held all the agony in the universe, calling him. –STOP IT! – Even when he tried to shake him off, he gripped harder, trying to retain him. - You are going to kill him! Let him go! –
He slapped him away. A movement like a whip that crossed Allen on the cheek and the mouth, splitting his lip. A huge red mark that would settle with the rest of the ones he had on his neck; the back of Yuu’s hand getting wet with his tears.

-Ho! You are defending him, now! -Sarcasm was an understatement. Instead a disdainful venom that feigned endearment. -You want to protect him! –

Now cornered against the mattress, the silver haired held his cheek astonished. Yes, it wasn’t their first argument, but Kanda never before raised his hand against him. Not to mention hitting him.

He looked at him scared, trying to make sure with nervous stares over the other side of the bed if Lavi was at least breathing, knowing how strong his boyfriend could be. A penitent life that lasted forever wouldn’t fit him enough for how he would feel if anything happened to him.

-I’m sorry beansprout but that I won’t stand here to see…-A step towards him that brought memories of the man that took him in. An automatic response of protecting himself, retreating against the furniture.

-I swear to god, man. You touch him and you are dead. –Lavi held him back, his arms twisted around his like a lock that lasted ten seconds. Kanda maneuvering out of it and letting Lavi fall on his back, in front of Allen. The air making bubbles as it tried to get out from his wounded cavity as he crashed the floor.

Kanda shook off the movement. The main fountain of his pain demanding to be named.

-You killed Alma; you piece of shit! You killed her…you are just a monster. Don’t fucking put a hand on me like we were friends. –

A flashback that had Lenalee in the place of the librarian; holding him back so he wouldn’t keep trying to hurt Lavi, who was back then crying beside the open bathroom door of that police station. His hands covering his bleeding nose.

Now, Lavi opened his green eye to see Yuu. His body tired and swollen, his mind fighting with shreds of consciousness to not black out and protect Allen.

-LAVI! LAVI, PLEASE…! -Allen’s voice was over him, near his face. His tears refreshing his hot skin but his sadness a broken glass that cut his remaining lucidity. – Say something to me, Lavi. –A murmur for him, no more.

His hands were shaking, afraid to touch him, tingling over his shoulder. The redhead moved his head to the sound, trying to let him know everything would be ok.

-I guess you deserve each other. A cheating whore and a lying murderer. Quite a pair. –The shortest pulled Lavi as he could on his lap, hugging him to shield him.

“Pieta, but with an angel…I think is from 1867 or something…I suck at art…” The redhead thought, the fight to stay awake getting harder, only his will to be there for Allen what pinned him on to awareness. “I should’ve gone to the museum the first time the panda told me to. I would know more about it by now.”

Irrational thoughts for irrational situations.

-WHAT ON EARTH DOES THAT EVEN MEAN?! –Allen’s voice gained and lost strength like an erratic upsurge on his disengaging ears.
-Oh! He hasn’t told you either?! He killed the love of my life! That’s why he keeps using this stupid thing. -Kanda pulled the eyepatch that he picked up at the couch, throwing it at his chest. -to cover the shame of his failure! At least now you have another use for it, mh? I bet you will have to, with that black eye. –

Allen held to him so strong he was starting to hurt him, but he didn’t mind. His screams danced like fireflies on the water, barely touching the exterior of his mind.

-EXPLAIN YOURSELF! –He could listen how hard he was crying, his body vibrating as his lips moved. Words an abstract senseless mess. The bleeding continued, occupying his mouth and involuntary spilling down his neck, staining the pajama that Allen wore, so close to his chest that he was held and over his lap it dripped.

-Nah. -Yuu shrugged. -Let him tell you. I’m sure it will be quite the story. If he can talk, that’s it. I wasted enough time with you two. –

He rotated on his heels to the door, as if he was just there to deliver some wrongly addressed mail to them. He picked up his bag from the couch as he gave long steps to the exit, slamming the door on his way out.

Allen was shaking more than a scared lap dog, trying to contain his tears as he tried to convince himself to move from his protective hug over Lavi.

-Lavi…-He called for him; his voice shattered. –Lavi, don’t fall asleep on me. Ok, handsome? I need you awake, please? -No response. -Junior? –

He listened to his name, the nickname of Junior evoking painful times and family reprimands.

-Don’t call me that, Snowflake. –He responded in a croak that let out another red puddle. –Not with that pretty mouth of yours. –

-Ok, that’s ok. –His smile was filled with worries and Lavi tried to imagine how bad it was for someone that worked in a bar that all the time had fights, to look at him like that. –But if you really want that I need you to stay awake, yes? For me? –

-For you? –He reached his cheek, the same that Kanda hit, with his stained hand. Allen leaning to his touch, his hand over Lavi’s to keep him there. –Anything. –

The youngest of the pair losing the fight to his weeping, nodding as he remembered the first time he told him that, right outside the door of that apartment. The second day he stayed there.

-You are so stupid… -He cried, a sad laugh and a smile that tried and failed to reassure him. –Just…just don’t die, Lavi. –Completing their phrase, following the memory, Allen broke again in a sob. Grasping what he said. –Please don’t die, you can’t leave me like this. I’ll chase your sorry ass to hell if I must, you have something of mine…-

Lavi laugh a crimson bubble that disappeared on his upper lip.

-That’s terrible. What is that? –

-My heart. –
It was almost six in the morning, one of the longest campaigns they held. Eighteen hours of a quest for the lost weapon of Innocence, the heart of all battles.

Characters sheets on the floor, pencils everywhere, tall drawings and models of how it would be, around the table and dispersed at the apartment between countless props.

-If you throw something less than a fifteen, we are screwed. I just wanted you to know that. –

-Wow, no pressure at all. Thanks dude. –

A light that shined in red and then purple, pulsing without a sound that could fight the epic soundtrack for their epic journey that rumbled over it.

-Guys? –The shortest pointed. –Isn’t that the Level Four alarm? –

The whole party raised their eyes to the source of the light.

-What the…? –Reever’s lollipop stick danced on his teeth, getting to the speaker, setting down the volume.

A muffled hit that barely passed through the carpeted walls.

-It’s your castle, sir, you get the door. –Said an ash-blond man with a makeup eye on his forehead and a colorful striped headscarf, breaking their unanimous silence. A poker face while he drank his tea.

-Ah, great. Awesome. I hope your squad rolls a three. –Johnny walked, putting his apology expression to excuse the sound that, even when he knew it was impossible to hear, the neighbors would be complaining about. The twins that accompanied Wisely screaming at him to throw the dice.

He opened the door, the pounding louder. As if someone wanted to take it down.

-I’m so sorry I know its…Allen?! –

Not even the most bizarre of his plots as a Dungeon Master would prepare him for the sight.

His neighbor, the kind, gentle and almost shy Allen Walker was at his front door; his cheek with a red stripe that crossed the opposite side of his peculiar scar that, in his opinion was pretty cool, shaped like a star and all. He was crying, his hair, longer, now that he was seeing it untied, a mess; his eyes surrounded by a sick red ring. His lower lip open by a wound that seemed to stop bleeding a moment ago, his hands in front of him shaking; stained by a deep red substance as well as the incredible big pajama shirt he wore, that reached three fingers above his knees, like a short dress. As he stood there, barefoot and panting.

-Johnny, thank heavens! Johnny I’m sorry to wake you I need help… I…well… something happened over my place and…I need help to get someone into a car…and… -A frantic talking that left him shocked as in unfolded.

The first thing that crossed his mind was that he was a vampire.
The second was that he accidentally murdered that impolite boyfriend he had, and he needed help disposing the body on a nearby trash tank.

-Yes, of course. –He said, pushing his glasses closer to his face. Either way was fine.

He followed Allen to his flat; a really tall redhead over a small puddle of blood on the floor, shirtless; his neighbor running to his side to lovingly raise his head. Creating questions that he would store at the back of his mind until it was time for him to ask them.

-Lavi, babe? You promised you wouldn’t fall asleep. –Gentle pats on the stranger cheek to wake him up. -My friend Johnny is going to help us get you down to your car, ok? –

-Thanks, Johnny… -The man mumbled, his head now resting at Allen’s chest. Whom held him like he was his own lifeline and a precious but fragile crystal, petting his hair carefully. Making Johnny’s heart melt, always weak for some romance.

-I’ll get some of my crew! –

The trip to the elevator was complicated but getting him in the passenger’s seat of the Maserati, a car designed to show off and be beautiful, was harder. They struggled what seemed to be hours for Allen; his adrenaline making him dance at the edge of the breakdown. Johnny and the rest of the team not letting him help carrying Lavi, as his hands still shook, and he was obviously far beyond tired.

-There he goes. –Reever said, picking another lollipop to replace the one he dropped before.

As soon as the door was closed Allen jumped on the driver seat, immediately turning on the car. A purring sound from the engine that screamed it was time to go.

-Allen, do you know how to drive? –

Without an answer the silver haired speeded into the dark, the morning refusing to arrive. His nerves making him hold with all his strength to the starring wheel, not really a fan for driving.

-I guess he does. –Mumbled Tup, observing Wisely inspect a stain on his favorite shirt.

Allen observed Lavi laying on the reclined seat, his eyes stopping a second on the port as he waited for the phone to charge so he could call Lenalee again.

Before stomping at Johnny’s door, he grabbed the phone and thanked for his memory as he dialed Lenalee’s number.

-Where the fuck have you two been? –She answered in the second ring. Her words out of her teeth in a stress that was only comparable to a mother’s.

-Lenalee, I need help. –He tried to breathe, remembering that once he took a first aid course. The only thing he was capable of doing calling the emergencies services, or simple things that didn’t involve someone slowly blacking out.
“Calm down. Calm down so she can understand you.”

- …What happened? Are you crying? – On the other side of the line, his friend paled, standing up her seat.

-Listen, Kanda arrived tonight…and…and I was with Lavi…and he walk on us sleeping together…-It was hard trying to summarize his night.

-Oh, Allen…- She didn’t want to say “I told you guys so” but she did.

-And…And we had a fight and he said things… and then he punched Lavi and he hurt him… -His voice deteriorated again into wrecked pieces of sobbing. The calm he conjured abandoning him. - And I don’t know what to do, Lena, please, please I need help I don’t want him to die. –

-Allen. Allen, I need you to calm down ok? If you get like this, we can’t help Lavi. - Her voice steady and sister-like. Allen feeling like she was already there with him. – I’m going to ask you a few questions, can you answer that? –

-I think so…-Lavi then coughed, resting against the mattress. Making him start biting his own thumb. The phone held by his shoulder as he used his other hand to push Lavi’s hair out if his face, trying to clean him with his sleeve. –I don’t want him to die Lena, he… -

-Lavi is not going to die, Allen. -She interrupted, a faint urgency in her caring words. -I promise you. He is too stupid for that. –

- That’s true…- A laugh that held him together. He could feel her smile on the other side, satisfied.

-Great. Now, do you have yours or Lavi’s phone close by? So you can leave the house with them and keep talking to me. –

-I don’t know where mine is and Lavi’s…-A reflection near the corner of the bed, the phone under it where Lavi took off his jeans the night they messed everything up. He pressed on the blocking button, a red flashing battery appearing. –Uh… it’s out of battery. –

-It’s ok, Lavi has an emergency charger in his car. He has one ever since high school. Take it with you and charge it in there, then call me. –

- Don’t hang up on me Lena! I still don’t know what to do, please! –

-I’m not going to. Don’t worry. -After he breathe, she continued. -Tell me now, from where is he bleeding? The head? –

-He…uh… Yuu punched him in the face and he started bleeding from the mouth. – The image engraved on his mind.

-Ok, I know it looks like a slasher movie, but it’s most likely he just torn the inner wall of his mouth. It’s not that bad, don’t worry. It’s like he bit himself, ok? Is there anybody that can help you get him down so you can drive to the nearest hospital? –

-I… I think a neighbor… -

- Excellent! I know you don’t want to leave Lavi alone, but it will be just a second. I’ll wait on the line. –
-I can’t believe you look so beautiful even like this. I might rethink my take on fights. –Allen was speeding, the snow making it hard to drive. He raised his eyebrows, pushing again for the phone to turn on. A welcoming screen finally on it.

-Please don’t. –He thought in how he told the redhead he was good at pleading, and how this wasn’t what he meant. –I think you must be hallucinating if you are hitting on me right now. –A quick turn to the left that elevated the car a little. -We are almost there, Lavi. Don’t black out on me. –

-Why? It’s true. Am I still handsome? –Allen smiled, still afflicted. Noticing how he chose not to answer his petition. –I hope so, because damn this really hurts, and I can’t afford losing you now. – A laugh that converted in a cough as he swallowed. –I don’t think I can pull out another fight like that any time soon, to impress you, either. -

-You are still handsome, stupid jerk. –He touched over Lenalee’s name. The dialing sound on the car speakers, then a clicking. –Lena? I’m parking on Hevlaska’s Hospital. Lavi’s still awake and…-

-Hi Lena, don’t say you told me so… -

-Hi dork, I see you are just scaring Allen, since you can talk. And I’m going to punch you as well for that. We’ll see you there Allen! – Two beeps and the call was over. Allen took the phone, the car cooling, stopped at the entry. He opened the door as a crew of paramedics reached there in no time, taking the man he loved most through the crystal doors in a hospital gurney.

-Sir? I’m going to need to ask you some data…? –A blond young woman with pink plumps lips and twin pigtails called him, her uniform giving her away as a nurse.

-Yes! Of course, I just… That’s my…my…-


- …Can I at least park the car, miss? –

-Eliade. –She introduced herself. –I’ll wait for you right here. –

Chapter End Notes

Hi dear readers!
I am very nervous as I post this chapter, I really hope it was what you expected.
I know it won't be for the liking of some of you, but this was what my story was build for. Crybaby is honestly a difficult chapter for me, as I know everything will reach its peak here. Its the climax, I guess.
I never wrote a fighting scene before and I had to check a thousand times for everything to make sense.
At least, if you didn't like it much I just want you to know I did my best. I researched on wounds, effects, classes, music, paitings, drama, poems,Dungeons and Dragons,
FLIGHT HOURS (this maths drove me mad for like a week) and a ton of other things so this would fit perfectly with the rest of the story.
I also want to say, this guys are tailored to be the most human-like I could. And when there is no trust in a relationship people will always end hurt.
I honestly hope you stick with me until the very end, and if you have anything to say I wil be more than glad to read you guys.

Remember, even if this story is for me, I'm really happy to read you, to see how you like this, your kudos or shares. I'm happy to even know you gave this tale a chance.

Sorry to not upload sooner! The topic really made me nervous on your reactions.
So..here we go! Thank you all!
Mrs. Potato Head

Chapter Summary

The storm has past and Allen is now at the Emergencies Room. Will Lavi be alright? Time has lost it sense, but not what he feels for the redhead.

Yuu has a conversation that starts a hurricane of doubt and some unexpected characters get in the picture.

How is everything going to turn out?

Angst, doubts and...you guess right: More angst.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Hospitals weren’t his favorite place to be.

The antiseptic smell, the white endless halls that took you nowhere but to another labyrinthic corner to get lost in; the murmur of the nurses that was nothing but bad omens.

Hospitals were a bad place to be, he was sure about it. Nothing good ever came out of them. They were only a bunch of good people in a cursed building that fought a lost battle against death. Nothing more.

A faint memory of his visits to the hospital as a kid where his stepfather took him reluctantly after a trick or two that didn’t turn out as they should, tickled the back of his mind. His right wrist tingling with the past, the puncturing pain of a lesion that never healed properly; and that, when it was cold or it was about to rain, munched on his nerves reminding him that the past wasn't something you could toss in a shoe box under your bed and forget about. The past would always be with you, no matter how fast you ran, no matter how well you hid; it would eventually find you. Whenever you are weak enough to let it spit you on the face. Whenever you are defenseless.

Sometimes the past was like an old injury. It didn’t matter that you forgot about it and thought you were fine. Someday, you would be lifting something in a particular way and your nerve would get twisted just right to be wrong; and the pain would be there again. To remind you, it never really left.

Allen was staring at his hands again, absently; when a tiny buzz broke the silence with a question that he didn’t listen but was followed by a cough he knew well.

It was the sound of the puritans.

The non-vocal accent of a person that disapproves everything you are but is just *too polite* to tell you. The only song the outcasted know better than their own reflection. The language of the odd and the outsiders. The noise that he associated more to himself than his own name until he was almost a man. The way people used to call him until he was…

“Useful enough.” The voice of his stepfather said, making him turn lastly to the person that
conjured it.

It was an older woman, wrinkles on every corner of her severe face. She was dressed in black, and soon, Allen recognized the habit of a nun in her clothes. Her tiny black eyes judging him over her thin and oval glasses, which almost seemed to melt on her skin as the frame transformed them into an almost invisible shadow. Her pointy nose moved emphasizing her side, where a kid sat next to her and was watching him nervously now and then in an intermittent dance of pupils that almost seemed like a more complicated Morse code.

Allen tried to understand why she was looking at him like that, his mind trapped on a treadmill that only ran on his fear for the redhead, who he still wasn’t allowed to see; his state a mystery. His gray eyes moved rapidly over her features trying to understand her discomfort; until a warm hand touched his knee, almost making him jump on his seat.

- …Walker. –He faced the blonde nurse that received them; his hands tight and sweaty around Lavi’s phone. –Are you cold? We have some spare clothes from a patient or two that might fit you.

- “Patients that died.”

His mind whispered as he looked into those deep blue eyes whom not only wore pity but also worry. A steel knot that descended from his throat and sank on his stomach like an anchor, falling with every breath; slowly and painfully descending as it destroyed his insides. Keeping him still.

She blinked and an apologetic smile appeared in her pretty pink lips, her long black lashes like a fan of feathers. She was really pretty; and Allen thought on how he never saw a pretty nurse before. Only grumpy old women that were borderline mean to him.

The doors to the emergency waiting room opened again and a cold breeze entered to remind him the reason why the nun was judging him and why Eliade’s hand was so warm over his knee. He switched to stare at his own legs, naked and pale with drops of blood, his feet dirty and numb as he was barefoot. Everything bringing back the absurdity and gruesome impression of his whole outfit. He was wearing only his underwear and Lavi’s shirt, which, by now, was more blood than shirt and would be not only hard but almost impossible to clean. His mind made a quick detour on how it was his fault and how he should wash it or buy him another one; an etiquette manner that stayed with him like an involuntary tic of the brain. And when this simple, faded detail of his forgotten normal life arrived, so did the shame; making him tug from the end of the shirt, trying to cover a little more of himself. The awareness soaking him in the fire of embarrassment. Red tainting every visible part of his face and neck.

Frustration was a senseless and stupid emotion that hit him on the cheek, the idea of looking worse than a hot mess mixed with a murder making him feel like crying. The phone was now on his lap, Allen forgetting everything about that little technology rectangle that offered him nothing but some ridicule comfort of feeling that something from the redhead was with him. His knuckles white with the strength he unnoticeable was exercising on the action.

-It’s ok. I’m going to bring them to you, and you can go to the bathroom and freshen up a little; ok? Everything is going to be right. –

Her voice was so gentle that the silver haired didn’t dare to speak. The tears strangling him as he nodded, drops falling over the back of his hands like lost rain.

“Such a crybaby…” Yuu repeated in a monotone inside his brain as the shame possessed him. And he bit his lip trying to stop the scream inside him, crying quietly like life taught him to do.
Eliade didn’t take long, kneeling again in front of him to deliver the neatly folded clothes she gathered for him, as well as a pair of slippers from the hospital.

She touched his left kindly, making him tense as he looked to the floor.

-Thanks. –He whispered, the tears leaving a mark against his tired skin. Allen stopped crying already, exhausted and in a manner the nurse recognized as the edge of a catatonic state she hoped he could avoid.

-I’m going to check on your boyfriend. –The blonde whispered warmly, trying to make him feel better without knowing the consequences of the word she picked. –

“If he was your boyfriend in the first place nothing of this would had happen. It was the fact that you couldn’t act like a man and choose, what hurt him. What put him in this place. In the house of death.”

Allen hugged the clothes feeling like a dagger was playing with the arteries that maintained his heart floating on his chest, threatening to sever the ties that kept him alive. The guilt taking turns with the shame to wash his spirit away.

-If you want to, you can change in the bathroom. –She pointed the place, careful that he followed the direction of her finger. –You can use as much water as you need or lock the place, there isn’t much people, and Mother Superior here is going upstairs to a visit soon, so you are free to be on your own. –

He nodded, not wanting to face her after the word played on his ears.

Still, Allen remained sitting on his place when Eliade walked to the counter, where two other nurses were talking in harsh whispers that he could listen, but he acted as he didn’t.

After a few minutes he ventured into the bathroom. Doing exactly as Eliade told him to; locking the door behind him after checking the other stalls.

He looked at his reflection and a stranger looked back at him.

Allen never appeared more than roughly twenty, but right then his reflection called him over the thirty-something he didn’t have or know. His skin as pale as the dead, the scar in a sick pink that reminded him of how livestock was branded. His lips were a single red line that guessed where his mouth was, a ring like a piercing over them were it was split; and his eyes were swollen and red with deep bags and dark circles. A cadaver that was resuscitated few minutes prior his encounter with the mirror. Abandoned by the necromancer that, in the last minute, decided he wasn’t worth the shot. His hand marked over his despicable face like a failure.

His hair was also a mess and he could understand why the nun was so preoccupied with his appearance; as he could bet that poor child would have nightmares in the best case and childhood trauma in the worst, that was all about him.

Allen waited patiently for the words that would slap him with the knowledge of his participation on how Lavi got injured, but the voice that tormented him never arrived. He stared vacuously, his eyes on the ones of his reflection; dissociation of who he was making him float in a sea of nothing. It was a person that he didn’t know. A painting that moved slowly and without any tangible
And there he realized that the reason why the voice wasn’t there was because he agreed with it. He knew it was his fault and he hated himself for doing it. There wasn’t a reminder because he didn’t need it. There wasn’t a discussion because the argument didn’t exist.

He was the reason why Lavi was so, oh, so terribly hurt.

He, and nobody else.

Slowly, he cleaned himself as well as he could, moving in impossible ways to reach to places that a sink wasn’t designed for.

He put on the pair of gray sweatpants and the oversized black hoodie with the logo of a rival school he barely remembered. The slippers hugging his feet like the only bliss in that accursed place. He tried to comb his hair, but as he didn’t have anything from his usual routine it curled in lazy waves that made it look shorter. Allen sighed, quitting his intent, and patiently folded Lavi’s shirt and put it in the plastic bag the nurse gave him.

After what felt like a million years for him, he managed to drag himself out of the bathroom, his steps silent whispers that could be ignored with ease.

-Eliade, you know we have to call him. –

-I know. But… You saw the kid. He is destroyed. I don’t think he is only a friend or a student or… -The blonde replied, anxiously.

-But he is not his family, Eliade. You know the clan of that ginger are heavy people in this city and you are going to allow a complete stranger beside his bed instead of his own grandfather? –

Allen stayed on his place, listening but disconnected from the fact that he wasn’t hiding but in plain sight. If one of them turned at least a little, they would spot him without work.

-Chomesuke, back me up, please. – He saw Eliade gesture a cute and small brunette that was holding a clip board.

-Just give him a minute Sara… Is clear as crystal that he loves him. Wouldn’t you want to be allowed by the side of the man you love for at least a minute? To know he is ok? –Her voice was childish but full of an empathy that confused him. Since he never even talked with her before.

-The doctor isn’t supposed to tell him if… - Sara was just a little older than Eliade and Chomesuke, her face toughed up by a cold responsibility that she was starting to doubt. Two twin curls dancing separately over her forehead. Her lips twisted in a taupe lipstick indecision.

-You don’t know that. –Eliade said in a tone that tasted like scheme. –He could be his fiancé, for all you know. -

-You can’t say they aren’t family. –The other agreed, writing on the blank spaces that Allen left. - Maybe he really is his boyfriend, maybe they are engaged, and something went wrong and that’s why he isn’t wearing a ring and… come on Sara! –The youngest brunette was speaking quickly, making up a story that almost made him smile.

Him, engaged with the redhead?

“What a stupid idea. You don’t deserve that. You know it, don’t you? Or are you so self-centered
that you can't even see how you screwed up that man's life?"

-Excuse me. –He called as loud as he could. Which was not much with all the screaming he did
hours before. –Is…is my… - “Don’t you dare to say boyfriend. He is not even your friend. Friends
don’t allow what you did.” – Is Lavi ok? Can I see him? –

The three stared at him at the same time, making Allen hug tighter the bag with the redhead’s shirt
as well as his phone. He wouldn’t know but to the three of them, he looked like a lost puppy whose
only person in the world has abandoned him.

In three separated chests a respective heart crumpled with compassion. A non-spoken agreement
that didn’t even require looking at each other.

-Yes, of course. He is stable now. –Said Sara, smiling softly. –Chomesuke will take you to his
room. But you must know he is sedated, so he might not respond to you. This is normal. –

She sounded like a teacher and Allen nodded obediently.

“All I can see is he is alright.”

-The doctor will explain the details to you. But I assure you, you don’t have to worry. –

Chomesuke and Allen walked through the silent hallways; and even when she was speaking all the
way up to the room, the silver haired couldn’t help but listen only to his pounding heart, that
pumped against his ears like a drunk man demanding to be let inside a closed ice cream shop.

-I’ll leave you to the doctor and then you two will have some time alone. –She said with a light
blush that could or could be not just her natural color that seemed too bright against the dead
appearance of Allen. –Then we have to call Lavi’s grandfather; have you met him? –

The color seemed to find back the path to his face as he blushed furiously with the comment of the
redhead’s family. Whom almost saw them kissing against a corridor in their museum…

-I…I haven’t. –Was all he could articulate. –

-That’s ok. He is a very nice man. Don’t be nervous. –And with that she left. Leaving Allen with
dormant nerves and a twisted stomach that threatened with lies.

The doctor didn’t take long, and Allen had to blink twice as he reminded him of Bak in an uncanny
way. With the same blond hair and eyes, without the Asian undertones of his friend, but in his nice
forties, or better and amazingly preserved fifties. He was as tall as Lavi and it was maybe his
similitude with Bak what made him feel so small against him.

-I’m doctor Edgar, I understand that you are this young man’s partner…? –He finally looked at
him after reading the sheet, his eyes widening in surprise. – Allen? Are you Allen Walker? –

Allen stared at him confused. Why was his name strange to him? He wrote it on that same paper he
was reading and which Eliade gave him to fill when Lavi was just hospitalized. Was it because
they didn’t look like family? Was it his hair? His scar? His hand?

-Yes? Is…is that a problem? –It was a stupid question, but he couldn’t think in something else to
say, eager and nervous to know about Lavi’s condition. The idea of meeting his grandfather in those conditions still poking at his worries. His tone wasn’t more than an odd apology that Edgar listened with confusion and a strange, parental guilt.

-What? No! No, of course. It’s just that… -The man seemed to consider his words and sighed brushing it away; recovering his professional composure. –Never mind, as I was saying… your partner will be ok. Eliade told me he was in a fight and everything got nasty. But don’t worry, he has only a mild contusion and a wound inside the walls of his mouth that needed two or three stitches. But he will be alright. -His voice was kind and patient and Allen felt like crying all over again. –In fact, I bet he will be out of here tomorrow, so don’t be sad, yes? –

He smiled at him, touching his cheek to clean a single tear that escaped the younger’s control. An involuntary gesture that was nothing but the reaction of a father that wanted to protect a kid that was around his own child’s age. Even if both were already men.

-I’ll leave you alone, then. I bet he will be happy to see you beside him when he wakes up, Allen. –

Edgar walked out of the room, not before pulling a chair near the silver haired. He closed the door behind him and pulled out his phone to make the call that would stir the honeycomb.

-Bak, son, isn’t your friend’s name Allen Walker? The pretty one with white hair and a star scar on that photo of your birthday? –He waited for his response on the other side and nodded to the nothing. –Well, I just talked with him. He is here in the hospital and… -

Inside, the doctor’s diagnosis was the only thing Allen listened; the words like medicine for his wounded soul. He sighed as he let himself drop on the chair beside the bed. A tiny refresh that did nothing against the sudden fatigue he was overwhelmed with. He had both of his elbows resting over the bed, one of his hands pushing back his hair, making the star scar perfectly visible; the other holding Lavi’s phone.

He unlocked the device, afraid of losing a call that wasn’t there yet. His heart aching as he discovered a photo of them together as his lock screen. Not noticing before in all the rush. Allen observed the picture, a masochist pain that relieved his anxiety for about three seconds before hurting awfully. There, he was asleep at Lavi’s shoulder while he had the million-pounds winner smile, resting his cheek against his hair. A peace sign close to the camera. Both illuminated by a yellow light that, together with the background situated the photo on his room back on the apartment. Probably the first or second time they slept in the same place.

Did he love him back then? Did he always do, or it was a mistake of a moment? Did he deserved to be in that hospital bed only because of it?

Allen wanted to hold Lavi’s hand but resisted, afraid of waking him up or messing with the machine that monitored his heartbeat.

No. Even if he loved him since the very first time.

The lock screen disappeared with a swift of his finger, leaving him with a more painful picture. It was a photograph of him, smiling while they were holding hands. Lavi wasn’t visible, but his hand with his silver rings was intertwined with his; his arm getting lost in the screen as the point of view. Allen was wearing his yellow sweater and he already had his bandana, slightly crooked to
the right; the recently bought milkshake on his free hand.

“It should’ve been you, instead.” His mind whispered. “The one in this bed.”

Lavi didn’t deserve that.

-I screwed everything up, Lavi. I am so sorry… -A pair of lonely, fat tears that slowly dropped to disappear in the bed fell from his tired eyes. -It’s my fault that Yuu hurt you. –He didn’t know if the redhead could hear him. As far as he was concerned, he was sleep. The sedatives making their job. His voice was low and painful, indecisive if any other tone was acceptable for a sleeping man.

-And I love you so, so much…so badly… I never should’ve kissed you. This is my fault. I’m sorry, handsome. –

He got up enough to kiss him in the cheek, the touch like a butterfly stepping on his skin; invisible. Allen sat again at his side, touching his finger faintly, resting his head on the mattress and wishing he could only close his eyes and open them to see him being perfectly fine. No bruises, no black eye, no pain. Only him and that smile that made him weak in the knees. A wish that seemed like too much, but it was worth trying.

At Lenalee’s apartment, the girl was throwing a coat over his brother’s sleeping face.

-What? When? IS SOMEONE BOTHERING YOU, LENALEE?! –He woke up abruptly, almost falling from his bed.

-Get up, silly. We have to go to the hospital; Allen is waiting for us. –

The man put on his glasses, confusingly starting to dress up, an automatic response from someone that was always late for work.

-Wha-why? – Wearing a pair of sneakers, he found nearby, his coat already on. Komui observed his younger sister walk from a side to the other of their flat, getting her hair up in her signature pigtails.

-Because Lavi and Kanda had a fight and I’m sure you know how that ends. –Komui tried to understand the story, his face a comedic and disbelieving expression of confusion. –Hurry! I don’t want to leave him waiting, he must be a mess! –

-Ain’t those two always fighting? –He helped her with her jacket, the keys rattling on her pocket as she reached for them. Komui rubbing his left eye under his glasses as he yawned.

-He is in the hospital, brother. I bet it wasn’t one of their “playful-friendly” fights. You know how Kanda can be… -She opened the door, a startled Japanese that didn’t lose his cool for long, behind it. -… sometimes. -Lenalee immediately changed her expression to a welcoming and polite smile. -Hi. –

“Speak of the devil…”

-Hi. –He said, his hair in his perfect ponytail. Not a single hair out of place that made him look like just punched the lights out of his mutual friend as well as leaving his boyfriend an emotional wreck. -Can I talk to you for a second? –
She observed him silently for a minute as if he was speaking in a foreign language; thinking on everything Allen said on the call that seemed far away by then. That until Kanda’s eyebrow raised, the translator on his brain working with a click. Urging a response.

-Yes! Yes of course! –Lenalee crashed with her brother who was behind her, the guy trying to hide his surprise as everything unfolded.

-Were...you going out somewhere, this late at night? –Yuu asked, pointing at her purse and outfit. She had black and thick stockings, a plaid skirt in cappuccino with black lines, a white and soft sweater under an aviator jacket on sand suede. Her boots clicked when she moved; Lenalee looking at her brother for help.

-It’s morning, Kanda. –Komui smiled after a blink. Lifting his left wrist, he tapped at his watch’s glass. His sister grateful for the speed of a genius that when stars aligned, was there for her. – About seven o clock in the morning, actually. Did you have a nice trip back here? –

-Right. –He dismissed Komui, like every time he visited his friend; used to his presence like someone would be with a particularly annoying pet. -Were you going to work? I don’t want to impose. –

-No! It’s fine. –A nervous laugh that she waved away. –We were just going for coffee! Go ahead brother, you...you have to leave early to work, anyway! –Lenalee pushed him out, taking Kanda by the arm easily. The man stepping inside their home.

-I have? –He asked, staring at how they held, the knowledge of his sentimental situation doing nothing to the worry he felt for any man; sure that they would want to take advantage of his sweet little sister. Specially someone like him. With his temper and history.

-Yes! You have. -His sister stressed. -Now leave. Tell...uhm tell the guys I say hi. –She looked at him in the special way sisters do, asking for him to leave to the hospital without words. Pleading for a favor that he had no word on.

-Oh, yes! I’ll tell them you’ll swing by soon. –Lenalee smiled grateful, mouthing a “thank you” as she closed the door.

Komui sighed, checking his phone for the closest route to hospital.

-The things I have to do...-

Kanda drank from tea that Lenalee offered him. A long and uninterrupted gulp that made the girl more nervous as the time ticked away.

She observed the clock over the door, its ticking passing quickly; every second that it marked a second absent from her emotionally destroyed friend. And Lavi. She was also worried for Lavi, but she was more upset with the fact that she warned him time after time about what would happen if he messed it up. How Allen was easy to wound and how he should do everything right if he wanted to be with him.

But did he listen? No. He never did.

And now they both were broken, for her to pick up after them. Like forgotten dolls.
I punched Lavi. –Yuu suddenly spoke, breaking her from her thoughts. The cup still near his lips.

Lenalee blinked twice, trying to figure if he said that or it was just her imagination.

-Excuse me? –She asked, her hands now on the table.

- I said, I punched Lavi. –He repeated. Establishing visual contact. Nothing that could tell Lenalee that he regretted it. –I hit him twice in the face and I also kicked him, while he was on the floor. If you see him soon, he will probably have some stitches inside his mouth and a black eye. At least. –He shrugged. –Oh, and I might have smacked Allen…but that was an accident. –

A truth from the beginning to the end. The girl sighed, worn out from being in the middle of her two high school friends ever since the accident.

-Oh, Kanda. –A deep sigh. –Why would you ever do that? –

She knew about the fight. She knew how terrible everything was and how destroyed he left Allen. She knew. And yet, she sat there and listened to the second part of a three-piece story; that she wished it never happened in the first place.

Kanda laid back on the chair, looking at the ceiling. The adrenaline was gone now and even if he still was upset with his friend, he found himself feeling the clear tingle of shame munching on the lower part of his stomach, confessing to Lenalee in those blurting words. His hands started to sweat in the way they did when he was young, and he had to tell Tiedoll why everything in his study was upside down after he and Marie played inside it and made a mess.

Like now.

Except Marie wasn’t there. And that was all his doing.

-I found him and the beansprout sleeping together…-He started, feeling her attentive stare over him but refusing to meet it. –They were really close, and Junior was missing his shirt. I just figured…-

-Wait. They…they were sleeping? –When Allen said the same thing on the call, she figured it was about sex. But as Kanda stated it, her disbelief mixed within his nerves in confusion. Careful to not let him see he already talked with Allen few moments before.

-Yeah, that’s what I said. -

Lenalee, held back the urge to slam his head against the table. All that drama for sleeping together? She was about to dismiss everything, but her memory gifted her with the image of Allen and Lavi together. How they looked into each other eyes. How they touched, how they talked to each other. And how neither of them answered her calls.

Maybe they weren’t doing it…but that didn’t mean they didn’t before.

-So, you hit him? – She continued, trying to pull away from the very easy image of those two together.

-No. I hit him because…-Kanda got silent as the words lost sense in his mind. Why did he do it? –Because…-Talking wasn’t something he enjoyed. Because when he did…-…because I felt like he was taking something that is mine. –

He had to listen to himself.
Allen is not a thing, Kanda. –Lenalee said, firmly and in a low tone that he recognized. –You don’t own him. And you know that… -

-Lavi took Alma away from me. –He continued; his voice bitter. A truth serum on that tea for all he cared. –He took away the only person I ever loved. She was everything to me…She was my light… -

Kanda was crushing the cup with his hold as his voice cracked. The pain back again, screaming for him to summon some rage, so it could be soothed in a horrible way. In the only way.

Letting the steam out.

The memories of Alma smiling, of Alma holding his hand and kissing it, of her gifting him awfully looking cookies, or how her apologetic laugh appeared every time she tripped, showed up. Only to push and melt into how she looked, her eyes open to the nothing as crimson tainted her beautiful blond hair.

Now, a teenage Lavi, his face smudged in dirt and blood. One eye green and one yellow; a mongrel asking to be let inside.

His lips were trembling when he spoke those terrible words.

“I'm sorry Yuu. I knew…”

A flash of red that tainted his mind once again.

-AND HE KNEW THAT AND YET…! –

Lenalee touched his left, her fingers cold but sure. An anchor to real life.

-And yet you know it was an accident, Kanda. You can’t keep doing that, my dear. – He sat again, not realizing when did he stood. A silence that ticked only with the clock and his agitated breath. -I don’t mean to be rude. But…do you love him? –

Kanda blinked slowly; his hand now held by his friend. His expression didn’t change, but he remained silent as he tried to understand if she was talking about the redhead or not. Until she squeezed his hand, logic existing as a lit match on the cavern of his mind.

-Allen? –He muttered.

What kind of question was that? Of course, he did. Why was she…?

-Do you? –She pressed.

-Yes… -

-Sure? Do you love him every day? From when he wakes up until he is asleep? When you see him smiling and when he cries about the silliest things? When he spends hours at the bath or when he is rushing over the counter with a handsome costumer talking to him as he only tries to work? – Kanda quickly looked at her with a cold stare, feeling threatened; and even when she knew how risky it was to upset him further, she persisted. -Do you love him even now? When you found him in the arms of whom was your best friend? -

-Is. – He stated, correcting her. –He still is… my best friend. –Words that died quietly. –
“Do I love him, even now?”

Lenalee smiled tenderly.

-Then I must tell you, I have to go visit your best friend now…-She stood up, walking towards the door. –You are welcome to stay as long as you want, if you don’t want to be back to your place… -

-I think… I’ll stay in a hotel… for a bit. –He said, the question running in circles that lost their way between flashes of his better times with Alma. Times… that weren’t there anymore.

Lavi wasn’t one for prayers.

What kind of god would leave his creation unattended to suffer? To die? What kind of almighty would chose to torture over saving?

God was for dreamers. God, if there was ever one, was dead by now.

His conscience cavorted around the darkness, walking in a suspended space where time was a joke; asking for him to surrender to nothing, as long as he kept falling in that place. Where nothing hurt and no one was there.

If that was the end of the world, or the end of his world… god wasn’t there.

- …And I love you so, so much… so badly… - A voice said, echoing in the vacuum.

His eyelashes trembled, recognizing the sound and unfortunately, the god that loved to torture his creation, came. To answer the question, he didn’t mean to ask.

The pain like a melting icicle; the arms of the invisible fire invading slowly his body, thawing away the soothing and protective layer of medicament he had before. A weight that shifted in the boat he was in the middle of nowhere, the waves asking him to open his eyes to face the real life.

“Just a little bit longer.”

His own thought resonating with his words from hours before. The pain clawing on his chest, expanding over his bruised ribs.

The face of a silver haired angel that smiled over his chest before everything hurt. The pressure of his lips over his; the delicate trace of his different colored hand, that touched around his eye, looking for the differences that made them both so similar. So unique to each other.

- … I love you so, so much… - His mouth moved; his eyes transparent with truth.

A stinging ache that managed to climb into his eye, pulsating, agonizing. A throbbing mass of what it was before.

- Why would you do this to me, Lavi? – Yuu asked, an echo of their fight.

Lost, he tried to breathe, the boat of his unconsciousness sinking rapidly. The weight of the world, sitting over his lungs. So hard to keep the air in, so hard to push it out.

“I have to wake up now.”
A deafening sound of a whistle that sounded inside his head; the blindness of the white light.

- Hey, it’s ok. It’s ok mister… You are in a hospital. You are safe. – A constant beeping, everything regaining shape as an abstract that only needed your time so it could readjust to your sight. He read the name tag, but it didn’t mean anything, only one thing he cared about.

- Allen… - The redhead murmured to the intern nurse, who shot him the most pitiful look he ever seen. But he endured it, the strength inside him only allowing one point of focus. – Where…? –

- He is outside. Don’t worry, try to rest. – She checked a few things beside him, twisting here and there, a renewed liquid of mercy that flooded his veins; allowing him to exist for a little longer. – There. That’s better, isn’t it? –

The brunette left, her front bangs up with a single pin, like a nymph bird; other two framing her slim face. He didn’t listen to anything but the clicking of the door. Not her talking to Allen or anybody, not somebody steps rushing to his side. A doubt then bit him, as if his pain wasn’t enough: What if he wasn’t there, to start with? Nurses are merciful creatures, and pity was all what he found in those brown eyes. A white lie wouldn’t hurt him, she probably thought. Medicine for the body, medicine for the soul.

“Would that be so bad?”

- How is he? – It was Lenalee. He tried to incorporate, but his body was just too heavy to move.

- The doctor said he is going to be fine. – His voice was tired and slow, but he recognized it immediately; a wounded hummingbird slamming at the cardboard walls of his heart with the sound. – He… It was a pretty hard punch. But Kanda didn’t hurt him permanently…-

Allen spoke with a pain he could feel on his skin. And as the beeping of his heart reflected on the machine, he tried to raise his right arm; dead with numbness over the mattress. Motionless.

- It’s ok Allen. Hey… hey it’s ok. – Lavi felt like someone was pulling his nerves from inside his palms. Like a sculpture of clay that has the skeleton removed to build another creature. He knew that tone. And the hummingbird inside him agitated its wings faster, trying in vain to be let free to find him. Only damaging its wings as the box remained between its goal. He knew his lover was crying.

His mouth opened, but his voice was now lost in the Styrofoam that founded a nest inside his throat.

“If there is a god… please don’t let him cry. Not for me. I swore I wouldn’t make him cry… please.”

But as he thought, there wasn’t any. At least, not any to respond. Not when you needed them.

- I thought he was going to die, Lenalee. I thought… - His sobbing was now audible and Lavi prayed one more time to the nothing. Louder to deaf ears.

- I know. I know sweetie. – Allen made a whimpering noise and the redhead managed to twist enough to see their silhouettes on the blurred glass.

“I’m the one who should be saying that.”

- Yuu… Yuu said so horrible things… and… he said… he said Lavi killed his ex-girlfriend and I just… - A snort that contrasted with his crying; he could picture that pretty face suffering and Lavi
felt like that was truly his personal hell. Stuck without being able to hold him, to talk to him, to
even see him clearly. What a terrible place to be in…-Why would he say that? Lavi could never… -

-Oh Allen… -His blood froze as Lenalee spoke. The continuity of that sentence a verdict against his
neck. –I think you have to ask that to Lavi yourself… -

Suddenly, there was just silence. And Lavi wondered if he fell asleep again, or if it was just the
fear of facing what made him a monster. To confess that terrible thing…that made him such a
terrible friend.

“Oh no.”

The seconds couldn’t pass faster, the door opened and there he was. Lavi thought that he would be
upset, but even when the tears still had their mark all over his face a smile slowly got painted over
his lips.

It was not the smile he gave him the first time they played. It was not like that one that he made
when he told him he loved him. Not even close to the one when he asked him for a second time.
Not the tender one of being there when he woke up.

No. This one was the smile of the love over the storm. Of someone who has lost everything and
yet, has everything he needs right there. And Lavi’s heart sunk, as he thought in how hurtful it will
be to tell Allen…that he didn’t deserve that love. To tell him that he was the one that messed
everything up.

-Hello, handsome. I’ve missed you horribly. –He touched his hand and for the second time, Lavi
wondered how badly wounded he is. His voice a cracked whisper. Allen sat beside his bed and as
the light hit his skin, Lavi noticed a red mark over his cheek. The sound of how Yuu smacked him
returning to his ears like the ghost of his worst mistake.

-Allen… - He muttered; his mouth dry. Trying to touch his face. He let him do, resting against his
touch as his tears fall once again.

-I was so scared, Lavi. I…-He bit his lip, that immediately started bleeding again; split just where
the hit reached it. Lavi hated being unable to do anything but look at him. –I bet you want some
water, don’t you? –He whispered now with a sad smile.

Lavi agreed; the water washing the metallic taste that his own blood left, a sting inside his cheek
that hurt as it passed. His tongue feeling like a resuscitated plant. The numbness leaving it like
tender tide.

-Thanks. –Allen carefully tucked strands of his hair behind his ears and Lavi felt the urge to cry
now, knowing how disaster looked like just before it stroked. –Allen…I have to tell you…about
Alma. I meant to tell you before but…-

-I know. –He cut him, nodding. –Kanda said you killed her, but I could never believe such… -

-It’s true. –His gray eyes were like storm clouds, making him regret what he said. Lavi inhaled
deep, trying to gather the courage he needed to keep talking. –

Allen didn’t say anything, his lips stained with the blood the wound left. He remained there, his
hand on his as he slowly sat again. His eyebrows furrowed as he listened to him. Waiting.

“At least he didn’t leave right away…”
-You see…some years ago, Yuu had a girlfriend. Her name was Alma. She was the nicest girl I ever met, but don’t say that to Lenalee. –Allen smiled a little and Lavi thought that maybe, not everything was lost. –Back then we were on high school…and…I had a lot of issues with my grandpa…with life. –

Lavi recalled how he ended up in the same school that Yuu and Lenalee. He was expelled from his last private one, for a joke that involved a lot of glue and everything that was at his mercy. He remembered how Alma was kind and how Lenalee invited him to join them. He could even remember Yuu…

-It was a long time ago, you see…I hated going to school but I loved having a good time. It didn’t matter to me… -He turned his eyes to the ceiling, unable to face Allen with his next statement. –Boys…girls…whatever. It didn’t matter. As long as I had fun. But Yuu…Yuu adored Alma. He even smiled with her. Can you imagine that? He? Smiling? It’s so weird now, it seems like a dream… -

Allen tried to ignore the grievance that seemed to be wrapping his heart at the mention of Lavi having meaningless relationships. Regardless, he smiled when the green eye looked at him as he spoke. Jealousy, for Allen, was not only unfair to his soul, but cruel; as it always brought back the favorite saying of his stepfather.

“No one will ever love you as you are. No one will love you if you’re unattractive. And if they do, let me tell you kid, it won’t be for long.”

-Back then…I didn’t use the eyepatch. I was just a kid with different colored eyes. If anything, it just helped me pick up girls and guys. It didn’t mean anything. We had a year together and we were all pretty good friends. I usually hanged out with Lenalee and Yuu but Alma…Alma was more like…my best friend girlfriend, you know? She wasn’t anything more than… -Realizing his mistake, the redhead looked at his lover, his gray fixed on the covers. -No, Allen…You…you are nothing like Alma. I…I’ve loved you since the first time. When you arrived that night when we met…and let me hold your hand…I…-

-It’s ok Lavi, what happened? – A smile that didn’t reach his eyes.

A small pause to the tale. Ready…set…

-She was someone distant, her private space something I respected to the point we greeted each other from afar with a wave. Until that day. –The silver haired turned to see him at last, an expression of destructive anxiety. –It was instinctive. She tripped…and I held her by the arm. And I saw… -

It was a small car and Lavi thought it was a shame that he wasn’t allowed to have one. He remembered it was shiny blue, as if they just washed it before that trip. It was nothing special, just some teenagers travelling from a place to another. Yuu was the last to get inside, and they all joked about how Alma would have to carry him. They were laughing, Lenalee and him waved as they left. Everything was normal, until it wasn’t.

- …I saw a car crashing. It was stupid. Someone crossed on the red light and it hit the car by its corner. It was really small…so it turned…and turned until it was just a mess of twisted iron and blood. –He didn’t notice when his tears started flowing, his sight fixed on the ceiling, where he didn’t have to face Allen, again. -I ran to the door where Yuu was supposed to be…but he was dead. He was dead, Allen. His head crushed against the pavement and his blood soaking my shoes as it kept pouring out of his brain. Alma was a knot of broken limbs; her eyes were open…her
clothes were torn…It was so graphic…so clear. –His voice broke and he felt how the other tried to reassure him by the touch. –And then I blinked…and she was there. There all were there. Asking me why I was crying. I ran to the restroom and puked. And…my life went to shit. –

Lavi shrugged, trying to keep his composure. Even when he was shaking.

-Days later I saw the car and saw Yuu trying to get in. Lenalee was laughing but I…I panicked. I tried to talk to him, I tugged him from his clothes, I plead…I screamed at him that I didn’t want him to leave. It wasn’t like I wanted Alma to die but…I…I thought that…If I managed to convince Yuu to leave with me…the vision wouldn’t be the same and she…they would…-

He recalled the accident. The car crashed, the same way he saw it in his vision. There were no survivors and he had to pull Yuu away from the corpse of Alma, whose blood was now all over his friend, as he tried to hug her once more. The screaming was something that was until that day branded to his soul.

That horrible screaming that mixed with his sobbing and the anger.

They were picked up by the police, their declaration a tortuous process where they were separated and asked over and over again what happened. By the third time, Lavi was starting to feel dizzy.

He walked to the hallway, to a restroom; a headache caressing his brain in a highway to a migraine. He pushed his hand against his green eye, trying to fade it into something more bearable but as he walked, he got lost at the wrong corner.

Lavi remembered asking a woman for the right direction, and how her image morphed into a weeping woman that held a dead, swollen baby. He looked over a policeman, that suddenly had a shot on the middle of his chest but was talking like nothing happen, blood pouring like a fountain. The woman asked him if he was ok and he removed his hand of his eye, the image disappearing in a distorted veneer, like life was a 3D picture and he wasn’t wearing his respective glasses.

“Yes” He said, pronouncing the first lie that would carry him to a road paved with good intentions, but missing truths. He managed to tumble down the hall to the restroom, were he saw himself at the mirror, the understanding hitting him like a mixed drink.

He was responsible for that. He was the only person that knew that it would happen…and he did nothing.

Lavi recalled Yuu getting inside the bathroom and how he tried to explain. His words running over each other and how his expression switched. How awfully hot was being inside his body while his friend suffocated him, his hands around his neck, his own tears falling and refreshing his skin as everything started to get dark.

“-You are just a monster! –“

-After I told Yuu about my vision he got so upset that he punched me in the nose and then he choked me…Lenalee broke us apart but…He was right. I killed her. If I just had the damn balls to speak, she wouldn’t…I wouldn’t…-Lavi sighed, closing his eye. –I don’t know Allen. It’s all my fault. I destroyed the only person he loved. After that…I couldn’t get rid of that thing…of my eye. Every person I see is a future I don’t want to know and that’s why I started to use the eyepatch. –

-I’m sorry, Lavi…I asked you to take it off…and see me. I bet you saw some… –

-What’s weird is that…when I’m around you…all I can see, is you. Your present, with me. That’s
all. You and me…-

Yuu’s words came back to the shorter now. Poisoned needles directly to his veins that he meant to pull out quickly, like a band aid.

Before it was too late.

-About what Yuu said…-He interrupted him, afraid to being cornered by a love confession that would coward him into lying to him. –Do you remember that? That…that I was a… -The words were hard, but he swallowed the fear. A truth for a truth. –A whore? –

-Yeah. –Lavi stared, trying to see his point.

-It’s true. –He sighed, feeling like a witch in front of Salem’s trials. –It’s true as well. I…my stepfather…Cross. He is…he likes to gamble and drink, but he hates to pay so…when he picked me up from the streets when I was five, he…slowly trained me to take advantage of people –The memory acid reflux that went up his mouth. –Specially men. Men like you. –

He finally looked at Lavi, eyes saddened with defeat.

-Handsome? –The redhead asked, reaching again for his hand.

-Handsome, rich, charming. Lovers that looked for a lover. Men that would fell for me with one or two nice words…-He shrugged in a nervous gesture that made him want to hug him.

“What’s the big deal, anyway?”

-Well…I think that was their fault sweetie…Nobody asked them to…-

-No, Lavi. I haven’t finish. –He was now squishing his hand tight, a slight tremble on it. –I let them kiss me, I let them touch me…Anything as long as I could get the money. I…He said it was the only thing I could do to pay him back for taking care of me… that no one would ever love me like… -

Lavi looked at him and pulled his hand to his lips, kissing his knuckles.

-Like I love you. –Their eyes met and Lavi took care on maintaining the contact. –I love you, Allen. I do love you more than I ever loved. More than anything I ever know. I don’t care if you fooled a guy or ten or a hundred. For fuck sake…I wouldn’t even care if you did that with me. –He raised his hand stopping Allen as he tried to refute that, afflicted. -All the money in the world wouldn’t hold a candle against what you are worth for me. –

-That’s nice to know. –A voice that Lavi knew well interrupted, freezing him on place. He turned to see his grandfather, his shoulder resting on the door frame; an expression unreadable.

Both of them swallowed; the extent of what he heard unknown.

-Now, if you allow me kid. I need a word with my grandson. –
chapter. We are so close to 100 kudos and I am AMAZED that such many people like this. I'm having great fun writing it and I must say, I was shy about last chapter but I can't see why it was since you all are such nice and lovely readers. It's 8600 words good enough as an apology?
I have to admit I struggled with this chapter. I wrote it twice and reviewed it like ten times, but I'm finally happy with the result.
It was hard at the start, after all I think it's harder to write the tone down of the action than otherwise but in the end I found a way to tell you what happen and feel proud about it.

I hope you like it as much as I did. How many character have you spotted by now? DGM is such a rich story on its own I found myself struggling to keep characters out. Literally had to make some charts to settle how everything was related. Do you love something in particular? Someone who you like most as they appeared here?

Again, thank you for your kind comments, your kudos, your messages, for those of you who have followed me on twitter and everyone who feels anything for this tale. I'll always be waiting and glad to read you and you opinions. I hope you didn't feel this like it was too long or heavy! Specially because I'm planning on making every chapter as long as I can. Hope it was worth reading and you won't feel uncomfortable with the length!

Don't forget to stay hydrated!

-Noctomata.
Pity Party

Chapter Summary

Gossip: casual or unconstrained conversation or reports about other people, typically involving details that are not confirmed as being true.

Also known as the peak of the self-fulfilment needs in the already elaborated pyramid in Maslow's hierarchy of needs and the start of all the real problems for our two favorite boys.

First impressions, a settlement, an email and certainly a lot of morphine that will eventually run out.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Every city is connected by roads. By subways, by routes, by culture. By people.

But more important, every city is connected by the real basic human instinct: Gossip.

They aren’t stopped by anything. Not by land, not by air, not even by electricity. Gossips will fly and run and swim away if it’s necessary to reach their intended target. And sometimes, some that were not.

Cities, as everyone that live in one would testify, are nothing but an enlarged town in which everyone knows at least, one other someone who knows someone. And in the case of Lavi and Allen, this proved to be awfully true.

Everything started with Eliade, but some would argue on that; as gossips manage their way like a virus, spreading with more than only one host to pinpoint.

Eliade, the nurse that received Allen and Lavi that day early in the morning, was engaged with Aleister Crowley the Third. A nice and timid man that looked like a vampire and worked on the basement of the Black Order museum. He was in charge of restauration, classification and storing the pieces that arrived; rarely being seen on the upper floors of the building. He was tall and pale, his black hair in any casual day over his eyes and every formal one cleanly pushed back; a white stripe that ran in the middle of it making him look older than he was. His smile not often showed the canines that earned part of his reputation as a vampire, but instead, was shy and gentle like an apology of something that didn’t happen yet.

Some people would consider him odd, but his heart was kind and full of love for his fiancée and of course, for his friends. Eliade loved all that and more, from his Romanian accent to his ideas of dates on libraries.

He came from a line of barons but enjoyed working in his family favorite investment. The museum. There, he didn’t talk with many people, but that was completely overshadowed by his coworker and childhood friend. A certain redhead who belonged to another wealthy family, that
never seemed to run out of conversation topics. She remembered seeing him once or twice on her free days or the times she was out early for some miracle that she always prayed for. But it wasn’t until she read the name on the sheet that that silver haired young man handed to her that everything connected.

The blonde helped the boy, whose name was Allen, as she later learnt, to sneak to his side so they could be together; as she saw herself on his gray eyes filled with angst for a man, she was sure, he loved.

It wasn’t like she tried to start a gossip; after all, rarely an honest person starts a fire with intent.

It was just the feeling she got when she saw him lost without the redhead, that impulse her to make the call that changed the game. At least…on her end.

She dialed the number of his beloved as she tapped over his name; a photo of them kissing faded on the background of it, an emoji of a heart and the announcement that the call was on course. Three times it rang, like always did and his fiancé answered.

-Honey, how are you? –She smiled as she twisted one of her curly blonde pigtails.

-Alistair, don’t you have a coworker who is really tall and ginger? You know, the grandson of… -

-Yes, Lavi. It’s something wrong? –Crowley sounded worried and she regretted not being softer, knowing how tender his soul was.

-Oh, yes, him. Well…he was admitted in Hevlaska’s today. A boy named Allen brought him. He was quite beaten up, but it looked worse than it was. -She paused, doubting. – You can visit him tomorrow if you like. –

-I should let his grandfather know…-His affliction was transparent and Eliade smiled, wanting to hug him. The same feeling that made her try everything to allow Allen to be with Lavi a few moments before.

-You do that. We will call him soon anyway so, better not to be a shock for him. –She sighed and turned as she saw someone approach the crystal door. –Look my darling, don’t you worry. We will take care of your friend and his boyfriend. They are such a lovely couple. You should see them; they remind me of us. –

Crowley, on the other side of the line smiled, lovestruck.

-I have to go. I love you, good luck with the paintings and stuff. We will call your friend’s grandpa later. Kisses! Bye! –She hung up as a Chinese man entered the place, asking for the same person she was talking about.

In the museum her fiancé stared at the phone as their conversation was reviewed inside his head. He knew Lavi since the guy was a baby and now, close to his forties he realized he never met a single person (male or female) that the redhead was in love with. It stroke him as odd but as the basement door opened, he trashed the thought to concentrate on the important task he was entrusted to: telling the old bookman that his grandson was at the hospital.

It was in the middle of that call, unknown by Bak, that his own phone rang to deliver another side of the story.
His father was a really loving man, always caring about his child, always worried and in touch with him. It was from him that he inherited the tendency to cry and the need to protect his friends. But from his mother, a Chinese tough woman who took no prisoners, he got the need to speak up his mind and meddle with other people affairs. Maybe it wasn’t the intention of his dad to give him fuel for the flame that was his despise for Yuu Kanda, but as gossips sometimes do, it was a collateral effect that couldn’t be revoked once it was pronounced.

-What’s up, dad? –In the secret of his house he would could his father “daddy”, but out in the city, were people were quick to misunderstand a loving son for a kinky fellow, he stuck with “dad”. Their relationship suspended in time, just like when he was four, but with the privileges of alcohol and curse words. A blessing, if you ever asked him.

-Bak, son, isn’t your friend’s name Allen Walker? The pretty one with white hair and a star scar on that photo of your birthday? –Bak listened surprised, the topics that he guessed for their possible conversation far away from his friend.

- ...Yeah? –He said slowly, munching the lollipop he got from his father jar in the morning, before leaving. The need of sugar the only thing that spared him from taking his free time that early in the morning to get the breakfast he knowingly skipped.

-Well, I just talked with him. He is here in the hospital and I’m a little bit worried about him. -

An alarm went off in Bak, his worst fear pulsating under his nails. Did Kanda finally hurt his friend like he always suspected he would?

The blond almost swallowed the hard candy trying to reply; starting a nervous walk along the hall of his work, trying not to step too close to the painting’s sensors.

-Is he ok?! Is he hurt?! Is he wounded?! –Edgar held to the device caringly, finding the gesture a mirror to his wife’s outburst of being a mama bear.

-Physically, yes. He has a red mark over a cheek and a small wound over his lip but overall, he is fine. –On the other side, his son sighed in relief. –But…-Bak tensed again, his hand over his heart. –I think he needs support. You see, his boyfriend it’s the one that I tended, he has some bruises and I gave him few stitches, but it was an impressive sight for someone who’s not used to the job. You know? –

He listened carefully, but when his father reached the topic of Allen’s boyfriend, something seemed…odd. It was probably paranoia, or maybe his intuition, but something made him revise his steps and ask for that particular man that…in any given day…he would be glad he was beaten up by some unknown hero.

-His…boyfriend? –The blond asked as calmly as he could. An attempt to be casual about it.

-Yes. Tall, red hair, heterochromia, a tattoo with some obscure quote on his back. –

The almost medical description of his parent made him smile in the light of disgrace.

“So, it was a date; you pair of lovebirds!” He thought.

-Oh no, Lavi. –He murmured; another doubt growing on his mind, concerning the man he tried to get rid of for his friend. –Do you know what happen? –

-I think it was a fight. Strong hits, it’s amazing that he didn’t break anything. –The doctor checked his clock, back at the hospital. –Anyway, I have to keep working son, would you pass and check on
your friend? I’m sure he will be glad to see you. If you could bring flowers or a coffee...Sometimes
the simplest gifts are just what the soul needs. –

-You betcha’ –He answered, starting to bite his thumb, the candy crushed and gone. –I’ll see you
later daddy. –The treacherous and subconscious answer taking advantage of his distraction.

“Kanda fought Lavi over Allen and sent him to ER? What a dick! He better dumps his ass, or he
will be listening to me...”

-Take care little man. –

-You too. -

The call ended; and since life is full of coincidences that are more than just an elaborate
mathematic plan to our own downfall, this happened to be just when Aleister was talking to Lavi’s
grandfather. His voice echoing in the solitary chamber.

-And she asked me to tell you that he is at Hevlaska’s hospital. He isn’t in any danger or anything
that could threaten his life but...well the staff will call you soon and we didn’t want to startle you.
Lavi’s stable...and...-

-Did she tell you what he did this time? –Crowley was bowing a little, like every time he talked
with anyone shorter than him. Which was pretty much everybody, except for the redhead, who was
just a few centimeters shorter. He twisted his hands nervously, the severity of the old man’s voice
affecting him.

Bak knew it wasn’t directed at him but to his always problematic grandson, and he pitied the man.
Crowley was too kind of a soul for the world.

He tried to see better from his position, afraid that he would be spotted by the eagle eyes of the
oldest. A spying mission.

-Uhm...well, she just said not to worry. I think it was a fight, but his boyfriend is with him, so I
think everything it’s fine. –

The facepalm resonated in the room as Bak slammed his hand against his forehead. Immediately
hiding away behind a column, knowing his mistake.

“Crowley you are so kindly stupid, what have you done?!!”

-His...boyfriend. –The elder said slowly. His eyes spotting the feather that peaked from behind the
column in the corner. The bonnet the blond used ratting him out. –Right. Thank you. –

His steps ticked over the perfectly clean floor and Bak held his breath as he knew he was closer,
too late to run without looking like a fool. A red-handed fool, that was.

-You are welcome to join me, mister Chang. Since you are that interested. –His tone made his
soul leave his body as the characteristics stains of his psychosomatic sickness attacked. –I’m sure
your friend and my grandson will be...thrilled to see you too. –

Lavi’s grandfather, (whose name was lost the minute he took care of the kid, as it happened to
every person in a parental role.) took the call in the back seat of the car he asked the Chang’s son to
get for them. He was calmed and thanked the polite but talkative nurse that let him know his
grandson was there…with his freshly new apparent fiancé.

The thought stuck with him only the necessary time for him to start worrying about the redhead’s
health. He couldn’t say he wasn’t nervous. After all, Lavi was all that was left from his blood and
he loved him and treasured him like a parent would…but he was also aware that most of the
problems the redhead got into, were his own, personal choice.

Silently he wondered about Allen, nothing but the name on his mental archives. He asked here and
there, but nobody knew the kid. Except Bak, who in every inquiry managed to slip away from his
questions. The name a dimmed light in a dark forest that was attached to a mental note that he
stored many years ago; but now stitched like a new wool sweater on a naked chest.

It wasn’t until the car passed in front of a panoramic of a specific brand of cigarettes that he
grasped the connection. He knew the name, because that was the name that Marian Cross, an old
acquaintance, gave to his stepson. A cruel joke on a child; the name meaning “small rock”, which
was what Marian said the kid would be.

“A pain in the ass, a stone inside my shoe. What a bother to take care of a child!”

And yet, Cross did. He remembered. Probably not well, but he did take him under his roof. The old
man only met the child once, when he was six and having troubles wetting the bed. He never saw
him again. Marian always moving or disappearing as his habits demanded. Absently, he wondered
if this would be the same kid; and as he walked through the hospital, leaving Bak to talk with the
Lee siblings, he listened to the sweet and androgynous voice of a stranger, that spoke from the
inside of the room that Lavi was supposed to be.

- … My stepfather…Cross. –

“So, he is.”

Lenalee, Komui and Bak were on some chairs at the beginning of the hallway, the sound of his
conversation dead. He ventured closer, his grandson finally on his field of vision.

The younger and beautiful kid he saw him with at the museum the day before, sat with him in the
bed, a plastic chair forgotten in exchange of closeness; Lavi was holding his hand like he was a
princess and at the same time as it was his lifeline. And the way he was looking at him, even with
only his green eye visible made his spirit shake. Allen’s hair was curled and messy, the clothes
hardly letting guess anything about the situation. Was he there all night? Did they just arrive?
Were they together when it happened? Where did the fight took place? Insufficient data in a
senseless frame of action.

He noticed there wasn’t a shadow of his sleek and carefully tailored appearance from before. He
couldn’t see his face, but his posture was enough for him to know how exhausted Allen was. His
shoulder blades down, his arms dropped like weights, his back curved; not even a broken stallion,
but a sad broken-winged dove.

-Well…I think that was their fault sweetie…Nobody asked them to…-The redhead said a little
louder. He had that stupid smile he only gave to what he adored most, plastered on his lips. Making
his grandfather’s heart skip a bit; facing the same worry he had for his mother back when she was
young. That same lost look of someone who was already drunk with cupid’s elixir. Lost to reason.
Was Lavi really in love now? He understood that his crush would made him skip work. The kid
wasn’t the responsible type in basically anything but the things he was entertained with. That was
why he talked to him, that was why he tried to explain it to him…

Because, just like he said to him days earlier: Love was sometimes cruel.

And in his opinion, a boy raised by Marian Cross wasn’t anything more…than troubles.

Just like Cross himself was.

-No, Lavi. I haven’t finish. –The kid continued, obviously flustered. He could see his profile now. Delicate lines that were challenged by time, a fine scar that he didn’t see the first time, embroidered over his cheek and down his lips; making him wonder what the reason of it would be. –I let them kiss me, I let them touch me…Anything as long as I could get the money. I…He said it was the only thing I could do to pay him back for taking care of me… that no one would ever love me like… -

He couldn’t help but pity the boy. A paternal sense that reproached him not interceding with Marian, many years ago. The man was closer to a mercenary than a businessman, what did he expected?! He wasn’t fit to raise a child, yet he saw him leave with him. Only for the man to use him like some ATM express.

Lavi was kissing Allen’s hand and it suddenly scared him, the idea of seeing him heartbroken if the other woke up one day and discovered he didn’t love him back anymore. Young love being so brittle…How would he ever recover from that? He barely overcame Alma’s death, blaming himself for something that was a generational gift that changed from parent to offspring…With little to nothing to do to avoid it.

How would he ever heal from what it seemed to be his true love? His only love.

He couldn’t endure it. And he would rather die than see his only grandchild suffering again like that.

-Like I love you. –Lavi said, confirming the second worst fear and primal suspicion of his grandfather. –I love you Allen. I do love you more than I ever loved. More than anything I ever know. I don’t care if you fooled a guy or ten or a hundred. For fuck sake…I wouldn’t even care if you did that with me. –He raised his hand stopping the youngest as he tried to object, scooting closer. The hand they were holding brought to Allen’s chest. His heart probably racing as they kept attention only to each other. Never noticing his presence. -All the money in the world wouldn’t hold a candle against what you are worth for me. –

-That’s nice to know. – He interrupted, both faces staring at him. Allen’s marked with struggle, pain and a desperation he knew well. But as much as he pitied him, the redhead was his priority and reason to be. Did he truly love his grandchild back? Or those eyes hid troubles from the same brand that Cross? -Now, if you allow me kid. I need a word with my grandson. -

Allen was now walking back the corridor. His hands in loose fists, rubbing his eyes as tiredness punched him, as if it just remembered he still had energy stored in there and his mission was to destroy it. Pulverizing his mood.

-That was the most awful way to meet the family of your date or whatever. –He murmured to himself as he dragged his feet while he paced.
-I don’t think there was a right way to meet Lavi’s grandpa, Allen. –Lazily, he dropped his hands, covered by the sleeves of the hoodie he wore; staring at his three friends. Identical apologetic smiles on their faces.

-Surely, there was one better than: “Hey, my stepdad used me to get money from dudes like you. By the way, I never said I’m not doing that exact thing with you. You, dirty handsome rich boy. This looks like I’m going to strip you clean but you are good with it, right?” –Allen sighed, dropping on the chair that Komui offered him in the middle of him and Lenalee, the blond standing in front of them. –And if that wasn’t enough, I look like trash puked me out because I was too unpleasant for it to swallow me…What am I going to do? -He buried his face on his sleeves, his voice breaking like he was about to cry another time. Exuding worry. -He is going to hate me! -

-At least he still doesn’t know about Kanda...-Komui said, patting his shoulder.

Allen shot him an irritated look, his eyes red with fatigue and stress. His sister looked at him over the silver haired, a killer stare that made him flinch. He turned to Bak for support; but the blond only rolled his eyes and pulled a coffee thermos from the bag he was carrying, offering it to the youngest.

-Anyway…I brought you coffee if you want some, Allen. And a pastry. It isn’t much, but maybe it will help you feel a little better. I figured you would be hungry. –

-Thanks, Bak. –He murmured while he took it. Closing his eyes as he rested his head against the wall behind them, the cylinder between his legs. Inside him, he also thanked them for not asking about his relationship status either with Lavi or with Yuu, because if he was honest with himself…not even he knew what was going on anymore.

-I don’t think the son of Cross Marian is precisely the best choice for you. –Lavi stared at his grandfather and saw all their discussions repeated in a loop that predicted the outcome of this one. The words careful and concealed with superiority.

-He is not exactly his son. And I’m sure you will agree with me that I’m not the best prospect for anyone that wants to have a decent, quiet life, that’s it. –Lavi waited for a sarcastic come back that never arrived, the man beside him suddenly tired, but with a small smile that shook him on his core.

-Yes, that’s for sure. –They remained in silence some moments and the redhead started squirming. What was that about? –Will you still marry him even if I told you that I won’t give you a single penny if you do? –

The tallest blushed furiously at the comment, the insinuation of a wedding something that threw him out of his comfort zone, pulled out of nowhere.

-What are you saying gramps? We aren’t exactly dating…–He quietly answered, looking at the end of the bed, as he scratched his cheek. Reminding the old man of Lavi’s already lost childhood.

–I would marry him even if you threatened to kill me. I would marry that gorgeous face every day of my life if I could. –He finally said in a rushed whisper.

The eldest of the bookmen smiled, patting his shoulder.
-Well I guess you better do then. I heard you were already engaged. And it sounds complicated when you aren’t dating, don’t you think? –He laughed and for the first time in years, the redhead felt close to him. Like the father he lost.

After the coffee, Allen recovered a little of notion about life. The last distressed potion on the last part of the game in a battle that you expect will suffice for you to escape with what you got. Lenalee and Komui were gone, both of them leaving to their respective jobs, but not without telling him to call if he felt like he needed some backup.

Bak was still there, a conversation about Lavi with his father that Allen wasn’t sure he wanted to listen. He promised to take him in in case Lavi’s grandfather decided he didn’t want him there. Still afraid to leave to his place, that more probably than not…didn’t welcome him anymore.

He wanted to cross his legs on the uncomfortable chair of the waiting, but the stress of being caught in such a vulgar pose by the redhead’s family glued him on place like concrete. He had his hands crossed over his lap, staring at the border of the glass and the ceiling, how they joined with a thick line of adhesive.

Allen thought on his phone and wondered how much more his misbehavior would cost him. Because of him Lavi was hurt and Yuu probably was more than psychologically devastated. He ruined their relationship if not Lavi’s and Yuu’s as well; by consequence undoubtedly, he didn’t have a place to stay anymore and if that wasn’t enough, he lost the only device that was entirely his and that he struggled so much to pay. He numbered each disaster, sighing and closing his eyes for a second.

“*But aren’t you a sucker for Junior? Was he worth it?*”

He pinched the bridge of his nose, his left eyebrow twitching.

-He is. –An exhalation that hurt his lungs. Balloons that were released after gathering more air than they could handle, close to explode.

-What is? –The chairs barely shifted, making Allen open his eyes to the old and petite man that was Lavi’s grandfather. He felt the tension pulsing weak from behind his liver, warning like a last chance of a dying animal. His mouth didn’t even move, and his thoughts crawled into misery without any help.

“Awesome. *I have the chance to rectify myself and I screw it up. He surely thinks I’m a moron.*”

-It’s ok. –The elder said, his hands folded, disappearing inside his long, loose sleeves. –Lavi haven’t introduce us, but I’m sure you know who I am. – He finally turned his eyes to him. Big black circles around them. Small, dark and sharp pupils. Scrutinizing his life with a stare. So different to Lavi’s.

-Yes. –He tried after swallowing nothing but dryness. –I’m Allen Walker. –He offered his right hand, thinking the other would refuse him or at least, judge him as he did.

Instead he took it immediately, the wrinkles around his lips moving to form a polite smile.

-It is nice to meet someone that makes that kid move. He is a lazy and spoiled brat, wasting all his intelligence in nothing but videogames and novels. –Allen smiled as he heard such an
uncharacteristic portrayal of Lavi. Always busy and with plans. Always working. -You made him
go to the museum the other day, and I can guess it didn’t cost you three months and multiple
threats or blackmailing him like me to make him stood up from his bed… –

He winked at him and Allen felt his face burn once again. Did he saw them kissing?! At his
museum?!!! Did he know?!!

-I-It’s not like that. –He replied, his bangs hiding a little of his embarrassment. –Lavi is really
dedicated to his work and he was just being kind when he brought me there…I study art history
and I suppose he thought…-

“He is a student! This damn idiotic Lavi. Is nothing sacred to you? Dedicated to ruin his work, you
mean.”

-I assure you kid. That’s not what he does with anyone else. –The silver haired wanted to hide his
face but he stood still trying to think. The old bookman pleased with what he saw. –Anyway. I’m
old and tired. And I don’t want to spend the night in a place like this. Are you going to stay with
my stupid grandchild? I bet you can stand his complaints better than me. –

Allen didn’t know but the man observed carefully his expression. Everything from the start an

He smiled honestly for the first time that morning, light hitting his face in a warm undertone that
made the elder doubt about his raising.

-Of course! I’ll be glad to stand by him. –He stood up, the choice of words what he needed to
understand how different he was from Marian.

-I’ll walk you back inside then. –

Lavi saw his grandfather getting back, his mouth opening the moment he stepped in.

-That was a pretty long ass time for someone that went for a juice. –He saw his empty hands,
raising his own to heaven, overreacting to the sight. –Specially for someone that didn’t even get it
back! –

-Shut up, brat. I brought you something else instead. –Allen walked shyly behind his old man,
smiling brightly as they made eye contact.

-Allen! –

-So, he will be taking care of you for me. Don’t be such a pain in the ass. Be nice. -His lover stood
by his side, his hands in front of him, not daring to reach for him. A formality that he only saw in
him with other teachers of his faculty. –I’ll leave you two alone. No kissing until I’m gone, I know
you Lavi! –

-PANDA! –A exclamation that was heard even at the end of the hall; the pierced ears of the
redhead lost in his hair, now the same color. –WHY? –

Allen was mortified as well, using the sleeve of the hoodie to cover his mouth. Laughing at his
expenses in between his shock.
-Whatever, behave. Call me if you need something really important. Like you are dead. Don’t make me waste my time. –Quick steps and he was gone. Both exploding in a laughter that was more than needed. A clear mark on their grades as they passed the exam.

-I guess I’ll stay with Bak. I don’t think I can be back to the flat after what happened. –Allen was scrolling by the photos of Lavi’s social media. Entertained with his influencer look that rivaled with Bak’s and yet was so diametrical opposed. Everything was nature or hipster places nobody else knew. Castles, paintings, rare first edition books, he working-out without a shirt… –I’ll just ask Lenalee to fetch Timcanpy for me. –

“How can he be a professor? I would struggle to concentrate in class after stalking him here. No wonder why his students fail…”

The light changing colors over his skin, the sun dying on a twilight that rushed to blackness.

His cheek was molded over his hand as he rested. His elbow on the mattress while he was sitting on the plastic chair to allow the redhead freer space on the bed. Lavi thought on how adorable he looked and touched a wavy, silver lock that only bounced back to its place, those gray orbs looking back at him. Two windows for a soul so beautiful it seemed like a celestial crystal.

-You can stay with me, gorgeous. –He smiled and returned his attention to the device.

-I can’t Lavi. Not after everything I did to you. –He sighed, the rectangle of his phone dropping against the white covers. The green case noticeable even in the dark. –I don’t even know what happened with Yuu. I don’t think is wise to…-

-Will you if I talk with him? –Allen observed the window at the other end of the room, watching the few stars that were still visible among the clouds and the streetlights.

- I think I am the one who is supposed to talk to him. I mean…for all that matters I am still his boyfriend. –Lavi listened, his hand grabbing tight the sheets. The shortest felt it, turning to face him. –And that’s something I have to fix, isn’t it? –He stood gracefully, kissing him so soft that Lavi had to touch his shoulder to feel he was really there. Calming him.

-And if I still want to talk with him? –The redhead held him on place, his eye going from Allen’s to his lips that, even with that bruised ring that went around them, were as sweet as the forbidden fruit to him. –Will you go and try to stop me? –

-Can anybody stop you when you have your mind set on something, Lavi? –A shiver that shook him with a tremble. Allen’s hands over his chest kindly, easy to read his fear of hurting him.

-No. –He answered, closing his eye as he pulled him closer for a more proper kiss. Slow, steady, warm. A kiss that needed no explanations or rush. A passion cooked on a low flame. A love that was tied with the red string.

He could feel how Allen took his time, careful and worried. Taking care of him even with something as mundane as a kiss.

“But is kissing him mundane? Fantasy novels are written with a face like his. When I was at the end of the world, all that was there…was him.”
-Aren’t you upset for losing your phone? –It was the next morning, every bone in Allen’s body screaming for a proper bed. The redhead drinking from a juice box that some nurse should’ve left him earlier; his eyebrows raising as he checked his own notifications.

-Uh…A little. –He stretched, feeling dirty and sticky. Used to long baths and daily showers. A yawning that escaped his control making scene, making him surrender as he rested his face again against the mattress. –Why? –

-I don’t know. You seemed really calm about not having everything at the reach of your pocket. – Lavi looked at him and shrugged. –I have like, another three or four, like this. I sometimes forget where they are and found them later or hoard them for emergencies or some excuses I made up because in reality I just love gadgets. –

Allen smiled at him lovingly.

-Your grandfather was right. –The tallest stopped drinking and stared at him; anticipation and doubt on his eye. Allen really missed the mismatched jewels that were the green and the gold, but the horribly purple that was closer to black that surrounded his left eye was enough punishment on its own to even think on ever being deserving of seeing them again. –You are a spoiled brat. -

Lavi pushed him with his right leg, shaking him from his comfortable position.

-Such a big mouth for an angel that likes to be carried to bed like a princess! –The silver haired grabbed him, hugging him and giggling after a short complaint. –By the way, Jerry passed by. I think Lenalee called him. He brought you flowers. –

A strand of hair that he brushed behind his own ear but didn’t stay put; exhaling as he smiled just like he adored. His heart expanding inside his ribs, full of love for him.

-What makes you think the flowers are for me? You are the one that is secluded here. And why didn’t you wake me! –

-Maybe because he said he didn’t want to disturb you and that you don’t have to go to work until you feel better? –He reached for his hand and Allen gave it. Playing with his rings that were finally on its place again.

-Sounds like Jerry, indeed. –He crawled from his place to sit on the bed, Lavi scooting over to let him be. –About my phone…I suppose I can pull out some money I have saved? I should send an email to my teachers. With everything I doubt I can even show up to school…-His hands were still intertwined, but he was now facing the door, his right side to Lavi without facing him.

-Take this one. –The redhead offered nonchalantly, extending his free hand with his phone. –As I said, I have a lot more at home and it isn’t like I can’t buy another one. –Allen doubted, but took it in a slow movement. –Really baby, it’s nothing. –

-Thanks. -He said, blushing as he looked again the lock screen. –I’ll take you home as soon as you are released, ok? –

-Will you still be my personal nurse? Because if not I’ll probably die. Alone, in my lonely tower of solitude…-

-Stop it! –He giggled again, hugging him as Lavi let his weight over him in a fake drama that was part of their game. –I’ll get it, dork. I will take care of you, ok? But I’m still staying with Bak. –

-It’s because his house is bigger than mine? Or is it his amazingly handsome looks? –Allen was
petting his hair, his incredible smell like new paper even after all the action and disasters.

-Neither. It’s his coffee. –

-Guys are you ready to go? Oh, you’re hugging, bye. –The blond turned on his heels, equal laughing snorts as he left. –Call me when you are decent! -

In a hotel, not far from there, Yuu Kanda was sitting on the floor. His back against the bed. His phone in his hand without anything that mattered. On his mind the question that Lenalee planted.

“Do you love him?”

Did it really matter?

-I guess it does. –He said to the empty room. –

Such a simple question and such a complicated answer.

He liked Allen. He was nice, he was drop dead gorgeous and sweet as honey…but.

But... But... BUT.

-But he isn’t Alma. –A gulp from the cold beer that was next to him, precariously situated over the carpet. And that was ok, because nobody would be Alma. Now, that his anger was dimmed and his mind cleared, he understood that. He accepted it.

But... that didn’t make right what Allen did. What Lavi did.

Sitting there, he found out that even when he wasn’t exactly happy and fine with Allen his spirit demanded amendment with the redhead. Blood atonement. If you wish.

He smiled at the irony of his own thought, another long gulp to the drink to keep his cool.

It wasn’t about Allen. Not really. One way or another Yuu supposed he would eventually grow tired of his attitude and would run away with some wealthier asshole from that bar, that was more a buffet for him to choose.

It was about the trust. About the betrayal. He trusted Lavi, he gave him the key to his house, to his things, to his forgiveness. And what did he do? He fucked his man. It didn’t matter if it was Allen or another random flick he had. He just couldn’t believe that after everything, he would do that to him.

“After he held me, covered in blood, pulling me away from the woman I loved and that he knew would die and he still said nothing...”

Fine, maybe that wasn’t his fault. Maybe. Maybe it was just like Lenalee said and he tried his best and still life was miserable. And yet, that gave him no right to seduce (Or let himself be seduced, he didn’t really care.) his boyfriend. Did Lavi loved him? He didn’t know. He didn’t really care. The fangs of the viper that was the embodiment of resentment were already deep on his heart.

Nevertheless, this wasn’t about physical revenge, as he first acted. Fruit of a hotheaded moment and clouded judgment. No. Junior wasn’t a man that understood how things worked like that. And
why would he? All his life sheltered by Bookman and his money. By his privileges, by his stupid and ridicule smile. By his lies.

Junior was a guy of books, of the mind. And what did you do with that kind of guys to teach them a lesson? Well... You used your mind.

It was a favor, really. After all... weren't they the best of the best friends?

It took Lavi exactly fifty-three minutes to call Kanda. It would've been less, but Allen indeed took him home, neatly parking his now dirty car on the garage; only to pass out later in the middle of his huge bed after he got a well-deserved hot shower and the fluffiest pajama the redhead owned.

Bak promised to pick him up the morning after, arguing that a day sleeping roughly counted as passing it together. And he agreed; surely, Allen would wake up in the middle of the night to eat and would sleep again as if nothing woke him in the first place.

- Would you see that. – The rough and dangerous voice of his former friend answered after a click.
- I was just thinking about you, if you can believe it. –

Junior felt like blood over his tongue, which barely touched the stitches that the punch he gave him earned. He watched over his shoulder and observed Allen’s back moved in a rhythmical, tranquil pace as he breathed. Soundly asleep.

- Nice to know we are still in good terms. – He spit back. A dark laugh that sounded like a super villain’s passed through the line.

- How’s your face? Did they picked every piece, or you want me to look for something that you missed under my bed? Tho, maybe the cat has already eaten it. –

The redhead held his words back, pressing his forehead against his forearm. Resting against the wall that was next to the door of his bathroom. Emotions starting to boil again. The sound of the silver haired crying being pushed away to the dark corners of his brain.

- Listen... About Allen... -

- No. If you want to do that, you have to say it to my face, Junior. I’ll text you my location, so don’t be a coward and face me. I’m tired of you acting at my back. –

A click and as he hung up. A buzz that didn’t take more than ten seconds with what was promised. A hotel. A number.

- So, this is how it’s going to be, huh? – Allen wouldn’t be awake for another six hours. At least.

Nobody would know.

"If you play like a man you better act like one when the prizes come. You know what they say; play stupid games, win stupid prizes."
Maserati knew how to make cars. He thought as the lights of a very early sunset passed by; stepping on the pedal to meet his fate. Dressed quickly after a quicker shower.

Lavi was driving at a steady pace, the car purring in a tranquility that only people who love driving would understand. All his body ached, but it didn’t matter as long as he was in there. As long as the adrenaline kept singing its sweet mermaid song. Pumping life like a last resource elixir to revive.

It didn’t take much time, the building a strange and sort of small black pyramid in the limits of the acceptable side of the city. He went down to the parking lot, thinking that whatever the results of his little chat with Yuu would be…they better be interesting enough to make up for the price of that parking.

Electrical stairs that transformed into a nicely clean elevator, received him, increasing his adrenaline dose; the memory of that one time the thing fell with him and Crowley inside, back and reinforced. Would that sensation be there every time he faced Kanda, knowing what he did?


The doors seemed identical, forcing him into checking again and again the number on his phone, grateful that he had some meaningless background in this device. His death wish, nowhere near. At least not now that he was with Allen.

Finally, the number on the door matched the one on the message, his hand trembling a little when it knocked on the wood with a faint and almost ridicule sound. Every ounce of valor he previously collected evaporated in the nothing. A soufflé pulled out of the oven when it wasn’t its time. Deflated.

“You don’t seem so brave right now”

He tried again, a little louder. The door opening a little too quick for his taste.

-Junior. –His hair was down, his face a lethal and inexpressive threat like a massasagua rattlesnake. One of the most lethal in the world. They were really pretty shy and tranquil creatures. But, as Kanda, they bit when they were provoked. And wasn’t that all he had done, getting in bed with his boyfriend?

He was wearing a white t-shirt with a v neck and navy jeans; barefoot in the absolute control of his space. And he? He was wearing all black. From his t-shirt and his pants to his vans.

“Ready for your funeral. I guess.”

The leather jacket squeaked while he changed his position, uncomfortable. Yuu with the hair down didn’t mean business. It screamed danger; it said he didn’t care anymore about anything…Nothing smart about walking inside the lion’s den. But was there any other choice? What was done was done.

-Yuu. –

The Japanese moved, letting him inside. A loud clicking of the door that set his senses on a crazy hunt for surviving the danger that wasn’t visible but surely was there. Waiting.

“Like a fucking rattlesnake…” He thought, starting to lose his liking for the reptiles.

-You wanted to talk about the beansprout. I’ll listen. What do you have to say after what you’ve done? –
Yuu was now sat on the corner of the bed, three beer bottles on the floor that not once showed through his temper. Kanda was a heavy drinker and Lavi felt his lips wishing for one as well, watching him drink another cold one. Like they were talking about last night party instead of why they fought each other in the middle of the night for the same man.

-I came to apologize. Not to fight with you. I’m sorry for what happened with Allen. I didn’t mean to hurt you. –

He stood in the space between the bed and the door, crossing his arms after pushing his hair backwards and over his black eye. His friend raised his eyebrows and cocked his head to the side in a mocking understanding that said, “well that’s fine, son.”, the brown bottle making the vacuum sound as the liquid moved inside to his lips. Kanda’s easiness made him more nervous, but as he recalled how Allen looked in the hospital beside him and how he waited for him in his bed inside his house, a match lit the last rocket for the fireworks to start. Just like in the children movie with two toys and a little RC car.

-I did. –He answered. Shrugging off his apology. – I think I didn’t kill you because in the end we are friends. Even if you pulled this out on me. –

-Like I said, Yuu. I didn’t mean that. I knew Allen for some time now, but I think that I have loved him since the first time we met and…-

-You mean when I introduced you to my boyfriend in my house and you woke him up to kiss his hand after flirting with him in front of my face? –Another drink and his eyes fixed on him. Dangerous levels rising. Aggravating. –

-Yeah. –An accepted challenge. A defying reply. Testosterone reclaiming its throne on the chemical reactions court. –That same time. –

-Look Lavi, you really suck at apologizing. –The bottle was now between his legs, still grabbed by his left; Yuu combing his hair out of his face with his other hand. The black strands like silk. –So, I’m going to save you from this embarrassment and tell you I give you my blessing with whatever you mean with Allen. Isn’t that what you wanted? –

The fire inside Lavi’s heart died as quickly as a gunpowder after the slightest rain; confusion washing over him.

-What? –

-Isn’t it? –He asked again, his arms open with no sign of aggression. Confusing him more. His face was already a prize on its own, but Yuu wasn’t ever a quitter. You either go big or go home and this was all or nothing. He couldn’t leave everything just like that. Not with such an opportunity.

-Well…-

-Then, there you have it. I give you my blessing. Since you don’t mind sharing, why would I get so upset? The beansprout can easily manage both of us without problems. I mean, that’s what he has been doing, isn’t it? –Lavi’s expression changed slowly, his brow furrowing from confusion to anger frame by frame, his lips tight and his stare cold. Wasn’t that something? Punches could disappear in a week or two…but words? Those were forever.

-Hey, that’s not what…-

-Listen, Junior. This isn’t even about me. It’s about you. You know him since what…? Last year? I
know Allen for a while. And I can tell you, that man is nothing but troubles. Always drawing attention and drama. I cannot tell you enough about Cross, he is a piece of work. After how he trained him on how to be a whor...-

-Don’t you dare finish that word, Yuu. –They were closer now and Kanda smiled in a treacherous and sly way, just like the snake that came back to the redhead’s imagination. The smell of the drink now noticeable but still, without affecting the other. Like the colors on a hazardous animal. A warning. An advice.

-Or what? I don’t care about this anymore. I already lost Alma. Losing Allen to you? There is no comparison. It means nothing. --The tallest was now grabbing him by the shirt, their faces close. His eyes piercing and calculating. Mad. –But for you? Do you love him, Junior? Do you really? –

-I fell in love with him, jackass. –He pushed Kanda without making him move much. Baffled by his words, the world getting lost in a twister of remorse and senseless abstractions of being there. –Of course, I love him. –

-Then you just have to settle, man. Because if you love him half of how I loved Alma... Losing him is not going to hurt, but to destroy you. Days will be meaningless, and nights will be pure agony. Food will be tasteless, like sand from the desert, any liquid will be air that make fake promises of forgetting. But you will give in, for a five second release from the pain. –He was lying now on the mattress, watching his friend sat beside him. –He will be the only face that you’ll see and the exact moment that you lost him will be replayed in a cyclical movie that will be overlapped with every second you didn’t make him happy. –

Yuu sighed and then looked at Lavi, tiredness plastered on his bruised face. Sadness and sorrow there, but not near enough. Lessons were supposed to be harder for the parent than the kid, but right there he thought that that was a load of bullshit. Lessons were either easy...or fun.

-And after all, I don’t see the beansprout breaking up with me. We are still a thing, since I recall... Isn’t it how it works? Together until a part breaks the deal. As I told you. I don’t mind sharing. If you would’ve told me back then I would’ve understood, buddy. But now you just have to settle or eventually lose yourself on knowing you are not the only one. –Sitting again he patted his shoulder, hugging him with one arm in such an awkward way that Lavi thought more in the iron maiden than in a nice gesture.

The redhead wasn’t the jealous type. Or that was what he kept repeating to himself. But the words that Yuu spoke echoed with his talk with Allen, itching everywhere. Rubbing him wrong.

“I think I am the one who is supposed to talk to him. I mean...for all that matters I am still his boyfriend.” Was what he said.

What if they talked like that and found out that Yuu without his anger was a different person? What if he apologized with him and Allen...?

“They have been together for an awful lot of time. Why would this break them apart? This isn’t the first time that Yuu is aggressive towards someone else and Allen forgives him. You know that.”

-Well if you wanted honesty, that’s all you have to say. I never want to let you down or have you gone, but it’s better off this way. –He muttered as he tried to push away his own thoughts. –So here goes nothing: I don’t want you near Allen anymore. I don’t know what game you’re playing over here but if you could just break up with him and...-

-Isn’t that his choice? In the end it’s not you or me, Junior. It’s his choice. And I don’t mean to
brag…but he chose not to call me or break up with me while you were in the hospital. Not even telling Lenalee or that stupid blond of Chang. So...what's gonna be? –And he was right. He thought. In the end it was all about Allen’s choice. -But I’ll be here for you, Lavi. I already know how to live after you lose the one you love the most. As I said, I already lost Alma…but for you…Allen will be your Alma. If you love him that much. –

The last sip for the bottle to be emptied. Just like the redhead’s confidence. Everything was gone. Everything was done.

It wasn’t hunger what woke him up. Instead, it was the cold.

The morning passed fine as well as the day, but as hours progressed the winter reminded everyone that snow was not made for fun and only the sun let them enjoy that privilege. Sneaking beside him in bed, he shivered and palpated for a cover and of course, for Lavi.

His eyes opened lazily when neither of them was found, looking around for a light that wasn’t there as well. All the place in a somber darkness that let him know he was alone. Quickly, he got on his feet, the floor freezing as it let its heat go sometime around the afternoon.

-Lavi? –Allen called as he walked, looking over the place, wondering if the redhead was on the other part of the house that he never seen. The taller telling him once it was some sort of library and restoring place.

He pondered if he was supposed to go down the stairs, standing near the loveseat in front the fireplace looking how dark the way down was. He crouched close to the steps, holding to the metal railings that drew beautiful curls and leaves of decoration in black iron.

Cross always got upset when he stepped on places he wasn’t told to. Would Lavi be upset as well? Touching his pajama, he found the phone that Lavi gave him. Running a finger to unlock the screen to check the hour and if he had a message that let him know if his lover was down the stairs welcoming him…or not.

It didn’t take long for him to synchronize every contact as he stored everything on his email. Now the thing completely personalized to his taste. Except for the lock photo, which he kept the same.

It was around nine and the house remained dead silent.

Allen observed the device, munching on his cheek as he thought about what he was supposed to do. But as he opened the window to chat with the redhead, a message made it vibrate in his hands, almost making him jump.

It was an email. One that shined with the colors over Pandora’s box.

A single word on it. A name: Yuu.

Thousands of questions per second. Was he supposed to open it? What would he want? Did he wanted to breakup with him over a message instead of talking? Was it a hate mail? What if it was something absurd like “give me back the apartment keys”? He stared at the email for thirteen minutes; his thumb over the screen without touching it.
“Just open it!”

A single tap and just like Pandora, he opened the box that he wasn’t supposed to.

“Allen.” The mail started. A terrible way to begin if you were Yuu Kanda and never used his name. He swallowed hard, the tingling of how he was starting to sweat punctuating like needles under his armpits, his hands and his feet.

“I need to talk to you. I tried to call you, but you seem to be out of reach. I’ll be staying at the Levellie. The room number 65.

- Yuu Kanda.”

That was all. He read the message over and over again, the nerves curling in balls of a twisted bump that stung over his throat. Even at the back of his mouth with a funny taste like the aftertaste of whiskey.

-Allen? Are you awake? –A voice down the stairs that went to the front called, making him drop the phone over his lap. A loud gasp of surprise.

-Yes! –He answered as the steps on the wooden surface announced the redhead arriving. Allen jogged to the door, opening it, founding him just about to take the handle after juggling some supermarket brown bags. –Hi. –

-Thanks! I was about to drop everything. –He laughed awkwardly and let him take one bag, as both got inside the place. –I’m sorry. I left to get something from the store, and I didn’t want to wake you…-

The shortest of both smiled at him, his mind still on that dreadful email.

-You should have. You are not supposed to be out there alone Lavi…-They left everything in the kitchen and the redhead turned the lights on as they passed, lighting as well the chimney; which immediately started chasing away the cold. Allen pulled out some of the things the other bought, putting the items on the kitchen counter as he spoke.

-You’re right. I’m sorry, Snowflake. –He cornered him against the piece, his arms around his waist, under the clothes. His hands were cold from the outside, making him recoil a little, flushing his back against the body of the redhead, just like that time back on his classroom.

-Lavi? –His voice was soft, exactly like then. The shyness gone, without any fear or modest doubt. Just his name, being called for him.

-Yes, my Love? –Allen let him pull the fabric of his top a little, exposing his shoulder for him to kiss.

-I love you, do you know that? –He turned to face him, his hands again over his chest, under the jacket. The warmth of his skin passing through the fabric, calming the complains of his bruises.

It was a simple sentence that Lavi heard before. But did he know? With his healthy eye he observed how Allen’s face had recovered its color. His cheeks pink as his lips. His eyes were a special shade of gray, now similar to raw silver. As he delayed his answer, he traced his hands on his back; feeling a little guilt for being so cold, but not enough to stop touching him. Yuu’s words were still there. Stitched carefully under the back of his brain.
"I don’t see the beansprout breaking up with me. We are still a thing, since I recall..."

-And I love you. I hope you know. I love you more than anything. –Allen hid his face on Lavi’s chest, his hands curled, grabbing his shirt. The defined muscles on his partner a comfort he missed when he found himself alone. They stayed like that some moments, until the redhead exhaled deeply, kissing the top of his head. –Let’s go to bed, ok? It’s getting cold in here. –

Lavi stripped from his street clothes; from his jeans and his jacket. The silver haired waiting for him at the bed. He noticed him staring at his new phone intensely, his brow furrowed like he was angry about what he was reading.

-Is it that bad? –He said throwing his garments over a couch which he would later pick up, his hands touching the border of the shirt to pull it off.

-Mh? –Was the answer as he finally looked at him. A sudden need that sparked like firecrackers over his skin. -Lavi, come here. Please. –

-It’s something wrong? –Nevertheless, he obeyed; leaving his shirt on as he walked towards him.

-I… -Allen wasn’t very good with crisis like that, the anxiety starting to run like a mad spider who just decided his skin was the perfect highway to test its speed.

His blood was boiling after so many readings of the same thing, and again he felt like crying as he held to the redhead as soon as he approached to his side. He was sitting in the middle of the bed, Lavi’s height towering still like that, as he crawled to be face to face with him.

-You… -Junior retraced, brushing his lips as he spoke. Allen felt his mind like a messy yarn, everything scattered and senseless. A music that seemed like a song he knew but now was played at a strange tempo.

Was that all he had to said? “Meet me in a hotel room.”? Not even a vague notion of what that “mysterious conversation” would be about? Did he even expected him to show?

“But of course.” His mind accused him; the cold of the outside relocated inside his shoulder blades. “Maybe it’s a cruel joke on me.”

-I…- Lavi was so close and he dropped the phone to get lost in between the duvet. His hands now busy looking to hug him by the neck. –I love you so much Lavi. I really fucking love you… -He murmured, almost kissing him.

It was a stupid feeling. He thought as Lavi reached for his chin and shifted him just enough to kiss him, slowly.

“Whatever… Whatever.”

He was upset with Kanda for choosing that exact moment to send him the message. He was upset because he hurt Lavi and even when that was his fault, he felt he deserved more than just a cryptical message on his last day with the redhead before everything settled. Lavi’s tongue caressed his own faintly as their lips were barely parted, distracting him for a swift split second from the heat that his anger was producing. Trying to ignore the open wound that fed from the living thunder that was his rage.

Against Yuu…against himself. Because he knew… Inside him he knew that it didn’t matter how badly Yuu acted, he would go to that hotel and he would talk to him. Even if it only was to tell him they were through…because that was the way Allen was. And Kanda knew it more than well.
And he hated him for that. A puppet under his strings.

Always playing around him, always keeping his cards close to his chest. Checking up on him every second of the day, ignoring his wishes, ignoring his pleads. And now? Sending a message without even asking if he was alright or even if Lavi was alive. He just left them at the floor of the flat in a puddle of blood and expected everything to be just like he wanted and when he wanted it.

The kiss deepened in a soft movement, Lavi pulling him to sit him on his lap. He touched his hand instead, scooting closer but refusing to get into a position that could potentially hurt him. Remaining beside him as his hands gently touched his neck instead, his fingers brushing lightly his hair in a way he knew would make him gasp. His mind trying to hang to what he felt for the redhead instead. Trying to stay only with him. Right there.

They pulled apart out of breath, not wanting to lose the closeness. The medicine still working on the redhead allowing him to ignore the pain.

-How I adore you…not even the most dedicated worshippers would understand… -Junior told him playing with his curled hair. Letting him give him a series of rushed and chaste kisses over his open lips.

-Every time I hear you speak all I want to say is “I do” … -It was a confession and wish. One that neither of them worried to translate. Not Allen for what he meant and not Lavi for what he understood. They just stayed like that, kissing and saying sweet nothings to each other. Until both fell asleep in the embraces of the other.

-Did you say goodbye to your future husband? –He was waving Lavi back as he got inside Bak’s Porsche. A big blue Cayenne that was used mostly by his parents since he was too lazy or stressed to do it.

The car started moving and Allen turned to shot him a sarcastic look.

-You are so funny Bak, I almost mistook you by a passing clown. –The blond pushed him lightly and lowered the music to an acceptable background sound.

-Joke’s on you, you are the one that looks like a deer under the spotlight every time you see Junior. –He shrugged, taking a sip from his iced coffee. –You can lie to me but it’s obvious for anybody that knows you that you are dying to marry him. –

-Shut up. –Allen turned to the window, hiding the blush that was now living over his cheeks. The street passing calmly.

-You didn’t say no… -Bak sang, shaking the ice on his personalized cup. –Didn’t you want to talk about something? Everything cool at school and with your cat? –

-Yeah, I messaged the school and they said I could turn over the papers by email until the end of the week. –He took a sip from the coffee that his friend bought for him and sighed. –Tim is fine too, Lenalee has him…-

Bak looked so calmed driving he couldn’t imagine him being stressed enough to not doing it. The fact that he wasn’t looking at him enough to allow him to continue speaking.
Then? –He encouraged. Almost as if he read his mind.

-Yuu sent me an email. He wants us to meet at the Levellie. –Allen half expected the blond to step on the brake or to scream at him, but instead, he just kept driving in a silence that hurt him more than what he thought it would.

-I don’t know what to tell you, Allen. –He began. -I’ve been trying to make you break up with that asshole since the time he picked you up at the gala and held your arm so strong you had his fingers marked for three days. –

He recalled the occasion. Yuu said he got upset with a guy that was catcalling him for a while. It was the same day he crossed paths with his stepfather. Whom appeared from nowhere and asked him for more money than he owned and a few favors to make up for him. His then boyfriend, dragged him out. They didn’t talk in a week.

-Yes, I know…but…-

-But. It’s always but when you justify him Allen. Don’t you want to stay with Lavi? It’s not because I work with him, but I can testify that he is a good guy. –A red light that he used to face him. –And he loves you. I never seen him as in love as he is with you and I know him since high school. Before Lenalee and Kanda. But if you want to go and talk back to your terrible selection of boyfriend then…-

It wasn’t often that Allen felt like a scolded child, sinking in the seat as he held his cup.

-I thought you didn’t know him…-

-I do. He just took me by surprise when he flirted or whatever with me. He never did that before. –He explained from his meeting at the museum when Lavi teased him and he ran away. -Let me finish. –He gestured as he kept driving, the clicking of the blinkers singing as he turned left, disappearing when the action was completed. –At least let me take you. I’ll be in the parking lot; I won’t say anything. But let me be there for you. –

-I don’t want to waste your time. –He whispered.

-I spoke with my dad when Lavi was at Hevlaska’s. He said that it looked pretty much on purpose. The length of the injury. The fact that he punched him in the mouth and in the face. He said Junior was lucky that he didn’t break a rib or something worse. A contusion like that could make a man fell into a coma. –The silence in the car was faintly interrupted by the music, almost quiet now. –Do you think I’ll let you be completely defenseless against him? –

-No…but he didn’t do anything to me. He just wants to talk…-

-You think is nothing what you have in your face? For being someone that pale you seem to forget really often how much a mark stays on you. –He touched his face without seeing him, his eyes on the road. –Or are you going to tell me that you fell from the stairs, now? –

Allen bit his lip, understanding his friend.

-Can you drive me there, then? I just want to set things right. If anything happens, I promise you, I’ll call you. Just…wait for me in the car, ok? –

-You better, Dimples. –Allen smiled at the nickname, watching him steering the wheel in a trip that hopefully would be short and quick.
Sixty-five the door read. He inhaled deeply as he knocked the door strongly, totally opposed to Lavi, who feared the answer. Instead, Allen wanted, needed, to know what was waiting for him behind that closed entrance. His anger grew by second, the footsteps that took him there rushed and charged with a plan of contingency to every possibly reason why his still boyfriend would be summoning him to such a shady place.

*Specially* knowing he would respond.

-Beansprout! I didn’t think…-Yuu was surprised and Allen took that as the only chance that he would get in the whole situation to have the higher ground.

-Save it. If you can’t even say my name after calling me here, you might as well listen to me first. –He pushed him to the side and stepped in, afraid that his boldness would disappear the moment he paused to think.

-Okay, then….His hands were up, surrendering. –Whatever is on your mind. Shoot it. –

-I just came here to tell you that we are done. I can’t believe you sent me an email just the day after Lavi is released from the hospital after you…-

-After I did whatever boyfriend would if he found his partner with another man in bed? –With the arms crossed, sitting on a little table that was near the door, Yuu observed him defiantly. And as Allen feared, all his anger vanished like a popped bubble of gum with that little accusation. His silent, but resented stare enough for Kanda, who shrugged trying to relax the shorter. –I’m just saying…-

He bit back his tears, knowing well how he would call him. “*Crybaby.*” The hurt coming back as the past days were revived like a nightmare.

-I am sorry, Yuu. And I could say I didn’t mean it but I’m not sure that is the proper phrasing for what it happened. –Yuu noticed how close he was, his emotions pouring from him. Almost palpable. –I loved you and I did it sincerely. I never wanted to hurt you and yes, I was a coward for getting drunk and kissing Lavi back instead of talking to you and setting things right. I understand that you are upset with me, I even understand if you hate me…-

-I don’t hate you. –He interrupted him, calmly. –I’m not precisely exhilarated that you cheated on me with my best friend but…I don’t hate you, Allen. –

He was a step away from him right now and Kanda pondered about exercising one last right as a boyfriend. It asked a single movement and he could…

-I just want you to know that even when nothing that I did was right…I am sorry. But I also can’t stop loving Lavi…And you don’t know how sorry I am for that as well. –His voice broke by the last sentence and Yuu raised his hand to touch the cheek he hurt on the heat of the fight. So far away and dream-like now.

-Are you? –He asked as he caressed his skin with his thumb. An abstract action that made Allen baulk; the look on the other eyes a mystery. –I’m sorry too. I didn’t mean to wound you. –

Kanda got closer, making him feel trapped as the shock attached him to the spot. His individual eyelashes visible as his closeness was increasing. Allen wanted to pull away, but the surprise of his
action was so strong that his muscles seemed to have forgotten how to move. How to obey. Cornered by his body and the bed. If he went to take a step back, he would certainly fall over the mattress. A place where everything would only be worse.

The last time they kissed was gone from his memory now; panic that overflowed him as he, instead, remembered every kiss he shared with the redhead. He urged his body to react, to push him, to stop him. But like a statue, he remained motionless. Feeling his body empty of life to move away.

It was less than a centimeter left when he stopped.

-But I’m not sorry at all that I punched Junior. This is between him and me. Like he said. –He patted his cheek pulling away completely. -I just wanted you to know that if you want to stay at the flat it’s fine as well as if you don’t. Just let me know so I know what to do with the keys and stuff. –

He opened the door letting him breathe again.

-I’ll just take my things and be out. By five everything should be gone…-Allen whispered on his way out, moving as fast as he could, his ears red with the accelerated and strange shame that made his nerves work. –Goodbye, Yuu. –

-Farwell, Allen. –

The clock stroke ten when he checked the fridge again. Nothing but beer and some takeout he storaged.

Allen left the house not only with his things but cleaning it as well. Everything smelling like lime and citrus. Everything spotless and…alone.

The bell ringed twice and Yuu waited for a third, wondering who could be at that late hours. His eyes traveled to the kitchen bar, in which rested the key that once belonged to the silver haired; having it slide inside an envelope after he closed, before leaving. Tired, he thought that maybe, his now ex forgot something he didn’t notice; and slowly dragged his body to open the thing. The bell rang another time and he started to get annoyed thinking that it wasn’t like he was waiting behind it to open it all night.

-I’m coming! For god’s sake…-

The door opened.

-Greetings. I already forgot your name, but is the brat home? I need to talk to him. -

Yuu wasn’t surprised by many things but recently, life seemed like making an effort to do it as many times as it could that week. A personal goal of the universe.

-Cross? –

The man smiled, pulling a breath from the cigarette. The smoke blown on the Japanese face without a care in the world.

-One and only. Now, where is Allen? –
Hello lovely readers! It's me, your lost writer of cheesy drama! I hope you missed me a little?
I've been feeling a little sick, but I managed this pilled-window of freedom from my agony to upload this puppy. This is a really long chapter and I'm sorry to say it will just get longer as the end gets closer.
Next chapter is around 16k so I don't blame you if you take multiples breaks to digest it. It is not my intention to make you feel tired and I hope you can endure them as they go, but since I just planned 17 chapter this is the only way to go.
Yet, I most say, I'm really happy with the results and the end of the fic it's already planned! (Just not written)

I'm really thankful for your patience and love. For your comments, kudos, messages, follows, hits, etc.! Every little thing fill me with happiness and pride. This is the first fanfiction I work so hard in it and your warm welcome made me gather the courage necessary to try and write more projects. So, even if this particular story was made for me, in a way it became yours.

I'm always happy to read you, never think that a comment can be too short or too long, as writers, we always love that someone took their time to let us know what they thought.

I enjoyed a lot writing about Kanda in this chapter and I get excited as the new characters are introduced to you. I'm sorry to leave you every time with a cliffhanger but it's the way I became this monster, haha.

Thank you again all! I'll be waiting to read about your thoughts in the comments! I hope you enjoyed this long chapter and please be ready for the monstrosity that approaches soon!
Chapter Summary

An uninvited guest, cigarettes and beers.
Sometimes the light at the end of the tunnel is nothing but a lightning the flashes in the middle of the merciless storm.
Would saying enough will be enough?
“Your skin is warm like an oven, your kiss is sugary sweet
Your fingers feel like cotton when you put your arms around me
I feel like I'm just missing something whenever you leave
You've got all the ingredients except you loving me”

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Velvet with iron.

A long, thin and patient needle that slithered through his nostril up to the bridge of his nose; piercing on the tender flesh that was barely a few centimeters away from his eyes.

A little too soon and a little too late to close them; already watering with the intrusion of what he identified as the soul of that pocket death. It stank of vice and recurrence; of broken promises, misery and mouths filled with lies. Even when the touch over his skin danced like silk, the punch to his senses was enough to overwrite the sensation with pain and anger. Two things that nowadays were clinging to him like leeches to a freshly open wound.

Never interested in leaving him. Not anymore.

He coughed, absorbing the smoke in his suffocating search for clean air. His hand moved like a fan in front of his face, trying to get a single bubble of breathable oxygen and failing. Like a timed escape from a burning building, that would certainly end wrong.

Then there was the red. A color that he was already used to see as nothing but difficulties. A summoning for his hurt and frustration; for all the things he couldn’t fix. It was properly situated at the length of the chest of whom called at such infamous hours, allowing him with some time to prepare before he had to look at him in the eyes.

-What? –He questioned the man. His words strangled within the smolder.

-You heard me. Where is he? –The cigarette was hanging from his lips and Yuu saw the perfect opportunity to close the hell gateway that his doorway became. He snatched the thing away and threw it to the ground stepping on it in a quick and clean movement. The smoke finally rescinding.

Cross observed him astonished for a second; a brief moment of victory that Kanda would savor forever in the most treasured vault of his memories, probably along the fight with Lavi. Yet, as it was never long before it started raining on his parade, the other smiled in the smuggest way the dark haired ever seen. A condescending and pitiful smile that reminded him how much he wanted to punch him. And how much satisfaction that would give him.
That smile was like an adult listening a child throw a fit because horses did not have wings. *Patronizing.*

Yuu crossed his arms, resting his shoulder against his open door. Nothing but a blue darkness inside, shifting now and then under the movements of the television. People that he didn’t know, doing things that he didn’t care about. Just sound to keep the loneliness at bay.

A good luck charm to scare the nightmares away.

-Oh? And why should I tell you? –Kanda wasn’t exactly in good terms with Allen. But that didn’t mean he wanted to rat him out to the man that had for hobby torturing him.

-Listen, I don’t have time to lose with you. I just want to talk to my kid. Are you going to deny a father to talk to his *only* son? –The hand that was previously holding the cigarette now dramatically posed over his own chest.

Yuu laughed. A punch of air that squeezed through his teeth and whistled in perfect mockery.

-*Father?* –He repeated. –It seems pretty convenient that you only call him your son when you want money. Isn’t it…*Dad?* –

Cross was wearing a worn-out leather jacket that he supposed was color wine. Under it a simple navy-blue tank top with a dangerously low cut at the neck that exposed all his attitude and poor concern for others; now already tragically burned in his pupils. Jeans that were dark and expensive, the fabric thick and resistant. With them, ankle boots that presumed the money he shouldn’t have. He lowered enough to be face to face with Yuu and a red rosary murmured with his movements; the cross dancing near both chests in a satire for everything divine. Since Kanda was sure, if somebody was a persona non-grata to heavens…it was that man.

-Fine. You want to get personal? I heard my stupid apprentice is marrying the heir of the old Bookman. And that interest me as much as it interests you…-He made a pause, so close to Kanda’s face that he could smell the nicotine that already resided on his skin. -Unless he dumped you, that’s it. Aren’t you alone for a winter night like this since classes are over? –

The tallest looked over his shoulder. The soft voice of the current playing movie crooning nonsense. Yuu tried to think a witty answer, but his mind was too worn out by the beers. His brain a slow computer that could never load the page fully.

-I don’t know why you would think that. Who told you such a stupid thing? –A quick answer that his body decided for him. Or perhaps some consciousness that lived behind his brain, under the bad temper and the terrible life decisions. Maybe there, a tired and forgotten golem worked hard for him to do what was noble.

The last wall to protect those who needed to be protected when he failed. Even if that one was his ex.

“*It’s the least I can do.*” It said inside his mind.

-Mh? So, you **know** where he is, then. –

It was the tone on the sentence, so...certain. Even that it was true that Allen left him… Why would he admit that with his ex-father in law?

-Again, I don’t see why I should tell you. –He stood his ground expressionless. Afraid to break and expose that what Cross believed was true. His drunken state far too buzzed to know for sure if he
was doing a good job.

-Kanda, was it? –He asked sarcastic. Like he didn’t recall. –You know…You and I aren’t so different. I know that the brat has this…special way to talk to guys like you but… I can assure you; we are the same. –

-I don’t see how insulting me would make me tell you where he is. –

A heavy laugh that sounded like the grumble of an old lion. A villain that mocks the futile advances of a wavering hero.

-Don’t act all innocent. We both used Allen as we wanted and then left him until we needed him again. I did it for money and you did it for a free therapy that you clearly needed. Sex was maybe in the middle of the sentence in obvious different ways… but…didn’t both of us took what we desired and gave nothing back? –Cross smiled again, looking to light another cigarette as Yuu’s face darkened with every word. -So, get down of your high horse with me, will ya’? –

He waited for the Japanese to answer; observing how a tremble worked his way up his right hand, that was now tight with white knuckles, grabbing the door. But nothing came out of his mouth.

For an instant, Marian wondered if he would finally surrender to his desire of hitting him and prepared to give a single step back; already guessing the trajectory. A little amused with his irritation.

-Well, just tell him I want to talk with him. Nothing too hard right? –He touched his head provoking him, and Kanda blamed the booze for not being quick enough to slap him away. Moving in an ignored compass that was only witnessed by the redhead’s back as he left as quick as he arrived getting lost in the darkness.

Yuu slammed the door as soon as he disappeared by the stairs. Spooking a tired Johnny, that only wanted to open his own door. The key not finding the way into the keyhole, the bags that had his weekly supplies threatening to fall.

A night that would be restless for both.

The tv spoke in the language of the informercials at the living room. Dead talks that barely reached him as he laid on the couch that started everything without his knowledge, empty looking at the ceiling. Ironically too uncomfortable to sleep in his own bed; where he found them.

He pondered now, with calm and loneliness, if it was any of his business to get in Cross’ way to reach the beansprout. After all, they weren’t dating anymore. And after all, he did hurt him enough to get back at him like that.

Yuu raised his open hand to the roof, observing his fingers and how the light danced over certain parts of his flesh, like waves that washed away the darkness, for only few seconds. Lightnings on the thunderstorm.

The gentle tingling of the alcohol was now all over his extremities, warmly lulling him to sleep. Chanting a nursery rhyme so he would close his eyes and forget all the drama he was finally free from. The drama that him brought with. But as he let his eyelids fall with heavy and tiresome blinking, a gentle voice came to him. In a dosing off state, Yuu remembered how Lenalee visited
him, shortly after Allen left. Carrying with her some more beers as a peace offering; a smile that was a blooming flower in the forsaken wasteland that was his life.

Impossible and secret oasis.

-What are you doing here? –He asked back then in pretended anger. Already too tired after confronting his now ex.

-Just checking. I was worried about you. When Allen asked me to help him take his things, I supposed…-

-That I was crying a river? Sorry to disappoint. –He let himself fall on the floor next to the couch and she made his way to sit in it, near him.

-It’s ok if you are angry, Kanda. And it’s ok if you want to talk about it…I came here for you. – Her patient and kind tone made him want to scream. He let the air flow harshly through his nose and proceeded to open another beer. The hissing sound like ice to his burning despair.

-Don’t fucking psychoanalyze me, Lenalee. I swear…! -His friend put a hand softly on his shoulder, the years and pain that she passed beside his side present in his fearless move that not even his father would make.

-I’m not going to. I’m here as your friend. –She was smiling, and Kanda felt a strange need to cry that was not only repressed but punched into the farthest place of his inner space.

-Well, you are friend of the three of us. Care to explain why he left? And why with him? Mh? Or are you here like only my friend and you will take my side? -He knew it wasn’t fair to push her like that; but the pain was growing back. Like a stubborn weed in the Zen garden of his patience. Threatening to throw everything off balance with a single stain of green. Just like that right eye.

-Kanda…-A motherly tone. A rope in the abyss of treason. Hope. –Have you ever broken a cup by the handle? –

The question was so out of place and so ridiculous that he couldn’t help but turn to face her, angry once again to be left alone in that island that was his feelings with that fake illusion of optimism. She was holding a mug that he used earlier; turning it with her long and graceful fingers that looked like they belonged to a porcelain doll. Elegance and strength that converged in a person.

-I suppose. –He retorted, letting a curtain of his hair drop from his shoulder, a shield that wasn’t too obvious, but it was there for him to hide.

-Did you try to fix it? You have to do it with waterproof glue. Because if you not…it’s going to break apart no matter how much you want it to stay together. –Yuu hugged his left knee, his eyes fixed on the coffee table in front both. Listening.

-What do you mean by that, woman? –He groaned, tired. Crossing his arms over his knee.

-Love is like that, Kanda. Sometimes you really want it to work, and even when you stick together for a while, it’s not something that it’s meant forever. I know you loved Allen and I know that Allen loved you but…-

-He loved me? -He interrupted with poison in every word. -Yeah, sure. That’s why he left with Junior the second he got the chance… -

The mug made a clean clicking sound as she left it on the table, her hand now on his head, gently
running down over his hair, petting him.

-Yes. He loved you as well as Junior. –She felt the nickname weird, not calling him like that since high school. –And I think they both still love you very dearly. Maybe not like you wish, but certainly as much as they can. They love each other but they love you too. –

-That’s so fucking stupid…-He hid his face in his crossed arms, the last resource of defense against his friend. Hoping for her to still stick with him at least a little longer, for his soul was now shaking and he needed someone to hold on to. –They just have the hots for each other, and I was just in the middle…-

-You think? Then tell me…when was the last time that Lavi fought you back? Because as far as I remember he never ever raised a hand against you. –In the present, Yuu flexed his hand as he recalled how it felt to be held by Lenalee. That was soft and smelled like peaches.

-When Alma’s accident happened…he let you punch him. -She continued, carefully. –You weren’t faster than him, back then. You weren’t taller or stronger. You were both the same…yet Lavi let you punch him and almost kill him. Because he loved you. And he felt like he couldn’t atone for what he had done to you, even when he was just a kid, like you. Even when it was an accident and he never wanted anything to happen to Alma.-

-I remember him wanting me dead two nights ago in the next bedroom…-He said, annoyed. Words muffled in his hidden place.

-Yes. Because you touched Allen. –He couldn’t see the point on the discussion, so he turned to see her, a gesture with his hand that said “So?” loud and clear. His lips a twisted smirk and his eyebrows remarking the sardonic question. –I know you think they both found each other on their most awful terms. But…-

-But? –

-But Lavi really loves him. He loves him so much he fought you back. Can you imagine how painful was that for him to do? -He clicked his tongue. Disbelieving. -I talked to you as I talked to him. And if you want to know why he did what he did is because he fell in love with Allen so badly that he wanted to protect him even from you. He was willing to let you hurt him again if that made you leave him alone. It wasn’t that he felt that what he did was right; but love, Kanda…is such a terrible thing sometimes and makes us do such terrible things as well…Don’t you think? –She was now kneeling towards him, holding his face so he would look at her, right after he pushed his hair back with a gentle stroke. A sad smile on her face that had only a toned conformism with the life she was supposed to live. A hidden story that he wondered why he never knew. Why he never asked.

Yuu then recalled the mistakes he committed when he was dating Allen. How he neglected him and forgot that his kindness or love was something to be grateful. The image of how he was smiling, even in his sleep when he was being held by the redhead, violently slapped his brain, shaking him even in the present.

An accusation of failure. Everything he couldn’t do. Everything he didn’t want to do.

-And Allen confronted you earlier…didn’t he? -He regretted telling that to her. Now only another weapon in her never-ending arsenal. -Even when he hates stepping up from himself. He went to you and told you he wanted to breakup. Do you think he would ever do that if he didn’t love Lavi more than anything? -
I honestly can’t see the point of this whole conversation, woman. Do you want to torment me? Is that what you want? Because I assure you, I have that covered already… He carefully pushed her away using his forearm to get rid of her grip. Closing his eyes and turning his face to the front.

The point is… They left because they found each other, Kanda. They are the cup and the superglue. And it’s horrible for you but they are meant to be together. - Her voice strained on her worry. A painful truth that he knew had nothing behind it but a neutral party. - But that doesn’t mean they don’t care about you. Yes, they fucked up. But both of them had the sense to speak to you again. To try to set things as right as they could. I’m not saying that you don’t have the right to be mad at them…but don’t stay mad. Don’t push them away. Don’t push me away. Misery is a dreadful thing to endure alone and I’m sure that when the time is right you will understand that even when love can do such terrible things like make your best friend fall in love with your boyfriend…it can also make beautiful things to happen. You just have to give it the chance. Be happy because you stuck with your cup as long as you did…you had the chance that life gave you. Now, the only thing that you can do is let go. Don’t hold to something that you can’t fix Kanda…That road only leads you to suffering and I’m sure you are already tired of that. –

Her words echoed as he was shaken by the sensation of falling. A mechanism of the body that feels death close. The last alarm to bring you back to life.

Yuu sat quickly, exhaling harshly as he touched his clothes like a police officer in the airport at the late-night shift; looking for his phone.

Every time he crumbled, every time he was angry, every time that he felt like his world would end again with the memory of Alma; Allen was there for him. He recalled him, his gentle smiles and his careful touch. How he always had food made for him and the house spotless. Even when he had to go to school and work at the bar… he always found time to make the chores and be there for him without a complaint. How the moon seemed to be him, in the darkness nights of his inner struggles…the only light was him. In the middle of nothing, with all his troubles…Allen was always there. He never asked much when he didn’t want to talk. He never pushed him. He never even bothered him when he was at work, no matter how urgent his matter was. Because he always thought they weren’t enough to trouble him.

With a knot on his throat and regret like sour gin, he replayed in his mind every morning that he woke up to make him breakfast and how fondly he smiled to him the very first time they made love.

And like every remorse in love, he wondered if he smiled like that to Junior the first time he took him. A useless and painful question that was only glued to him for the sake of self-pity.

If he woke up early. If he painted for him. If he sang in the shower or while he cooked like the little bird he was. He questioned if Junior was surprised as well for that particular skill. If he let him hug him by his little waist or let him touch his hand until they were intertwining fingers. Because he never did it enough. Bitterly, he remembered how he looked at everything like cheesy and annoying. How he got accustomed to his daily demonstrations of love. How coldly he pushed his insecurities and fears to the side for the sake of logic. How quickly he forgot how life without someone like Allen was. How he wasted away someone so wonderful for him. And as he tried to dial his number, with the same needle that pierced his senses before now in his heart, he thought that at least he owed Allen that.

He owed him a warning about the man that ruined him more than he did. His words now working him into soberness.
“We both used Allen as we wanted and then left him until we needed him again.”

Because how right he was and how disgusting it felt to finally realize it.

Allen got back to Lavi’s place late at night. Knocking at that door like there was a fire or a 90% sale.

The museum had called Bak; whom sported a particularly bright shade of red on his face as the assistant of the eldest member of the board told him that since he was taking the morning off, surely, he didn’t mind staying at night to cover his obligations.

After apologizing a dozen times, he asked the silver-haired if he minded staying with Junior one more night, since he didn’t want to leave him alone with his mother at dinner. Unless he was fine with interrogations level ten that would make any military pale.

Of course, he agreed to the first. Being left at the entrance around eleven.

Allen was never good at confrontations on his behalf, the conversation with Yuu being a rare example of how sometimes everything could end up without him cowering to please the other person. A seasonal miracle. The consequence of this taking Lavi by surprise; as it took only a blink after he opened the door to found himself pushed backwards in a kiss; steps sure to the place of his house that he spent more time recently.

-I love you. –Allen said as he breathed heavily, adrenaline through his body that pushed for a reward. –I love you so much, Lavi. I…-

They found each other for a kiss that ended too soon, the redhead flinching back in pain, as they fell in bed a little too harsh for him.

-Sorry! – The shortest said over the other, supporting his weight to give him room to breathe. – Are you alright? I’m sorry I didn’t mean to be rough…-

Lavi smiled touching his lips gently with two of his fingers, stopping him from talking, his left elbow supporting him up against the mattress.

-First. I love you too, Snowflake. I love you so much and so intensely that sometimes I see your face and honestly forget my own name. –Allen smiled, touching his arm lovingly as he sat. Trying to be closer without being over him. – Second…fuck! Yuu surely knows how to punch! This is going to hurt longer than I wish it would. –

Allen moved the redhead’s hand down to his neck, pushing to his touch as he tensed his muscles a bit.

-I’m so sorry Lavi. I never wanted anything to happen to you… If I could do something to…–He swallowed as the tallest exercised a little more pressure, licking his own lips after it. Nothing to hurt him but enough to drive him away from his sentence. The strength in the gesture vaguely recognizable to him.

Like a tight collar that was just enough.

His lover grabbed him by the arm and turned to pin him against the bed; his breath already quick. He gently posed both of his hands over his chest, feeling his heart race inside. A horserace with
only one contender and an open field; fiercely beating against his ribs. Lavi’s right eye still had the sick color of the bruise but was now healed enough to open without any troubles and he slowly raised his hand to touch his cheek, smiling lovingly to him as he understood what he was trying to do.

He got close enough to kiss him right next to his lips, gently grabbing him by the shirt; his thigh brushing against the now tight pants of his partner. Noticing this the only thing that he needed to transform his smile into a smirk, letting himself relax into the moment. Allowing him a single tease.

—I’m sorry…did I worked you up? —

His voice was now playful, and the redhead thanked silently that the sadness in his tone disappeared. If anything, he could take a few punches every given day, but even having to listen to Allen being sad or guilty was enough to make him feel like dying. So, if he had to interrupt him every time that he was about to blame himself for what happened with Yuu, so be it.

Allen felt the vibration through his skin as Lavi laugh, now flushed against him, unable to support himself for long.

-You apologize a lot for someone that likes to behave badly. Don’t you think, babe? –He sighed and then sat again, not wanting to be too much for the smallest.

-You know what they say, better to ask forgiveness than permission. –Lavi tried to hold him over his lap tugging from the tight black t-shirt that he wore under his mint sweater. A garment that had four transparent lines that ran vertical with thin strings in tan that made it look like a fragile yet provocative piece. Two over his chest and two that curled around his arms.

He was aware of how much it would hurt if he would let his weight over him; remembering the bruises that the mauve shirt that Lavi wore as a pajama hid. So, maneuvering enough to support himself over the redhead’s legs, not letting himself fall, they reached a position of compromise. Both pleased with the closeness. Both pushing away their anxious thoughts that came and went about what they were. Deciding to get lost in each other for at least one more night.

Their favorite lie as they both knew there was never such thing as only one more.

-But there must be a line, sweetie. You can’t expect having everything your way. There must be a punishment for your…behavior. –His hand was cold, but Allen didn’t mind as it sneaked under his shirt, tracing his shape. Faintly rubbing his nipple, like it was an accident. The other hand under his chin, his thumb caressing his lips over the small line that the fight left on them.

A strangled gasp was the only thing he let out as he immediately bit his lower lip, touching his finger as he did. Not wanting to be the first to lose at their game.

-Professor…please, I’ll be good next time. I promise. –His voice was a pleading moan that was carefully cut by calculated panting; acknowledging how it would hit the skin of the redhead’s hand while he did. Something that made Lavi wonder if the pain was so bad, after all. Couldn’t he ignore it ten minutes while they…?

-“Next time, next time” …You are nothing but a naughty little… -Allen arched a little raising his clothes as if was an accident. Showing him his flawless, soft and beautifully tempting skin. Unmarked as they concentrated in other places the last time they were alone with such…diversions.
“Yes, Professor? Would you like to finish that sentence? – His smile was like staring back at Satan himself when he whispered to Lilith about salvation. It was glory and hallelujah stolen away from heaven… with a pinch of selling your soul into oblivion.

“Oh, but if it is to that face… I would sell everything I own… and still it won’t be enough.” He thought as he pulled air to breathe deeply, trying to concentrate. Every centimeter of his skin complaining in an aged pain as the oxygen filled his lungs; asking to be let out. It was like the spirits of the damned claimed from a recently opened pit of hell. Maybe forgotten, but not for that gone.

He pursed his lips, biting over them and closing his eyes for a moment. Hugging him and resting his forehead against Allen’s chest.

- You are going to kill me, Snowflake. Seriously. – Lavi held him by the waist and Allen rested his hands now on his shoulders, attentive to his pain. He sighed, understanding that his body was only warning him and any attempt to do anything else that required his physical effort, would result into excruciating pain and a very worried silver-haired angel. – What am I going to do with you? This is torture… -

He raised his eyes to look at the kind and warm pair of gray ones. His eyebrows closer as he frowned, an apologetic smile.

- It’s ok if you feel poorly, Lavi. Just tell me. We can… -

- If you say we can do it later you are just going to make me feel worse, baby. – Allen touched his face and closed the gap between them with a gentle kiss that took him with the guard down. Goosebumps over his arms as his senses pleaded for the other. –

- How about… you let me do this, since even kissing hurts you so much. Mh? I’ll be good and gentle… Professor. – It was probably the way he rolled the words. Like a purring and a song. A simple spell for his ears only that made him weak in every place except one. – No rush, I’ll be nice and patient until the end. That if you can stay with me for that long… -

Or maybe it was his eyes, like two stars, shaded by those extremely long eyelashes. Or his lips, pink and plump with a smile that invited him by his name without pronouncing it. Or perhaps his soul… that tracked him down from another life and brought him to his side. To burn forever in a never-ending cycle of a love that ran more deeply than Yggdrasil roots or the star dust that we are all made of.

- I don’t remember what you said but the answer is yes to everything you want, you glorious, perfect, gorgeous angel. –

Allen giggled as he switched places with the redhead, letting him rest on the bed and positioning over him; Lavi’s heart beating so fast he felt there was actually an earthquake and not his palpitations on every part of his being.

- Well. Then let’s get you into heaven, mister. I have a special ticket with your name on it. -

The duvet was over his shoulders; like a virgin from some religious painting that if he had at least a pound of talent, he would love to keep forever in a frame. It fell like a cape, the light deciding to paint over his bare chest.
Lavi felt everything around him just like the first second of being submerged in a pool, motions slow but absorbing. Every second a breathing experience. He pulled air through his mouth and thought, with a touch of unreality in the idea, that that was the first time he ever saw Allen completely naked.

-It’s…it’s something wrong? –He asked quietly, all the teasing gone from his tone; leaving him with nothing more than a tender innocence that seemed so out of place. The redhead smiled, his hands over the other thighs, nothing to shield them from each other eyes.

- No, no. I was thinking… -His words drifted away as Allen balanced on top of him and pushed a lock of silver hair behind his ear. His face beautiful and round, faintly blushed. His eyes big and sparkling with blessed moonlight from inside his soul. As if they were water in which the night was reflecting; stars swimming in the melodic and tranquil surface of a secret lake.

- …Yes? –Allen whispered back. The movement of his shoulders making the blanket drop, drawing his silhouette against the darkness. A golden glow over his skin; the marks that he did that time back when he wore a collar still on his skin a little above his collarbone. Fading.

Lavi thought on how he did them. Not being able to pinpoint the emotion he felt now wishing nothing but to kiss over them. Tenderness over the harshness. The silver haired on his side, didn’t remember the last time he was fully naked with someone; Yuu being an entirely different person from Lavi.

He didn’t feel exposed or vulnerable around the redhead. He didn’t feel disconnected or absent or like every little thing he did when he was finally enjoying himself was a mistake. That he was being bad or behaving incorrectly. Sex with him was far away from a fight or a punishment.

No.

With him there was nothing but warmth. Fun. Kindness…it was…

“Love.”

-I was thinking that you are the most beautiful creature I ever seen, Allen. –He raised his hand to touch him and he bent a little to let him do.

-That’s because you haven’t seen yourself in the mirror enough…-He was aware his voice was barely audible, and he took Lavi’s wrist to kiss it while looking him in the eyes. How could he ever be able to demonstrate him how much he truly loved him?

“So, you are sure now…That is love?”

He rolled his hips gently, making Lavi gasp; too sensitive, already completely inside Allen.

“It is.” He replied in his thoughts to the voice of his torment, while his heart started racing as he watched the other react. Replaying how they got rid of their clothes, so carefully that was more a ritual than a simple action.

-I…don’t…ah… -He murmured, fighting to keep his eyes open. The sensation a starburst and a firework that murmured slowly as its colors spread through his abdomen and up.

-You don’t…- Allen repeated, moving again. His words meaningless against his loving voice. A painfully slow but delicious pace that both spent fixated with each other without distractions and for the first time without guilt.
-Allen, please…! -He listened to himself exhale and immediately covered his face with a palm, flushed red. A loud moan escaping his control as the other pushed again against him his thighs touching his; overstimulating his senses.

-No, no, no… -He quickly called for him, touching his wrist. –There’s nobody else that will listen Lavi, just me. -The redhead turned to the nightstand, still blushing and trying to keep down his breath that was becoming faster and faster with each thrust.

Vaguely he recalled that even with his experience, he never in his life let anyone to listen or see him like that. A spasm that answered for him as Allen kept on with his movements, a moan that even when he tried, he couldn’t keep down. The silver haired riding him again.

-Let me…- He whispered again. His hands touching faintly his chest every time that he pushed into him making the tallest feel like fainting in pleasure.

Soon both of them were panting; Lavi grabbing to the sheets and moaning so loud that if he had any close neighbors, he was sure they would have complained by then. On top of him Allen followed the rhythm that allowed him to move without hurting him, a skill so perfected that the cold was something far away and forgotten between their heated skins. His voice was outdone by his lover moans; on his behalf only whimpers and broken words that were either encouragement or the redhead’s name.

There wasn’t a warning like the other times. The control slipping out of their hands.

Lavi felt it hit him like a flash, quickly slapping his hand against Allen’s and grabbing it as he came inside him; his sight with purple flowers that brought with them a cooling wave and a single breath of air. Making him feel his throat sore and dry; his muscles like gelatin, trembling with the soft numb the aftermath of only great sex has. Only a shaky nonsense that came out of his mouth when he tried to speak. He was followed not long later by the silver-haired, whom tried to keep all his lasting strength to not fell over his partner.

Side by side both felt how their consciousness was drifting away, Allen moving as he could to cuddle with him.

It was the first time for both to be out of words after making love. The first time feeling like nothing else matter but to be beside each other. Knowing at least for that moment that even when they didn’t say it, they loved and were loved in return.

And so, their eyes closed, and the light went off. A gently tapping in the glass that the rain sang, winter away from their bed and their hearts.

The buzzing of the phone brought him back from a dreamless but perfectly comfortable sleep. His heart racing as if he just saw the creepiest screamer in an already terrifying horror movie.

The person who was calling him had enough luck to find him with the number of his previous device, something that made him thought in Bak. But as he sat and rubbed his eyes trying to read the words on the screen, his hands started sweating with the fear he thought he already forgot. Proving him wrong.

He touched the crystal, getting up as quickly as he could. Hanging from the door frame of the kitchen as his legs failed him. Reminding him how tired he really was and how that was pushing
himself a little too far. The cold creeping on his back after getting away from his lover. Almost immediately missing him.

-Yuu? –He answered as quietly as he could. His voice harsh and croaky. A sharp pain that stabbed him behind the eyes as a migraine threatened for him to go back to sleep.

-Hey. –The man at the other side of the line sounded nervous, which only made himself feel worse. A growing sensation of disaster that approached imminently.

-What…what is it? –

-Listen…-A pause that made him look over his shoulder. The redhead soundly asleep. –Cross came by…-

-What?! –He exclaimed a little too loud. Instantly lowering his tone. The other shifting on his sleep. -He…He went to see you? When? –

-About half an hour? An hour? Shit, I don’t know but…-

-What did he tell you? Is he upset? Does he know about us…? –Yuu could easily see the fear on his eyes if he closed his own. A memory that was branded with a terrible aftertaste.

“And you made him look at you the same way.” A regrettable flashback to those desperate tears as he pleaded him to leave Lavi alone.

-Relax bean sprout, I didn’t tell him about your prince charming. –He sighed, less annoyed that he thought he would be. The TV at his flat displaying a strange commercial about a life-solving kitchen helper. He rubbed his temple and kept his eyes entertained with the picture as he spoke.

-Thank you…-Allen was resting against the kitchen counter now, wearing the shirt he took from the taller earlier. Yuu listened to his sincere words and for a minute the light that was already buried inside him shined on his blackness; the sensation like a flash behind closed eyes.

-Whatever. I just wanted to give you heads up with him…Good luck. -And he hung.

Allen checked the phone and after being sure the call was over; he pressed the device against his chest. His heart moving it weakly as it hammered inside him.

-Snowflake? Who was that? –He jumped on his place with a nervous laugh that told Lavi before he spoke about his lie, while he started walking back to him.

-Ah, it was…it was Lenalee. It was about Timcanpy, it doesn’t matter. –Crawling back to his side, the redhead touched his scar. Looking for the truth.

-Are you sure? You sounded worried back there…-It wasn’t that he was trying to set a trap but the words that Kanda said the last time they met were still there. And in the dark, like every spooky story…made more sense as the shadows repeated them.

“Isn’t that his choice? In the end it’s not you or me, Junior. It’s his choice. And I don’t mean to brag…but he chose not to call me or break up with me while you were on the hospital.”

-No, really. It’s fine. –Lies were always easy for both. It was the language they spoke since they were kids, the mother tongue of their lives. Never thinking there was someone else that spoke it as fluent as they could, they kept going. Like locals murmuring against the tourists without knowing there was one of them with their group. Understanding everything.
So Lavi let him slip away with it. The cold back to hug his soul. Knocking on the door. Knowing the price of a lie in a relationship like theirs, were nothing was written, and everything was too loose to grasp. An amazing castle in the sand.

“If everything is right…what’s with the lies? He said his name.”

-Ok then, Love. How about we go back to sleep? –

The last jump of faith.

In the morning Lavi opened one of his eyes to a sunray that filtered through one of the skylights. He stretched and as his mind tried to order everything that was inside it, he hoped for his last thought to be nothing but a bad dream.

Nevertheless, Allen walked hurried nearby, pushing his head through his knitted red poncho, a black shirt under it that stuck to him like a second skin. He was wearing black jeans that looked more like leggings and a pair of knee boots the same color.

-Morning, hot mess! –He winked as he smiled, trying to brush his hair with his left as his right held an apple, giving it a bite before he continued.

-Morning, angel. –Rolling in the bed, his muscles got a momentary relief only to complain after. Forcing him to drop back his head in the mattress. –Are you going somewhere? –

-I’m meeting Bak and Wisely at the café. –He grabbed a beanie with a pompom on top of it that he recognized as one of Lenalee’s gifts. It was all black as well, presumably to be combined with every possible outfit he owned. –Well actually…- A claxon sounded outside, and Allen smiled at him brightly. –Bak is picking me up, sexy. –

He ran to kiss him lovingly, his lips against his, holding his face. The fruit resting on a table.

-Are you going to be fine without me? –

-Mh, maybe I’ll die. –He couldn’t help but smile lazily against his lips. It didn’t matter right then if he lied to him, he was there when he woke up. He was there, not wanting to say goodbye. He was there…

-I’ll check on you at night. Please don’t move my backpack I have everything ordered and I really get upset when…-

-Yes, yes. You love your clothes more than me, I know. –Allen giggled and kissed him again. –

-So dramatic! Take your pills. Call me if you need me. –He was about to leave when Lavi held his hand pulling him back.

-Maybe I need another kiss. –The silver-haired let him do, giving him a softer, way sweeter kiss until both were smiling; their foreheads together. –I love you Allen. You know you can tell me everything…right? –

-I…-The door opened suddenly, the claxon loud and unbearably constant outside.

-God damn, you two! Don’t you have enough of each other? –The blond kicked the door on his way in, Allen rolling his eyes and giving a single step away from the redhead. -I’m getting sick
with only watching. –

-I told you to stay in the car, didn’t I? –His hands were now on his hips, facing Bak. Lavi restraining himself from spanking him, his ass at the same level of his face; instead, pushing his hair back to try keep his hand busy.

-Excuse me, princess Di for not wanting to wait forever when none of us had breakfast. I’m starving. I stayed in the museum so late I thought the security guard was a ghost! –

-Not my fault you don’t get your work early. –He showed his tongue and Bak flinched Bak faking offense, his hand over his chest. –I’ll just grab my phone and we can leave. –

The blond was now in front of the bed, the distribution of the floor a wild mess for him.

-Are you seriously dating that brat? –He pointed at his friend as Allen checked his battery and disconnected the thing over the kitchen.

-I am. –Was his proud but tired answer. –Listen, I would love to stand up and say hello to you, but you see…- He pointed to his naked torso and finally the green eyes of his uninvited guest widened as the scene played too graphically for his taste inside his mind. Always too imaginative for his own good.

-ALLEN WALKER! ARE YOU FOR REAL?! –

- WHAT?! –Screaming back at him he arrived at his side only to be shook by him.

-YOU! You…UGH I CAN’T EVEN SAY IT! –Lavi started laughing as the blond left to the entrance, leaving a puzzled Allen trying to fix his hair now the beanie was on his head.

-What was that…? –He sighed trying to find an answer, a questioning look to his partner; who only shrugged in faked ignorance. –Anyway. I love you. –They kissed again and Lavi got sure to keep eye contact with Bak, that just peeked through the door. An expression of impossible disgust on his face.

-Can you stop sucking face, please? Just get married already so you can spare us all from your long goodbyes and your cheesy comments about each other. Please! Maybe like that you will be tired of being around each other all the time and will finally be decent for your poor friends! –

-MAYBE WE WILL, IDIOT! –He threw a pillow at him that thumped at the door, making him disappear, his shoes clicking as he ran downstairs.

-We will? –An impossible smile that threatened to stretch too much the stitches inside his mouth.

-I said maybe, don’t get too excited you are still recovering. Bye, Lavi! –His laugh as he ran outside ringed in his ears for hours. Fighting against his growing insecurity. In the end…what was that call really about?

-I’m just saying…-

-If you want so much to go to a wedding, I suggest you get married and stop messing with other people relationships. –Wisely was now parking at the entrance of the café. A green and white two wailed mermaid in a circle as the sign of entrance.
He was wearing a white shirt with a loose cotton coat in blue. The border of the cloth thick and soft, filled with cotton with Asian motives in gold. Navy joggers that let him move comfortably and short puffy boots in white that Bak always said were too ugly, but he knew he secretly envy them.

-Guys…-His head was starting to pulsate with a headache, and he sighed as they descended the blond’s car. –

-Allen you can’t even pass one night without sleeping with him, I mean…-Wisely observed them as he tied the band that pushed his hair out of his face. His best friend and his recently new addition to his friendship circle discussing the same topic all the way over there. The silver-haired red like his clothes; almost like a stop light. Contrasting amazingly against his usual paleness.

By his side Bak was sporting a graphite wool jacket with a v cut. Black jeans and a black sweater over his white dress shirt. A green scarf that complimented his eyes hanged stupidly from his neck, not covering him and being only a fashion statement.

-H-How can you say that?! You don’t even know!! -They kept walking with him and Wisely thought how life was so much interesting when you were with friends like that instead of his family. Even the headache was worth it.

-He was naked! Do you want me to spell it for you?! What are you going to say? That he just sleeps like that and you are a saint and don’t even think in riding that disco stick like a…-

-AHHHH! Shut up Bak! –Allen pushed both of his hands in his face and the blond almost fell backwards as they were near the stairs to the second floor of the establishment. The door emitting a soft noise at it closed back.

-Kids, could you please tone it down. I thought we had serious business to address in this meeting. –A double apology that was already forgotten as they ordered their beverages to sit later at their chosen table. –And for what is worth…I also think you two should get married. –

The blond laughed in victory, Allen complaining with a childish moan that made him laugh as they were walking up the stairs. A perfect blue sky outside the windows.

-Yuu called me last night. –Wisely observed how Bak rolled his eyes with the corner of his, keeping a straight face for Allen to keep talking. His friend taking a photo of the three cups with their respective names. –It was about my stepfather…He said he is looking for me and…-

-Woah. You didn’t say that on the phone….He didn’t know much about Allen, but Wisely Kamelot was someone who trusted his observing skills and his sixth sense. So, he waited patiently for the conversation to develop. Carefully analyzing both of the reactions.

-No…But I can’t let him find me with Lavi. It’s not that I want to keep him like a dirty little secret but…-

-But you don’t want him to know you are dating a rich dude stupid enough to give you all of his money. -The amber eyes of Wisely went from one face to the other. The shame in Allen’s letting him know that it was probably something that happened before. His phone vibrating with the notification that he was tagged on the photo that was just taken; mentally adding a note to follow Allen’s social media later.

-Then don’t. –He commented calmly, putting the device face down the table. Showing his full attention and noticing that the other didn’t even checked his. –Call him and tell him you are in
another city or that you are still dating that Yuu jerk you talked about before. I don’t mean to be rude as we barely know each other…but you strike me as someone who has a very gifted way into lies. This shouldn’t be different. –He smiled trying to reassure him that he meant no harm. Already liking him by those twenty minutes they been talking.

Wisely recalled how it was to help him get the redhead into that car and how he admired his decision to protect him when it was way easier to call an ambulance. His urgency to do something for the other earning his attention and his wishes for them to work. His family was problematic at best and criminals at worst; so being with people like Allen or Bak fed his soul in a way nothing else could. Always wishing for that bit of normality that he could never achieve at being around his relatives. And love, he thought as he asked for Lavi again, was something that even when it didn’t interest him for his own, he adored to see playing and being real.

The conversation continued, meaningless talk about how they met or what he liked, that made Allen feel like everything wasn’t that urgent and maybe with enough luck, Cross wouldn’t even find him.

However, luck rarely favored the cheaters.

- I’m not going to tell you that. –They were walking outside, Allen grabbing the crystal door as he walked forward, the doormat moving under their weight. Not paying attention on his path too distracted having fun.

- Come on! Is not that we’ll tell Lavi if he is better or worse than Kanda in… -Said Bak.

First it was the smell. Tobacco, alcohol, cologne and leather.

It ran deep in his system. A smell he associated with his childhood and his home. His palms started sweating even before seeing him and he thought on how messed up it was that his clearest memory of when he was a kid was that smell.

The sound of gritting teeth was the next thing that triggered the anxiety that bubbled all the way up from his gut. His hands running quickly to try and separate him from the man with whom he crashed. He felt like clothes that were dried on the sun; the texture of the star in the fabric. Allen’s heart started pounding in his ears as he looked a little higher and was confronted by the bright red of the long hair of the only family he had. The reminiscence of aftershave lotion and the kind of shampoo that men that are afraid of smelling like flowers bought.

Allen refused to face him; his eyes fixed on the rosary that danced in front of him. Red beads like his red eyes. Like his red hair. Nothing like the copper that was Lavi. It was blood where he was sunset. And he knew the price of staring at it; the anticipation nothing better than the payment.

One of the man’s gloved hands reaching for his chin to lift it up, so he would look at them. The eyes of the master of his fears.

- Aren’t you going to say hello, pretty thing? –Allen felt like someone punched him in the stomach; his first words to him an invention that had a threat under them. He tried to call for him so, like a demon, his name would give him power. But nothing came out as he started to shake under his touch. His blood cold.

Different and nasty from Lavi’s, whose touch was kindheartedness and love. This was nothing but a control measure. A simple gesture so he would know…
-Hi. –He muttered like a dog that was trained to bark at command. Cold beads of sweat already running through his back, his teeth threatening to chatter like in a freezing night. Forcing him to tight his jaw.

-Hi, what? –Cross had his other hand on his lower back, as if he was hugging him. But Allen knew well, it was just a charade to whisper his demands while he looked like a loving father. Something that he never was.

-Hi master. –He recalled how he never let him call him by any other title, everything that sounded like a fatherly name punished by rough work and hateful treatment that made him feel less than a misbehaving pet. So, he recited obediently, letting him hug him in that way that made his stomach revolt. Even when it meant nothing to Cross.

-Good. I see that you are hanging with your…friends. Do you mind having a moment with me, perhaps a meal? –It wasn’t a real question as he didn’t have any option but agree. So close to him that his scared breathing moved his hair.

-Allen, is everything alright? –Bak got close to him and when he was thinking to call for him and give a sign…or anything to let him now that he was in fact his stepfather, turning to see his friend…Cross held his arm tight. His other hand pushing down on his shoulder as his fingers extended until touching his collarbone; a warning that he knew better than his own palm. A point of pain as he was touching one of the bruises Lavi left few nights before; reminding him of his great interest and biggest worry.

-You don’t want to make a scene, right brat? Be good and everything will be dandy. –His words were impossible to listen to someone else being whispered. And he swallowed and put on his best smile to let Bak and Wisely away from it. The advice of lying to him already the only lifeline that he had to held before he drowned.

-Yes! I just…I have to go guys. It was nice to see you, you helped me out a lot. I’ll meet you at the museum. You don’t have to wait for me. –His gestures were loose and easy, but it was how his lips twitched a millisecond what alerted Wisely. Whom tried to remember why that man was familiar to him.

-Sure? –The blond observed the extravagant stranger suspiciously, trying to give sense at everything.

-I’m sorry, kids. I didn’t want to interrupt you and I guess sunshine here forgot but…we have an appointment together. –His voice was horribly social and upbeat, and Allen swallowed hard as he begged for only one more second without being alone with him. Knowing he was already trapped. –After all, isn’t every day that your dad’s in town, right?! – He palmed him in the back as he laughed, an indication for him to do the same. His other hand still iron clenched into his shoulder. A mark that he rather told Lavi was because an assault or an affair than explain it was made by the very man that even Yuu wanted to kill.

-I didn’t know you talked with your dad. -Bak pressed. A good friend with the best intentions but only a loose cog in the machine that was his torture. Pression was the least that he needed in that already hot situation.

-Yes, I don’t see he much…But it’s ok. Don’t worry…please. –He pleaded to his friends with his eyes, the only thing that he could hide from his stepfather from that angle. The hand over his shoulder aware of every movement that he could make.
-Ok then, if you say so. –Cross thought in how annoying the Chang’s kid resulted, but as he remembered how he clashed with his parents, he considered it was a fine price to pay if that saved him the trouble of doing it.

-See you, Allen. –Wiseley said, pulling Bak to leave the café; not before leaving a threatening look to Marian. Both getting in the Porsche without starting the engine, quietly observing them from a safe distance.

-You have poor taste in friends, as always. –He stated, lighting a cigarette that for Allen was already late to appear. –

-They are nice people. –The shortest barely responded as he sat in the leather seat of the red Mustang and closed the door. Not too strong so he wouldn’t get a reprimand but not too soft so it wouldn’t close at all and earn him one anyway.

-I’m not saying they are not. They seem like nice beasts. But you could do better. Like that rich boy…what was his name? Junior? –Allen closed his eyes tight for a moment, his face turned to the window. He curled his lips and exhale slowly, trying to keep his nerves at bay. Bluffing.

-I don’t know who’s that. As you know I barely have friends since I’m always busy. –He used his most controlled tone. Every word addressed with a polite and formal manner that he hoped Cross would get bored with and stop pushing it.

-Since you started dating that good for nothing, Yuu Kanda. Right? It seems he cut you some slack now. A few months before he wouldn’t let you be alone with anybody. Not even me. –The silver haired crossed his arms, but not before he pushed on the car’s stereo looking for some background noise to hide his qualms in.

-Yuu isn’t a “good for nothing.” –He refused to see him, but he knew he was staring at him. His face three quarters tilted to the right giving him at least space to breath without facing Cross. The accusations of his ex-boyfriend too fresh inside him to do it.

-He is. Did I ever tell you that you’re worth nothing if you waste your time with him? –His hand was now reaching for his scar. A light touch that made him feel sick and used, but he endured through. Tracing it to the star on his forehead. A fascination that came since the day the wound was done. Like he had nothing to do with it.

-If what you want is a meal at least let me choose the restaurant. I had plans today; you know? –The hand went a little up and snatched the beanie off his head, pulling some of his hair in the process. Something that even when it was hurtful, he tolerated without a sound.

-Don’t you say. -Sarcastic and dangerous. -Just don’t take me to Big M. –He inspected the cloth only to throw it at his lap a second later. Starting the car that rumbled Starkly under them, nothing like the clean purring from Lavi’s Maserati. –And brush your hair. I don’t want you walking with me with that Christmas tree over your hair. Is ridiculous. –

Allen held the accessory tight nodding and sighing. The need to cry completely repressed as he spoke with the most tranquil and uninterested voice he owned:

-Fine. Turn left on the next square. –
Kanda had both of his elbows over the midnight blue bar. Dispersed sparkles in silver were the
decoration inside the resin of the surface, and he concentrated in one that was especially big. His
thoughts traveled once again to Allen and how he hoped everything with Cross turned out ok.

He wondered if that meant he was ready to speak again with the redhead, but the thought of facing
him after what they both did was enough to make him feel like he was munching on a lost penny.
Copper taste under his tongue. He asked for another beer to the bartender that didn’t have a clue of
how many he was planning to ask through the afternoon. His name tag read Kie. A name that
Kanda found more suited for a puppy than a person but that he tried to remember with no real
avail.

It wasn’t that he wanted to end up wasted on every corner of London, but that place had his
favorite beer. *The Brasserie de Rochefort Trappistes.* A rare traditional Belgian quadruple that was
malty and dark, with hints of plum and apricot at colder temperature. A slow-sipping beer with the
complexity of a fine scotch or wine. Rated with a perfect 100 and World Class by several critiques.

Something that he could only taste due to the owner of the place. A student of his named Chaozii,
who was grateful that his class saved his life in one precarious situation in a dark alley late at night.
Nothing important, but then again, not something Kanda would waste. Good beer was good beer.
And if was half its price and sometimes free…who was him to complain?

-Yes, for two. –He heard as he was inspecting the label of his current bottle. The voice familiar
with a strained undertone that he thought he recognized.

He turned on his high seat and noticed Allen stepping inside the place. Turning behind him as he
spoke to someone else.

“Great. What I needed to ruin this almost good day. Now I have to be in the same place that those
two idiots chose to have a date.” But his thought was quickly replaced by an alarm as he saw
Cross Marian walking behind his ex. Choosing a table two places away from the entrance, at the
center.

-Fuck me. –He murmured tilting his beer and spilling some on his shirt. –Fuck! – He quickly left it
at the bar, his eyes over Allen as he stiffly sat in front of his stepfather.

“*Are you going to leave him like that? Alone with him?*”

-No. –He said to himself as he drank one last bravery shot of beer. Taking the bottle towards their
table.

-As I already told you, I don’t know that person. So I can’t help you drain him out. –He hid behind
the menu, the letters making no sense as he passed his eyes over them.

-That’s nice and all but Chomesuke…do you remember her? –His face lost the little color it had as
he dropped the menu on the table. His eyes wide with the expression Cross was looking for; a
smug smirk that was slowly drawn over his lips. –Yeah, well she called me and said she was *really
worried* about you and your…fiancé. Since you were both at the hospital that she works in… I
thought you were marrying that other kid; but you see…she described your honey as someone with
red hair…and a pretty important last name. -

-What? W-why would you…?”
-Know her? Come on, brat. She is one of my gals. Don’t be rude. –A waiter appeared and the tallest ordered a beer and a glass of water for him. Allen’s hands were in fists under the table as he grabbed the fabric of his poncho to dry them. Trying to relax.

-I just took him there. I don’t know him. I don’t know why’d she say that…-He tried to think in any possible explanation, feeling more and more cornered with every given second. -And anyway, why were you at the café? Don’t remember that one of your hobbies was stalking younger kids like me and my friends. –

He pushed trying to gain some time.

-You think you are so smart, kid. But I raised you. -A dreadful tone that he understood. -And I’m just saying I just want a few pounds so I can pay some meaningless things by month. That shouldn’t be difficult for you. I’ve trained you better than that. –His options were running out and he tried to think in how he could order his story so Lavi wouldn’t sound like a wise bet.

“You could say the money is from his family, but he is disinherited. Isn’t that credible? His grandfather seems pretty strict and maybe…”

-You still haven’t answered my question…-

-I don’t see why I should. –He was scrolling down on his phone. An ostentatious gadget that the silver-haired doubted he could use in his entirety; making him angry to think that was the sort of thing he wanted to pay at Lavi’s expenses.

-So, you did stalk me? That’s petty even for you. –A pinch of his real emotions that leaked through his words. Cross looking at him over his frameless glasses.

-Don’t need to stalk you when you put everything online like you are asking to be found, Allen. –

He turned the screen for him to see. A photo of three coffee cups with his name, Bak’s and Wisely’s; each of them tagged to their social media accounts. The hour and the place were there as well and, even when it was blurry, Allen was visible by the angle in which the photo was taken. One arm on the table and the other gesturing as he was (probably) talking to Wisely.

The air abandoned his body and surrendering he stared without words. Knowing when he’d lost.

-Sweetheart! We have to get you a watch, every time you keep telling me the wrong hour. Don’t you want me to have dinner with you dad? We get along fine, don’t we? –Allen turned to see the person that was speaking to him but was met with a kiss on his cheek and a curtain of a silky and dark hair that he could recognize even with a blindfold. The pet name only adding confusion to him.

-Yuu? -

Lavi was still naked, staring at the ceiling of his house when his phone rang. Somehow sure that it wasn’t his special someone, he answered bored exhausted; his eyes closing as he sighed deeply.

-Yeah? –

-Lavi! How are you feeling? Your grandpa just told me you were released a few days back from
-Crow! Hi! I’m fine, I’m fine. It’s just some scratches. Nothing important. What’s up? –He smiled listening to his friend, covering his face with his forearm as he kept listening to the call. The sun lazily walking down his bed; too lonely to address it at the moment. Already missing Allen.

“I feel like I’m just missing something whenever you leave” He thought as he pictured his face.

-If you are feeling good, would you want to go out? My free hour is at two and it’s been a while since I went to a restaurant at decent hours. How about the Gatekeeper? People say it’s pretty nice. -

-I’ll meet you there then. I have nothing better to do. I’ll just take a shower. See ya’! -He hung and rushed to pick a green dress shirt, his favorite jeans and some slip-on black vans. He selected the simplest of his watches from his most ordered drawer; worried that checking on his phone would give him more separation anxiety than he already had.

His shower took more than he intended, but the hot water and the soothing steam was too much of a luxury to pass them.

By the time he got into his car, the door clicking as he closed it, he realized he wasn’t wearing his eyepatch; both of his eyes looking back as he stared at the rear-view mirror. He touched his face, the bruises acquiring a yellow coloring making him munch on his good cheek as he thought on how awful he looked.

-Whatever. –He said as he opened the glove box, pulling out an eyepatch that he stored there mostly because of his paranoia than anything. Lavi put on the piece of cloth, successfully hiding his black eye; his hands on the wheel. –I have to take you to the carwash soon…-

He was wearing fingerless gloves that crunched comfortably as the materials clashed. Taking a deep breath as he started the car he concentrated on the road, the car vibrating under him. Ready to keep with his life, no matter what happened.

It took him around twenty minutes to arrive. A little lost around the wrong corner as he never visited the place before.

Crowley was more than happy to see him, hugging him like a brother and playing with his hair as both entered the place and chose a table from the left of the entrance; near a balcony where the sun filtered. His friend missing the star on his skin as he was always on the basement.

They asked for different dishes and Lavi was happy to know a new place and to try two new things to eat in the same place. Well knowing that the tallest would let him try his.

He was well on the food when he started looking around the place. By this time, he was already sure whatever Yuu said was a lie. Convinced, by the light of the day that his fear was nothing but nonsense; he smiled missing Allen like he usually did and not like something happen was going to happen to him because he was out of his sight. Finally allowing himself a break.

But…

“It’s funny how it all goes down. Don’t be sorry when it comes around.”

“Ain’t it funny how it all adds up when you’re always tryna’ push your luck? Real hearts don’t lie. Take it from me, I know. You’ll see in time.”

Karma. What you do will come around.

Those were his thoughts as Crowley kept talking and he spotted certain silver-haired dressed in red. Like a cherry over a sundae or a drop of blood in the middle of the snow.

His fork sounded as it slipped his hand when he saw him sit there with a strange and mysterious man that had long red hair. The pettiest part of himself told him that maybe he had a thing for redheads but as he observed him to be sure it was Allen and not an incredible look alike, he noticed how nervous he was. How his back was straight and against the chair and how his hands were fists under the table. Absently, like hitting someone in a dream, he thought about getting up and meeting him, but his idea was destroyed as nobody else but Yuu Kanda greeted him with a wide smile that followed a kiss on that skin that he wanted all for himself. A face that he refused to say goodbye to him a few hours earlier.

His soul passed to the deepest floor of the Gehenna and disappeared in the nothing as he looked how Allen instead of pushing away, started smiling, his body relaxing with the arm that was now hugging him; even when it just punched him square in the jaw only two or three nights before. He was aware that Crowley was still speaking, but he was deaf as he tried to figure out what on earth was happening. He couldn’t believe Allen was cheating on him but…was it cheating if Yuu was still his boyfriend and he was nothing but the third in disagreement?

“I think it’s just karma.”

-I’m going to lend you a hand. Just go with it, ok? –He whispered as he acted like he was still kissing his cheek, something that displeased his stepfather in an obvious manner. –Well, dad. What did you want to talk about? Have you already told him that wild story of yours that he is marrying Junior? –

Yuu spoke louder to the oldest at the table. Unaware that he was being observed by Lavi a few meters away. Although he couldn’t hear their conversation, his physical language was enough as his mind worked with his fears.

Allen, on the other side, felt like a bone being tugged by two fierce dogs. Yuu holding his hand in an awkward way over the table as he squeezed it while having a staring contest against Cross; whose cigarette dangled dangerously from the corner of his mouth.

-I heard he took him to the hospital. –He stated coldly. Kanda didn’t recoil, shrugging it with a maniac smile that had nothing but troubles in it. A strange thing on his face. Bad reputation attached to it.

-And? Is it required for him to marry a stranger just because he is stupidly nice? –The dispute didn’t ask for his opinion but only for his presence as a mere object of it. His heart contracting like newspaper over a campfire. –After all, he just did that because I was the want who sent him there. I punched Junior because he took something that was mine and I don’t like that…as I bet you understand. –

Allen gripped Yuu’s hand back sturdily. The shame of remembering the whole thing coming back at him and summoning the tears he so carefully repressed. How distant it seemed for him, calling out Kanda and establishing his limits! Where were they now? Didn’t anything that he say matter?
Was he condemned to be thrown from a place to the other like a used toy until everybody was bored of him?

Was all what he was? A toy? A tool? A piece of cake?

Now he was there at the mercy of the man that he just asked to leave him. It was him or his master. Only two options in that horrible balance of misfortune. From a captor to another. Was that what he was born for?

How about Lavi? How about what he felt for him? Didn’t that matter? If he didn’t want to feel free for a day nothing of that would’ve happened.

-Let me get this right. You know this kid…Junior. -He blew smoke on their faces without blinking. Yuu’s brow twitching in annoyance, while Allen remained expressionless, too used to care. -But you don’t want Allen to marry him because you would hate to share your little boytoy instead of having some mad cash as he will do what he was trained to? –

-A strange way to put that if I would want money from him, I would simply take it. We are friends. I don’t see why Allen would have anything to do with him. –His voice had no place for doubts and Cross raised an eyebrow as his glasses fell down his nose. Taking the beer in front of him and chugging it down without breathing.

-Well, then you just made me lose my time. Call me when you get something better than this, stupid apprentice. Just remember; love doesn’t pay the bills. Love doesn’t last forever. And in your case kid…you should be specially worried about that. –He threw a contact card over the table and after taking his jacket, started walking outside the place. Not caring about leaving a single penny to pay his part.

Allen listened to his steps without raising his eyes from the card. Counting to one hundred after he disappeared behind the door. Fleeting thoughts of what he would want to say but he kept along with everything he usually felt.

“I’m not a piece of cake for you to just discard.”

Yuu already let his hand go, touching his arm in an oddly gently way that only annoyed him more. He knew he was trying to make sure he was fine, but he shrugged so he wouldn’t touch him. Still feeling like trash when the man that was supposed to care about him the most just saw him as a walking wallet.

Allen stared at the card thinking as he counted, how much of a coward he was. How he couldn’t stand up just one more time for his own sake. How he always needed someone else to save him only to later do the same to him. Trust was a hard thing to build and so easy to break.

“You are losing your temper. Don’t you think they won’t remember? You’re only sorry when you’re coming down. This is only what you deserved for what you’ve done.”

After he reached the number he intended, he stood up and quickly walked outside, his hands shaking as he looked for what he managed to take from inside the car of his stepfather and had on the front pocket of his jeans. A nervous habit of quick hands and bad behavior.

-Hey! Allen, wait! –By now, Lavi had the last confirmation about their identities.

He observed Yuu looking quickly for his wallet. First in the pocket of his red flannel shirt and then in his torn jeans. He had the camel ankle boots Marie and Miranda gave him his last birthday and under the flannel the white shirt that seemed to be his favorite. He wondered why he was paying
attention to those details as he observed Kanda finally found the money and dropping it over the table as he ran after Allen. Unable to move himself.

His heart was a dried fruit by then. Once a beautiful and juicy apple, now a languid and chewy piece of beige that yoga moms dared to call a dessert or a snack.

“Maybe I’m having a heart attack.” He thought as he sat there, watching everything without even thinking on calling him out loud. “Isn’t It hard to know the difference between that and a heartbreak?”

Outside, Allen was doing something that he had years of not doing. His boots sinking in the pebbles that decorated a small side way between a wall of the restaurant and a bush. It was right beside the doorway and the employees didn’t pay him attention as he exhaled and pushed his hand against his nose in a up movement, trying to not start crying as the crybaby he was.

-Are you smoking?! –It was Yuu. Allen had now a crossed arm around his chest and the other supported by it where the cigarette he just lit was. He stared back at him, observing that he ran over there. His voice raised and shocked. All those years and he never knew about that little secret. He thought.

-What does it look like? –He let the last part of the smoke through his barely open lips and his ex-boyfriend felt it like a personal attack. He started to move his right leg, bouncing it as the stress tried to take him again. Facing his stepfather and his ex, proving to be too much at the same time.

“Being caught cheating, the fight, taking Lavi to the hospital... your phone. You want to keep going on?”

“Shut up.”

Kanda observed quickly around them, pulling the cigarette from his fingers and dropping it to get lost among the stones. Over them the neon sign of the place blinked. Its blue light winking at their closeness. He towered over Allen, his face so near his nose would touch him if he as much as breath too deeply.

-What now, Yuu? Are you going to kiss me? Will that be the price of being such a nice guy? – Kanda hated that look on him. His eyes drained and empty, his cheeks pale as his usually pink lips. Not a single trace of any of his beautiful smiles. Nothing that would hint about how he was one of the most amazing people he ever met. Nothing. He was nothing but contempt. A dead man.

Allen didn’t mean to spite at Kanda like that, but as the last trace of the smoke disappeared with his words, he knew he wouldn’t be able to stop it. Everything beyond his grip.

The Japanese knew it, but the choice of words still pushed him on the wrong buttons.

It was because he was upset. Upset at himself. Upset at Cross. Upset at Junior.

He held his face in a rough way, knowing how he couldn’t pull away unless he gave a step back; unable to do it as there was no place for that. Nowhere to run. He thought that maybe the staff would think he was choking him, but as the clatter of the cutlery inside continued, he figured there was no one there willing to interrupt them and proceeded.

-Would you want that? –Allen wasn’t even raising his hands to push him away, already defeated and done.
He knew that position and it fueled the wrath inside him, knowing that he would do nothing to defend himself. How could he do that? Just let everything be after everything they went through. After all that Lenalee did trying to help him…trying to help them.

-I rather die than be unfaithful to him. –There it was. A spark of fire that even when it wasn’t enough to push him away, it was enough to let him know he was still alive in that empty shell. His eyes a secluded anger than boiled deep.

One that he never met but was willing to.

“How much is needed to drive you to the edge, beansprout?”

-I would love to know you told him that the first time he kissed you. –As they got closer Kanda couldn’t help but remember how many of their discussions ended up in sex. The only place where Allen fought better than in a battle of wits.

-You would be disappointed. I kissed him first. –He knew Allen’s bravado when he saw it, but the words had a special pride on them that he couldn’t help but believe without resentment. His face a little raised, his eyes now with the crescent vindictiveness that was bubbling its way up the surface.

-I bet, Snowflake. –Now Allen had a hand over his chest, a firm push that he decided to ignore as he felt himself getting hotter in the argument.

-Don’t you call me that…! –As his voice was louder, he decided to apply a little more pressure on his grip over his face knowing well which his limits were. The silver haired using a tone that he never met before.

-Do you think it counts as cheating if you just kiss your ex goodbye? -He tested; earning only a scowl from the shorter. A dead-end for sure. But that wasn’t for his own pleasure, but for the other’s sake. He repeated to himself. -Because I think we have no choice. Marian is still at his car and I assure you, he’s observing you to see were the lie ends. -Allen looked for the car and he spotted the red Ford close by, grabbing Yuu by the shirt in reflex without moving his head. -So… unless you want to give Junior’s address to him personally, I suggest we make this farce more credible… –

He gave the last step towards him, his right leg in the middle of Allen’s. He felt how he pulled him hard and rough from his white shirt and as his lips met, he pushed a little farther so their bodies would be touching. Just like when they dated.

“Rough kisses and angry sex.” He recalled.

Yuu didn’t plan anything about them. It was just what happened. Cheap therapy, Cross called it. And it was true. Every problem was erased from his life when he kissed him against a wall. He was tender just once or twice. But then, he arrived home upset and discussed with him just to make him upset too. Then, after he slammed him against the table or the shower, or the fridge or whatever furniture that was unfortunate enough, he would fuck him until both were so tired that the argument wasn’t important anymore.

It wasn’t love. But it was what was there.

Allen’s white skin was usually branded with his hands and even when sometimes he felt bad about it, mostly it was a matter of pride. Because he was his and no one else’s. When his life crumbled down, Allen would be the only thing that would remain for him to claim. For him to hold onto.
But now?

The kiss was supposed to be just a peck, but as his tongue wrestled angrily with his he figured that was it. His teeth crashed with Allen’s and he smiled inside himself as he imagined the face that Junior would have if he ever saw them kiss like that. A petty thing to do, but one picture he enjoyed it because it was only that: a fantasy of revenge.

Did he know him like he did? Did he know how he mewled against the wall between pleads to be let go? Did he know about the thousand toys or the dirty mouth that was hidden behind his smile? Was he aware of how easy was to get him going in a public space or how quickly he came when he thought someone would catch them?

Lenalee asked him if he loved everything about Allen. From the good to the bad. And he concluded that he didn’t.

It was just that. Cheap therapy with great sex.

And what about Lavi? What was Allen for Junior? Did he love him with all his messy life and kinky sex? With his sugar and his spice? Did he love him even knowing that some days there wasn’t anything nice in there? Nothing to love?

Did Allen? Maybe it was only a stupid phase as Cross insinuated. One wish to be Cinderella, for a prince to swept him off his feet. So he wouldn’t have to wake to all the mistakes that he chose his life to be. To all that mess. To nothing to be loved.

Was he truly the glue for his mug? Because even if Junior loved him, he couldn’t be that sure that Allen…

First, was the engine. Dark and loud.

He opened his eyes without stopping the kiss and his question was answered. How he pictured wasn’t even a shadow of the real expression on Junior’s face.

It was like he just faced the ghost of his parents, or every people that was dead to him. A broken vase.

He knew his friend and as he kept going, making eye contact with him he could read how the despair and pain was swallowing him whole. But was that enough to stop? Was that a fair compensation for what he had done?

Then it was the salt, that said that no. It wasn’t fair.

“Love can do some terrible things…”

It took a second for him to understand were that taste was from but as he broke contact with the redhead to see Allen, he felt that he overstepped on something that Lenalee warned him not to.

“You just have to let go.”

He was crying. His body was trembling as they parted, and he kept grasping his clothes. His face now hidden on his shoulder.

-I hate you. – Allen whispered as the taller hugged him, moving him lightly so he wouldn’t have to
look at Junior. Whom he hasn’t noticed. –I hate that I have to do this to Lavi…He doesn’t deserve this…God, I loathe you. -

Kanda was sure that his friend wouldn’t listen at that distance and only stared back at him as he rocked his ex-boyfriend; trying to give him some comfort as he understood that he loved Lavi just like he once loved Alma. Terribly and intensely.

And that alone was already a fair price to pay for what they both had done. As there was nothing more terrible than to lose someone that you loved so much. Feeling like they betrayed and were betrayed enough. Both hearts broken.

-That’s ok. You can hate me all what you want. –Lavi was touched by a man that Kanda recognized as one of the nerds of the museum. He shrugged in the same way Allen did when he tried to touch him. A mirrored move that hurt on his conscience. And after shooting Yuu the deadliest look, filled with the hurt of their treason that he ever seen; he walked to his car, disappearing with a screeching sound of wheels drifting over the pavement.

-I love him. – Allen said between his sobs bringing him back to where he was. –I love him, Yuu…I do. I don’t want anything to happen to him. I’m sorry… I’m sorry I did that to you, I’m sorry he was hurt…I…I… just can’t stop loving him… I’m sorry… I’m so sorry…I don’t want him to leave me, I just want to protect him! I’m sorry! -

With every word Yuu felt like the knot on his throat got tighter and rougher. Swallowing was almost impossible, and he felt an electric pressure below his ears as he heard Allen go from quietly crying to almost screaming as he spoke. His heart broke a little more as he recalled how himself sounded like that when Lavi pulled him away from Alma’s corpse; trying to hug him as he talked softly to him, trying to protect him from what was already done. He held tight to the silver haired who barely managed to keep his ground. His body felt like he was melting, and he tried his best to hold him without hurting him.

He elevated a single and grateful prayer, that he was quick enough to spare Allen from facing Lavi; because if he was like that for doing something behind his back…he couldn’t imagine how destroyed he would be if he had to do it in front of him for nothing.

-I know. I know, beansprout. I know. Don’t cry now…Don’t cry. –He was shushing him kindly and Allen felt his voice die as he lost his strength with every tear that was poured. Hiccups that made him move sporadically; and as he let his hands hung while he was hugged, his finger touched the pompom of his beanie, that was now in the back pocket of Yuu’s pants. As he felt the softness of the fabric and his head was now free from everything that wasn’t cotton, he thought of why he cried at all.

"Why cry when you can’t do anything about it? What is done is done, Crybaby."

There wasn’t an answer and he knew. Closing his tired eyes on Yuu’s shoulder and exhaling while his body finally gave up. Shutting down.

-No, it’s ok. He just… He had an awful day. I’ll take him home, don’t worry. –He was talking to someone that Allen didn’t care; and as he felt unable to open his eyes any further than two millimeters, he let him take him to a cab, both seated in the back in silent. His body like rag doll, resting against the other.

With the murmur of the car he closed his eyes and Yuu had to carry him back into the apartment they once shared. Putting him down only to open the door. Grateful that his whole job was dealing with weights and being strong.
When he opened his eyes again, he was in bed, his ex-boyfriend sitting next to him on a chair from the dinner, texting frantically.

-What…? – He managed to say. His mouth like he swallowed a bottle of glue.

-I think you had a breakdown. Too many stressful situations after the other. -He put down the phone and looked at him with faint worry on his features. A few years more weighting over his head.

-And Lavi? –

Kanda pondered if he should tell him the truth, but as his eyelids dropped slowly one more time, he decided against it. A few more hours without having to know wouldn’t kill him.

-He is ok. Cross left. Don’t worry. I…I can ask Lenalee to pick you up and take you with him, if you like? Or your blond friend. I can also call him. –He prayed once again for him to not ask another time for the redhead; the gods finally on his side.

-Bak is fine. I don’t want to alarm Lavi. I don’t want him to know that you…that we…-His words were cut by tearless sobbing and Yuu quickly stood up as he dialed the number of the heir of the Chang clan from Allen’s phone. The answer on the line quick and urging.

The worried voice of his least favorite person from Allen’s friends almost screaming.

-Can you pick up Allen? –He asked, trying to remain calm.

-What the fuck happened? Why the fuck are you with him…? -Quick to be angry against him; Yuu shrugged satisfied that he was as pleasant as the other to him. Staring at the window so he wouldn’t be analyzed by Allen.

-Look, Barbie doll, you just have to pick him up. Can you or can you not? -

-I’ll meet you in ten and if he is hurt, I swear to god I’ll kill you. -His tone made him smile for a brief moment. Amused to think about that wimp attempting to do the same that Lavi tried.

-Funny, that’s what Junior said. –He hung up before he could say anything else and sat on the corner of his bed, still not wanting to face the other.

After five minutes of complete silence he ventured to speak.

-I’m sorry for kissing you. –He said without turning as they waited for Bak to arrive.

-Say it like you mean it. –Was the croaked answer that came from behind him. He recognized the resentment but could feel nothing but sympathy.

-Fine. I’m not sorry I kissed you. But I’m truly sorry that that made you cry. -Nothing but silence. –I…-He paused as he wetted his lips. –I didn’t know how much you love him. –

Outside a door was opened and closed.

-And I didn’t know how much he loves you. And I can understand that. Love is truly…a terrible thing. Don’t you agree, Allen? -
Hello again, dear readers! Yes! I disappeared again, I’m sorry! Last month I hurt my wrist and was impossible for me to write. Yet, I’m way better and I’m back to you with the longest chapter of this fic.

On the Brightside I also decided to edit all the past chapters as I think(?) I got better at this as the year that took me write this story went by. I already have the first 8 chapters edited, but I’m going to finish them completely before I upload them again. I’ll be notifying you with the next chapter, anyway.

I’m really excited and already working in the last chapter of Crybaby. It’s amazing how time passes by! Don’t you think? Sadly, I’ll be disappearing once again as I leave you with this until I manage to edit all past chapters and finish the last one. Hope that doesn’t trouble you, guys.

Again, I’m really grateful and glad for all of you that keep leaving kudos or comments or messages. If you feel this isn’t private enough, you can always contact me on twitter! @noctomata

You are part of this story and I’m always happy to know about your thoughts, ideas, feelings. Everything is amazing. Even the smallest comment is like Christmas to me. It doesn’t matter if you aren’t that good at English. I also speak Spanish and can read French. Nevertheless, if you want to leave another comment in some other language, I can use the translate, so don’t you worry if that was ever an impediment to you.

To make the bad news of me skipping here another month or so lighter, besides leaving you with this 16k long chapter I’m also telling you I intend to make a special collection of one shots(?) with holiday themes! Three for Halloween, three or so for Christmas and the same with Valentines day. All as spinoffs from this tale, of course. I’ve been thinking in a Lenalee’s spinoff as well but what do you think? Would you like that?

Anyway. I had a lot of fun with this chapter even if I wrote it like…five times? Wisely is one of my favorite DGM character and I feel he doesn’t have enough screen time in any media. He’s such a sweetie pie.

Lena and Kanda’s interaction also super fun to do. And Cross came pretty easy to me. But then, I’m blabbering again!

Hope you liked it!

Ah! And if you wanted to know which songs were used then it was Karma by Marina&The Diamonds and obviously Cake by Melanie Martinez. As well as Judas and Government Hooker, by Lady Gaga.
Chapter Summary

One last to go. It was supposed to be a dark secret, but Lavi was like in every tragedy, at the wrong place in the wrong time.
Nothing personal.
Will this change how he feels towards Allen? Forever only means something when the storms hit your house.
“Stitched you up, put you together
With cotton and feather
Gave you love, put my heart inside you
Oh, what could I do.”

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Quiet was found at the most unexpected places. Tyki thought, observing the last drops of anisette that danced on the bottom of his glass, like a goldfish swimming on a secret pond.

He was a man of routines; because routines were what gave his life sense and purpose amid the asylum that was his family.

They were all about the simple things. His job, his cigarettes, his stool at that bar every day that had at “t” on its name.

“Simple life with simple things.”

Yet, being simple was a complicated task on its own and he sighed observing that, again, the bartender wasn’t his usual bartender. His name was Doug and he was nothing but a normal beauty. Nothing to turn your head to see. Nothing more than black hair and short height. Perhaps just a considerate smile, steady hands and several attempts to talk and make you feel welcome.

He put the glass down and drew his attention at the desolated length of the bar, asking for another pour; his hand raised with two fingers up. It wasn’t that the kid was bad at his job, but he wasn’t him. And even when the place was still quite busy, there was still some room to move. Some room to breathe.

“I guess I’m not the only one who misses him.”

-You seem tired, sir. –He said as he served him, the tallest raising his eyebrows with the last word. A nod to his age that was politely rude. He wasn’t that old…right? -I hope it wasn’t a hard day for you today. -

Doug was just being kind, and yet, Tyki couldn’t help himself comparing him with the perky and witty comments of the rightful owner of the position. His words a cardboard cutout of the real deal. Barely enough to fill the space, but nothing in contrast with having him there.

-Every day is a hard day when you have to deal with cranky clients, don’t you think? -He smiled at
the boy, wishing for him to leave.

-I guess...But don’t worry! Here we’ll make sure you get what you need! –

“Excellent client service. But…”

-Thank you. –

“Just leave.”

The cigarette was tapped two times against the ashtray as he used to do before he drew another breath. He closed his eyes, letting the smoke out in a thin line, the music vibrating under his seat. The lyrics passed through his mind in a lazy and slow pace that stuck to his skin. Honey with coffee. And without noticing, he switched with the beat from one idea to another until reaching the reason of his tension.

Tyki was never fond of drama. Not in movies, not in theater and specially not in life. It was that the main reason why he tried once, and only once, to hit on the silver haired that was now missing from his routine. His pretty smiles and sharp looks only a façade for all the work that was meeting him.

He liked pretty things and Allen, right there, was one of the prettiest things he had ever seen. He liked talking to him and observing him move like a dancer on the stage; yet the charms and skills of the boy were nothing against the shadow of the man that he was dating. A horror story on his own. Tyki saw him two or three times before, and one of them had with it the memory of a guy being absolutely crushed against the bar when he was flirting with Allen. So, he kept his hands to himself.

“Better safe than sorry.”

That was how he handled drama, with a single step back. Nothing bad can happen to those who obey the rules. Or at least, that was what he thought.

His golden eyes concentrated again on the liquid inside his glass, his hand absently moving it in circles in an act of ambiguous autohypnosis. He thought about his family, the reflection of his own eyes inside the drink a trait that they all shared. And just like a summoning spell, his phone ringed in short but strong buzzes. Two messages in the group chat he shared with them. A new superstition growing on his heart.

[Wisely: Hey, do we know this guy?]

A photo was attached to the question. A man with long, red hair and thin framed glasses. He was tall and had a leather jacket in some color that he couldn’t care to identify; as well as a body language that spoke for him as loud as a first-row speaker in a concert. Beside him, his favorite bartender stood in an outfit that would be a heart-stopper for most of the regulars at the bar; but his posture and his missing smile made him look closer for a clue he didn’t really want to find. His younger years in the family business showing up again.

Carefully, he left his cigarette aside, letting it balance in the small gaps of the corners of the crystal ashtray. A long exhale that tried to relax his body for his answer; picturing the smoke like fog inside his mind. Protection against unwanted stress that surely was yet to come.

[Road: That’s Allen, silly! My future husband!]

Tyki considered answering to his sister but found himself too tired to deal with her impossible
crush. His fingers lingering over the digital keyboard that let space for the chat to move as the responses appeared.

[Wisely: I mean the other dude.]

A smile appeared over his lips as he could feel his cousin exhaustion over his reply, a perfect reflection of his own sentiment. Then, he started typing, careful to not being screwed over by the auto-corrector; which he equally loved and despised. Technology a touchy matter as he grew tired of constant upgrades to learn.

[Tyki: That’s Cross Marian; Allen’s stepfather and father’s colleague. What’s with him?]

Three points that appeared drumming as Wisely wrote. Tyki observed them move, taking again his cigarette as he waited. Suddenly they were gone, leaving him with one eyebrow up and a question that he now demanded to be answered. They showed again, only to vanish one more time without any trace from his cousin. He tapped his fingers against the bar shiny surface, letting more smoke out between his parted lips.

[Wisely: Thanks.]

That was all.

Wisely was his favorite cousin.

He never cared about anything but his designer career and his extravagant fashion sense. He liked playing board games with his nerdy friends and dedicated his life to patiently listen to everybody over flavored and seasonal coffee. He was currently finishing a master and Tyki couldn’t be prouder of him. He stood away from everything that happened with the family and chose a life with simple things just like he did.

Unlike his sister.

Road, on the other side was an irregular student that never wanted to do anything but troubles. She was already pushing twenty-seven, but she always acted like she was still eighteen. And just like someone still on her teens she devoted herself to break the heart of her big brother, her only brother, by sticking with the family business.

Their father was a powerful man that exchanged his name for his job; his current nickname being the Millennium Earl... As if his bizarre appearance wasn’t enough to make his occupation obvious. Nevertheless, they were what they were and there was no escape to that. Thinking it over, he was probably the black sheep, being an economist in a criminal mafia family. He sighed cringing at the thought of his little sister being so eager to participate in whatever shady business their parent asked, to the point that she even ditched any formal education in pursue of an “important” position in the industry.

He understood about the twins. After all, Jasdero and Devitto weren’t precisely the sharpest tools in the shed. If anything, the criminal life gave them something to earn the roof over their heads and the food on their plates…but his sister…

“What’s wrong with the simple life?”

And as he turned his head to the sound of broken glass, he realized…that what was wrong was that life is never really that simple.
-I’m sorry Lavi! Doug apologized quickly as the familiar redhead moved his hands shaking the
tbooze that was spilled over his sleeves, that were now being rolled further up his arms. The
shortest embarrassed of being a mess in front of the only man that was kind enough to help him
when he first started going to gym. So many and forgotten months ago.

-No biggie. –He sighed, visibly tired. He looked from a side to the other for something to clean his
hands, a bunch of napkins being handed to him. -Thanks. I guess today is not my day. –

-That makes two of us. Want to talk about it? They say misery loves company. -Tyki wasn’t sure
the redhead would remember him from the other night, but he pushed his luck a little. At least he
wanted to know why Allen wasn’t around; the last time he saw him he was kissing with the
redhead. Now his nonappearance messing up his routine and, killing two birds with one stone,
getting rid of his cursed family thoughts.

He offered him the drink that Doug left with him as an attention before he could even finish his
current round; the other man gifting him the faint ghost of a smile in gratitude, taking it.

-I’m not sure you want to hear the tragic love story of a stranger over a glass of bourbon on a
perfect night like this. –Lavi looked like he was apologizing and at the same time it felt like he was
already done for, a mood that only made him more interested on his wellbeing. His brotherly
nature showing up.

-Well, how about over pool? I know a place that’s close by. -The winner of the bet they previously
had on their first encounter raised his eyebrows and let a weak laugh out, shrugging.

-What the hell, why not? It’s not like I want to head home anyway…-

They moved over, and a game after another, Lavi told the tale of how he met Allen Walker and
how everything turned upside down inside his heart. From the secret dates, to the unfair fight and
how everything seemed to end with that kiss that he wished he never saw.

He recalled, in the last parts of his story how he was at that restaurant and how he felt like
Crowley’s voice was being silenced. Muted, against the sight of Allen sitting a few tables away
with a total stranger. It was like the world turned the volume down waiting for him to focus. He
remembered how his heart slowed down, one heartbeat after the other in weak motions like a
distant knock on a lost and broken door. And how it crunched like a candy wrap under a toddler’s
foot when he saw Yuu kissing him on the cheek like nothing ever happened. He told Tyki about
their talk at that strange hotel and how he insinuated that they were still a thing. He even told him
about the phone call in the middle of the night and described him how everything started spinning
when he saw Allen leave and Yuu ran behind him.

But all of that wasn’t even the shadow of what it was being inside his skin at the moment; fables
just as good as its teller’s ability to narrate. Everything feeling like a ride on the spinning cups gone
wrong. An earthquake and an airplane going down in turbulence. All at once.

Lavi relived how he felt like fainting, with purple chrysanthemums flowering on his sight
shadowing the corners of the world. The clicking of the plastic as he let his black card hit the table
resonating inside his bones; a sudden chill that sneaked inside his clothes. Bodily torture.

-I need to go outside, Crow. I need to breathe. – He said back then, his words underwater; clumsy
but quickly moving out of the place. The speech of his worried friend not reaching him in the
middle of the sudden nausea that assaulted him.

Was that because of the meds? Maybe. Was it a good idea to be mixing them with alcohol now?
Probably not. But who cared, life was a risk.

“A bet.”

Lavi remembered walking and thinking that if he could only reach his car and sit in there for at least five seconds with his hands on the wheel everything would make sense. The world would stop shaking and his pressure would settle, and everything would be right. Only five seconds.

Five seconds that never arrived.

The crunch of their shoes against the stones. Their bodies together. The black and expressionless eyes of his friend.

And then a sentiment that wasn’t anger but wasn’t sadness either.

It was something in between and something beyond. Pain, cold, dizziness... An out of the body experience, or more precisely, the sensation of his soul being sucked away from his body tortuously slow. Like blacking out in a terribly planned stop motion.

A personal circle of hell that was just about Allen. All without him.

He blinked and all that was there were the streetlights and the sky that was purple and pink like an adolescent dream of starry nights. Everything was fading and the question about the longest heart attack in history or the feeling of a truly and hopelessly broken heart swung in the middle of his respirations. Another blink and there he was, talking with Tyki...Confessing.

What a wild ride.

Tyki listened to that man in between plays, the clicking of the balls crashing with each other over the pool table an analgesic for the soul. He listened attentively, and as the story developed, he found himself involved in it like a reader to a great novel, hooked on the plot. He sighed at the closure, the end like a story that wasn’t really finished. At least lightning another cigarette, his black jacket on a nearby chair.

-I don’t know kid. – He said now that Lavi finished his narrative. -It sounds fishy to me. –

-Fishy? – It was his turn now and the brunet bent near the table as he slowly moved the cue to calculate his next move; not willing to lose regardless of the situation.

-Yes. If you ask me, with all of what you just told me...It sounds like your friend Yuu is lying. -He pushed the cue and his target ball missed the pit; instead making one of Lavi’s fall in it, earning him points.

-Thanks. -The redhead addressed with an amused smile that got him a shrug. -But the call…-

-I’m just saying that you are making the **exact** same mistake, that he made with Allen. -Tyki observed the other lean on the cue, listening. His eye over the table in a pensive concentration.

-And that would be…? -He was now moving to hit the number 6 with the cue ball and Tyki took advantage of his proximity by pushing him a little with his shoe with the intention of making him fail, without avail. A well-meant glare that was almost a joke with a now more relaxed redhead.

-You don’t talk to him. I mean, I know what you said and honestly it sucks that they were kissing
but…didn’t you said that Allen seemed weird? You knew them when they were in “good terms” yet you say he was acting weird now. Don’t you think that’s worth asking him? -Lavi made his play and sighed, pushing his hair back and staring at the ceiling for an instant, considering his words.

-But what if he lies to me again? –

-Then ask again. If you love him, you should. If he loves you, he will tell you the truth eventually. Ask until he breaks. -He shrugged again and Lavi considered his proposition. -Judging by how he kissed you over a bet at his workplace…-Raised eyebrows that wiggled playfully. -I think he loves you very much. So, kiss and makeup, kid. Everything will be fine. -

A smile that was slowly painted over his lips until he was unable to restrain it. The memory of Allen telling him he loved him.

When he was drunk, when they were making love, when he was with him in the kitchen, when he smiled…Every time he said his name, every time he smiled for him.

Every moment that was just him.

“It is worth it.”

-Yeah, I guess I’ll do. –

Regardless…it was one thing saying it and it was certainly another to do it. Lavi thought as he found himself greeting a very confused guard at the museum parking lot entry.

He opened the door of his Maserati and crossed his arms as the cold atmosphere hit him with reality. How was he supposed to ask Allen about it?

“Hey baby, not that I doubt you or anything, but have you been kissing Yuu behind my back?”

- Honestly, I don’t know how to talk…- The sky still held a bit of the purple haze that it had when he met Tyki; the afternoon and the night the same thing at winter. He walked to the entrance, convincing himself not to run, surrounded by the deep darkness of the subterranean parking space. With his senses palpitating on a strange and childish alert he pushed the button to call the elevator a million times in a second in a desperate movement to make it appear. Quickly for him, it appeared, saving him from some imaginary demon that roamed the place at night. He sighed in relief inside the machine; every floor marked by a jingle until the door opened at his destiny.

The Black Order Museum was already closed for visitors, and the halls were deserted. Only the warm light that was dimmed to protect the works that hanged silently like dormant guardians.

Lavi crossed his arms behind his back and relaxed, the museum a place that belonged to him. With the smell of old paintings, polished marble and clean spaces to perfection. Plus, no one else to face but himself and his thoughts. He walked slowly, taking a special pleasure in the sound of his shoes against the clean floor. Gentle whispers in the nothing. Just him and the way the air circulated in the building.

He stared at the paintings without really seeing them; ghosts of the histories that once were. Thinking over and over again about the words of Tyki at that pool billiard.
The man was right, talking to Allen was the right choice to make but…

“But do you have the balls to do it?”

Lavi was good at fighting (when it wasn’t against Kanda), he was good at complaining and even good at debating…but making that question appealed to the one thing he sucked at the most. And that was dealing with his feelings.

He turned to the left at one of the corners, submerged in his thoughts. His sight passing from a painting to the other until The Evening Angel was in front of him.

There, the angel gazed into the horizon, sitting in loneliness. A melancholy with him that was his only companion. The sun about to die in orange blood with gray undertones; his hand over his cheek and a city lost in the remoteness. It was his solitude what made the redhead think that he was waiting for someone else to appear. Someone else to arrive…Lavi’s body recreated his posture from that date with Allen without him noticing. The exact same moment when he was staring at that very same painting and then…then they…

His heart stared racing at the memory of his face.

How they kissed, how they held hands…how he promised at his house…

“Don’t let me go, please…”

-Lavi? –

The redhead visibly jumped, his teeth sinking on his fist as he was close to scream. A familiar voice few steps behind him.

- WHAT…?! -He cleared his throat, smiling in embarrassment. Trying to excuse his outburst. -What is it? -He rephrased with a more calmed tone. Finally addressing the newcomer.

-Sorry, didn’t mean to scare you. I was just finishing my work and I saw you there and I wondered…-Bak’s phone rang and he looked at him with a worried expression that made him remember the fact that Allen was supposed to be with him. -I have to take this, excuse me. -

The blond answered in a side room, closing the door behind him, nevertheless his voice audible without making sense among the walls. Muffled screaming of an obvious discussion that ended as abruptly as it started.

Lavi waited as patiently as he could for him to be out again, his hands now in the pockets of his jeans, his sight on the vaulted ceiling as he tried to keep that sensation that nested on the back of his neck that something wasn’t exactly right. And he wasn’t thinking about the kiss…

The call didn’t take Bak longer than two minutes, he noticed after checking his watch; the other storming out the place quickly, spooking him yet another time. The door hitting the wall as it was pushed open.

- I have to leave. -Bak said as his face tried to settle the redness of his obvious anger. -I’ll talk to you later. –

-Wait! Bak! Where is Allen? –He tried to reach him, but the lift was already closing its doors and the blond had no intention of stopping it. His back resting against the furthest part of the thing. Lavi gave a few steps towards it and saw him pale; white as the papers he hated to address. A dramatic change of color on his features that only called him out. -Bak? –
-He is fine. Don’t worry. –A fake smile and shaking words.

“Liar. And a bad one…” The redhead thought, biting his lower lip as the shortest disappeared behind the metal doors, away from his sight.

Chang avoided his gaze and looked to the floor as soon as he realized his question before it happened.

“Great, now I’m fucking scared.”

Driving was a distraction. His hands sweating against the maneuver, textures contrasting in relevant sensations that kept him away; the white lights momentarily flooding the car in an imitation of a divine illumination.

Lavi realized he was speeding when the car softly jerked, complaining about his mistreatment, as he took at a turn to the last place where his mind sought peace. Allen wasn’t answering his phone and even when he didn’t want to be like Yuu, he understood his insistent calls and messages when he was abroad, not knowing a thing about the silver haired. Now, being in his position, he found himself waiting for his phone to ring with a silly apology or an elaborate excuse. Whatever was fine. Even if he lied...as long as he was okay. The expression of Bak and his dismissive comment branded on his heart, that in the end remained beating.

For him.

He was aware that visiting Lenalee was out of the question. Not because of the hour, but of the state of affairs.

If he went to Lenalee, that meant he would be forced to tell the truth. To tell her that yet again, he had another issue with Kanda, and again, it had Allen in the middle.

And that was something he simply wasn’t willing to do, the last admonishment still too fresh on his mind; his nerves not capable of enduring anything else. The idea of her, making him think about Lenalee liking Kanda back when they were kids, an unspoken preference that he would like to think it was over. A thought that melt away like a timed add on a page you just scrolled over, unimportant.

In anyway, he needed someone that would hear him without judging him or reprimand him…a shoulder to lean and cry on. He needed…

He was surprised by his subconscious as he now parked in front of the Timeless Clock. His steps decisive as the waves from the water nearby murmured his mistakes, his hand already pushing on the doorbell; too late for second thoughts to appear. An automated motion in seek of a cure for the heartache.

Five minutes later he was sitting inside at his favorite table; his friend listening to (a censored version of) his story. It was easier to talk now, his chest being relieved with every word that came out, his mind like a steamed room that finally had an open window...For the second time that day.

Don’t the problems get smaller as you talk about them? This was just a need to be patted in the back.

“Self-pity is a sin.”
He shrugged with the last part of his retelling, trying to ignore the voice inside his head accusing him of what he knew. The little spoon that Miranda gave him to stir his coffee making a melodic sound as it rested against the porcelain cup.

-Well...-His friend started after sipping his tea. Only made to keep him company, for sure. -I’m sorry, Lavi. But I think your friend Yuu is a terrible person. Doing that to the sweet boy that is Allen...I can’t think in an eviler thing to do! -She put the cup down, another musical note out of it as the china clanked. Her left crossed over the table and his right going to her cheek in a motion that was just like a painting of a Victorian lady being fixated in reality. -Don’t you think, Honey? –

Looking for a cardiologist would be the first thing he would do after everything was over. He thought as his spirit left his body, listening to her words. Waiting for his inevitable death to come.

Sudden steps that barely creaked over the wood at the kitchen appeared with the last word, like a cue in a play. The huge man that was Marie letting himself be seen, walking with the grace of a great king making a sudden appearance at his own court.

The redhead swallowed with difficulty; cold sweat threatening to break through the skin of his already freezing back. Why was destiny like that with him?

“Sounds like dharma.”

-Don’t ask me to take sides. Lavi is my friend, but Kanda...-

-He is your brother. -Lavi completed utterly terrified and ashamed. Mortified.

-Yes. -He addressed him with a nod of his head. A reverence to the fallen.

How awfully he made a fool of himself!

“Nah, you were already one. It’s just showing now.”

A thousand meaningless apologies came quickly to his mind, overlapping in a mess of words that ended making no sense at all. Like cars trying to exit the same place at the same time, not letting anyone pass and ending stuck in a stupid twister of claxons and frustration.

“Second circle of hell?”

He opened his mouth to start apologizing but nothing came out, only a strange noise that sounded strangely just like the doorbell outside.

-‘I’ll take it. -Said Marie, walking towards the entrance and making Lavi feel more like a fool. He hid his face in between his crossed arms over the table; the door opening with the possible costumer getting inside as the wind howled in the street. The little bell inside announcing the new arrival.

-Thanks, it’s freezing out there... -A deep voice greeted, making him incorporate with the speed of lightning. All shame forgotten.

-YOU! -Said both at the same time.

“Fuck!” They both thought, comically, also at the same time.
At another part of the city Bak texted furiously while his best friend petted Allen’s hair, who slept agitatedly on the blond’s bed.

-He is fine, Bak. He just needs some rest…-

-I don’t know what happened to him! What I’m gonna do if he is hurt?! What I’m supposed to think?! HE WAS WITH KANDA, WISELY I JUST DON’T KNOW, I DON’T TRUST THAT FUCKING ASSHOLE! –

The other blew air to apart a lock of hair that fell over his forehead, the scarf that he usually wore, too far away for him to reach it without sending Bak into another emotional crisis.

Wisely rolled his eyes and decided to concentrate in Allen, his eyebrows almost invisible and slightly furrowed as he was having trouble sleeping. A level of anxiety that he wished only for his worst enemies. He then thought on the message he shared with his family and how his cousin clarified the identity of the man with the red hair that picked his now friend up.

Usually, he remained as far as he could from such affairs but thinking about the reputation of such person and how that probably affected Allen in the past, it made him feel a strange need to protect him. Like a lost kitten that lived in the street. Or a stray puppy that pleaded for a hand kind enough to pet at least once his soft, little head.

“He is more like kitten…or maybe I like more kittens. I don’t know.” He thought as he tried to move the pillow into a more comfortable position.

The abrupt opening of the door startled both of them; a small scream from the blond a few steps away, his phone tightly on his left now against his chest.

-Seriously Bak, if this kid is not dying, I’m going to kill him myself! I was busy! -The third party of their usual hangouts finally making her requested appearance. Her phone making the sound of a service bell as the last message Bak sent arrived.

-Foh! –The ginger girl looked at him with despise and Wisely smiled wondering when they would admit their feelings for each other. The crush with Lenalee nothing more than a phase. -I’m going to compensate you, I swear to god, just please, pleeease check on him! My parents aren’t home, and you are studying medicine and…-

-Sweet mother of the Holy Grail, shut up already! –Her clear, brown eyes that held a pinkish undertone on them rested on him for a second longer than necessary, but he wasn’t the one that would bring that on the table. -Where is the kid?! –

She wasn’t more than two years older than Allen and yet, her pride was before anything. Wisely raised his hands, letting her all the space she needed to look over the patient, who opened his eyes a little. The cold hand of Foh probably bringing him back to the land of the living.

-I’ll tell you something…-She said in a serious tone, injecting more worry to the blond. Her purple crop top letting her pretty and pierced belly button be seen as she moved. A matching pair of sweatpants that seemed soft enough to believe that she was already in bed, if her slippers weren’t proof enough. -He is a cutie! –

Foh smiled with a patience that Wisely only had seen in Edgar, the man always in love with his profession like he was with his wife; making him feel happy for Bak. Having such woman fell for him wasn’t certainly an easy task and honestly…It was more a miracle than anything…in both
cases. But Foh was there for Bak. Even with an incoming exam the next day. And wasn’t that what love was about? Being there for each other…even in the hardest parts.

-Foh! –An exasperated complaint that fell into deaf ears.

-Hello. -She ignored the blond, speaking in a tranquil tone that kept his attention on her. -My name is Foh, as you heard. I’m going to ask you a few things, do you think you can handle that, Allen? –

-Your hair is like Lavi’s. I like it. -Was the answer that he gave, making her giggle as she touched his cheeks, feeling his temperature.

-Thank you. Is Lavi your sweetheart? He’s nice. I know him; he’s a friend of Bak from high school. -Allen nodded and she proceeded to check his pupils with the flash of her phone. -That’s great. Can you follow my finger with your eyes? -He obeyed her request and she sighed, thinking on how dramatic was Bak and how much she found that adorable. -Ok, what is the last thing you remember before you blacked out? Bak here told me that a friend of yours said you fainted. Did you eat well? Do you know if you have blood pressure problems in your family? –

Bak was biting his nails and Wisely kept pushing down his arm in an attempt to make him stop.

-Uhm…I remember I…I had…I got really upset and then I…- The images flashed through the back of his eyes and he closed them feeling an incoming headache. Pushing his hand against the left one, that hurt him the most. The feeling of Yuu’s lips over his made him feel nauseated; the repulsive sensation of cheating on Lavi, that didn’t wash away and who he loved more than anything, accusing him from the bottom of his stomach. Making him seat quickly, trying to avoid vomiting.

-Hey, hey, easy! Easy…-She helped him and instructed the other two for the trash bin that was close. Preventing the worst. -It’s ok. -Foh was now petting his back carefully, circular long motions that tried to soothe him. -That’s better. Let it out. –

Acid tears on the corner of his eyes and the sour after taste on his throbbing throat.

-Are you ok? -He nodded after some seconds and she offered him a tissue. -Do you think you can stand? -

- Yeah…yes…I think. – Allen answered, trying to keep what was left of his dignity as he let her do. Curling his legs so he could hold them close to his chest.

She offered her hand as she stood making him follow, Bak running back to the kitchen and bringing back a glass of water as she took Allen’s pressure. Her fingers over his wrist and her eyes on her phone. A single silver charm of a cross with some sort of spikey star in the middle swinging with her movements.

Foh thanked him and help him sit again; taking a nearby chair to do the same.

-Were you stressed recently? –

-Sort of…-He took the water grateful, the liquid soothing on his way down.

-His boyfriend was released from the hospital recently and it was his ex whom…. - Wisely hit his friend with his elbow on the stomach, making him bend. An uninterested and disapproving stare from the girl to the owner of the house. Her freckles moving under the gesture that she made with her nose. A little wrinkle over it. Small like the bud of a flower.

-He meant to say: “Yes, he has been very stressed recently.”- She smiled to him and Kamelot
winked at her, finally able to reach for the band of his hair. Partners in crime.

-I see. That sounds like you had a nervous meltdown, Allen. You need to rest and have a fair amount of liquids. I can’t prescribe you anything since I’m only a student, but I can recommend you a psychologist if you need to talk to someone else about what’s happening in your life. -She noticed how he was holding the glass with both hands. His muscles now tensed and his stare in what was left of the water, just like a reproached child. -It has nothing wrong needing help and I’m sure therapy will do wonders to you. Sometimes friends try to help but they are not qualified professionals…and that doesn’t mean that you are failing them or that they aren’t enough. It’s just something that happens and that’s ok. –

She smiled at him and Allen considered her offer as everything inside him claimed to be saved from that prison that his life became. Desperate.

-I’m sure my favorite dorks here will support you and be there at any time you need. -Her hand was now over his shoulder. Trying to reassure him. -I’m usually busy, but you can call me as well if you can’t find them… and of course, you have your sweetheart, don’t you? Lavi will be there as well for you. We all will be. –

Allen breathed, thinking on how his existence was always tied to troubles and drama and how strange it was now to meet people that would not only like him but also be willing to sacrifice their time and energy taking care of him. He looked at Bak, searching for a confirmation to the question he was afraid to ask. The blond nodded quickly, and his friend beside him made an ok sign with his long fingers; his skin a wonderful chocolate that made him look like a model even in the worst of circumstances, distracting him a moment from his inner queries. Golden eyes that hid nothing; like a gold star. Absently, he gazed into Foh’s eyes, trying to detect a lie that wasn’t there to start with. Finding only a supportive smile that dissipated his doubts.

It was time to look for a hand to help him get out of that pit. It was time to heal. It was enough.

-I would like that very much…- He stated, finally finding his smile.

-I can’t fucking believe that you dare to show what’s left of your face here! -

-What do you even mean, asshole?! You were the fucking jerk that kissed my boyfriend! –

-Oh! OH! SO NOW IS YOURS?! – Lavi had Kanda against the small entry door, the bell singing stressed as it was shaking with every one of their rough movements.

The redhead hands were holding the other by the white shirt, and Yuu had his over his forearms, squeezing tightly as a sneer was plastered on his face. His teeth showing like a wild animal being upset.

-DON’T EVEN START YUU! YOU KNOW I LOVE HIM! – He pushed him again and Miranda moved worried about the small window that would probably give up against their weight. A stained glass that she loved and was a present from his husband when they were dating and she opened her place. Flowers that would never wither.

She raised a hand trying to call them out, but Marie put his over her shoulder, shaking his head. Probably listening to her faint muttering.
Miranda sighed and let him direct her to the stairs, leaving the two to their troubles alone. After all, if anything, Kanda was family and Lavi was the closest to it to her. Getting in the middle would only make it worse.

“How did love become so violent?”

- AND YOU KNEW WE WERE A THING YET YOU FUCKED HIM IN MY BED! - Yuu was shouting and if he wasn’t as tired and done with everything as he was he thought he would kneel Lavi on the crouch without any troubles. And would probably enjoy it…But then again, one of them had to be the grownup there or nothing would ever be solved.

-AND THAT GIVES YOU THE RIGHT TO KISS HIM AFTER I ALREADY TOLD YOU HE IS THE LOVE OF MY LIFE, IDIOT? YOU DIDN’T EVEN LOVE HIM! YOU CALLED HIM A SLUT! –

He noticed as the redhead’s voice broke in the middle of the sentence that Lavi was crying; Allen’s face and words as he held him, trying to spare him the pain to face his lover, coming to his memory with painful accuracy. Making him feel guilty once again.

“I love him. I love him Yuu… I do. I don’t want anything to happen to him. I’m sorry… I’m sorry I did that to you, I’m sorry he was hurt… I… I just can’t stop loving him… I’m sorry… I’m so sorry… I don’t want him to leave me, I just want to protect him! I’m sorry!”

His heart stopped for a moment and he breathed through his clenched teeth letting go of his anger as Lenalee taught him countless times.

“Peace in…anger out.” Her voice said inside his head.

-Yes, I know. -He stated after a few seconds, trying to calm himself down. -I know that…-He wetted his lips. Conjuring the right words to keep it nice. -Listen, Junior… About what you saw…-

-What? What are you going to say now? That you are still a thing? That he doesn’t love me? WHAT? –

It required all the willpower Kanda had to not smack him right then again, his constant shoving an annoying movement that just pushed him on the wrong place. A button for him to explode on an easy route. That, until his words made sense on his mind. Waves that were translated by a lethargic brain that was more concerned in not experience a stroke for the pressure of his anger.

-What? No! Didn’t he tell you? He broke up with me! -Lavi finally loosing his grip but Yuu remained there, careful to not upset him again, as well as trying to process the moment. His face a disbelieving expression of confusion. -He… he went to meet me some time later than you. He told me we were over, and…-He avoided his gaze as he kept talking, too embarrassed to tell him the truth, but decided to do so. -He told me that he loved you. –

-Then…then why would he kiss you? -Again, everything started to spin, and the redhead remembered that everything that he ate was flushed down at the bar’s toilet shortly after he arrived and had his first drink. His stomach notwithstanding the abuse.

He let Kanda go and stumbled some steps to a stool that was always near the door. Letting his weight fall as he support himself at the wall, the little piece of furniture crying in complaint.

-Because he tried to protect you, dumbass. His stepfather was around, and he is what’s next to a gold digger. He asked him to milk out your fortune, but Allen told him he didn’t even know you. -
Lavi blinked quickly trying to understand and the Japanese rested a hand on his shoulder, backing him up. Bringing back old memories of endless parties where he just picked him up with Lenalee instead of abandoning him to his luck, no matter the hour or the place. The very foundation of their friendship...Being there for each other. How did they forget that in the way? – Man...you don’t know. -Yuu sighed. -Cross is the worst kind of person. I tried too many times to keep him away from Allen but...it was useless. This is the first time I see him lying straight to his face. He did it for you...I just...helped him with the lie. –

-That honestly sounds like you took advantage of him and I don’t see how that would work in your favor, bro. – Yuu let some air out of his lips in a mock, amused to hear him call him like that. The boat of their odd friendship floating again.

-We told him we were still dating so he would forget about you. -He patted his back in a gesture that resonated with another ginger in a whole different place. -But then, Allen got upset and got out of the restaurant too early. Cross was still there, and I told him that if we kissed, he would fell for it for sure and would leave you two alone...And if it makes you feel better...Allen was more than against it. He scratched me, he bit me, and he cried...saying that he hated me and himself for doing this to you. -A nervous gesture that was rare to see in him. A hand that went for the back of his neck, rubbing the skin hidden under the black curtain of hair. -He never wanted to cheat on you...So...I guess you are doing something right for once, Junior. –

His hands were now inside his pockets and Lavi noticed, as he was so close to him, that he indeed had a red mark under the v neck of his shirt; as well as a swollen lip. Two proofs that complemented the sincerity in those obsidian eyes and with enough staring, dissipated the fears inside his damaged heart.

-Oh man...does that mean I got wasted for nothing? -He let himself drop on the floor, looking at Kanda from there. Thinking how right was that man at the bar...Tyki. –That sucks... -

Yuu smiled at him for the first time in years. A lopsided grin that was just like those buried in the past.

-Oh, look at that...You still know how to smile...-

Allen was grateful for the spare key that Lavi gave him few nights before; finally alone in the middle of the redhead’s bed. A fluffy mess of blankets that were more like a nest and that he now was too used to it to sleep comfortably in any other place.

After a shower and looking everywhere for one of Lavi’s t-shirts, he snuggled with a pillow under the soft, white covers. He smiled feeling the fabric against his cheek, the thermostat already doing wonders to chase the cold away from the place.

He missed Lavi, but he was grateful that he wasn’t there to receive him like the mess he was just before that wonderful bath. As he was still thinking on this, a clicking announced the arrival of the owner of that bed and that house.

The clacking of the keys disappeared with the door being shut and Allen couldn’t place his footsteps until he dropped beside him on the bed.

-Light of my Life... -He called for him quietly, making him turn. Not realizing until then how
much he really had missed him. -My stars and soul…-The redhead was now over him and Allen opened his lips to breathe, feeling his body numb like when he had unbelievable great naps and he had nothing better to do but have some hot chocolate and stare at the snow falling from the window. Tingling under the skin.

-Yes, Lavi? -His tone was steady but calm. A melody that conjured his heart being tied forever to his. Always ready to do for him whatever he wished. Whatever he wanted. He let his eyelids drop halfway, concentrated on the green eye; his fingers weakly curled as his palms were up. A gesture of complete trust on someone like him, not caring being pinned down.

-I…-He caressed his cheek and close his eye for a second, sighing heavily. – Wait…I need to see you. –He removed his eyepatch with a single movement and the silver haired observed him without moving. Attached to his place. –I don’t mean to upset you…but… -As he looked into those eyes, Lavi thought that it had to be done like taking a tequila shot. You had to do it quickly or else you would be screwed. –I saw you with Yuu at the restaurant…-

-Wh-what...? -It was a terrified response. His orbs immediately filling with tears that hurt his heart. His chest went up and down in a rushed motion that he identified as the first step to an anxiety attack and, having talked with Bak over the phone, he hurried to calm him down.

-No, no, no…It’s fine baby. It’s ok, don’t get upset. Yuu…he talked with me and…And I know why you did it, I’m not mad at you. I’m not mad. –

Allen was now grabbing at his shoulders and Lavi felt like he was doing nothing but worsen the situation.

-I’m sorry…I’m sorry Lavi…-Tears were falling again and the redhead tried to shush him gently; hugging him. –I didn’t want to…My… my stepfather…he…! –

-I told you, Love. There is no need for you to explain yourself now. I trust you. I love you. God, how much I love you. I would die first than leaving you. –

Hiccups were now his only way to breathe and he pushed Lavi weakly, trying to see the mismatched jewels of his eyes to believe those words were true. The feeling of a parallel reality assaulting his senses; looking for something wrong so his life had sense.

“Too good to be true?”

-Why? -He asked touching his face. A loving look on the other that words were not enough to describe.

-Because you asked, Allen. Because I want to. Because I promised. You asked me to never leave you…to never let you go. Right here in this room. -He smiled like the sun and Allen found himself returning the gesture as he kept crying. -So, I will never, ever leave you. I’ll hold your heart and you will hold my soul as long as you want to. –

-And if I want that to be forever? – He whispered, his voice a faint croak. –

-Then forever will be, my Love. –

Two years later Allen was graduating, receiving his degree after shaking hands with his favorite
professors and of course, earning a collective gasp that became screams as he dismissed the wave that certain history teacher of the other graduates offered him. Instead grabbing him by the red tie and kissing him in front of a now cheering crowd. Most of his schoolmates feeling like they dreamed it, as they saw how their lips touched. Lavi’s students had never seen their teacher blush, looking somehow like a fool, nearly petrified because he was taken by surprise; they couldn’t quite believe their eyes.

Allen’s class went wild, everybody thinking how the quiet student just kissed the teacher. And as he held his breath, the world stood still, but then his favorite redhead just smiled, sending him right to the seventh heaven.

Both blushing as Lavi’s grandfather hit his grandson with a plastic folder that contained someone else’s papers; the redhead still holding Allen by the waist. Apologizing with his now, patchless eyes and a hand that rubbed his undercut in a nervous gesture as the other teachers looked at him with amused and wordless reprimands; his boyfriend waving happily to their friends that were screaming at them too many embarrassing things for him to acknowledge.

Professor Klaud probably trashing Lavi as a professional as she whispered to Tiedoll. Whom only laughed and clapped, not letting him know what it could really be.

Beside everything, the old bookman offered him a job, arguing that Allen would do a better work than his grandson and then again…he was already part of the family. He would at least keep him at his toes. Probably giving him a good reason to never skip work; if their longing looks and the way he seemed to miss his words every time the kid passed was any indication.

Allen couldn’t be happier. Therapy was truly a life saver and with the support of his friend and his partner, he felt there was nothing life could throw him that he couldn’t take.

But just like someone that tempts fortune, life didn’t take his confidence right. Instead, it sent him just what he wished. A test to prove him worthy of being happy…

It was an afternoon at the museum; his freer schedule allowing him to do the work he loved close to the man he loved and still sometimes cover a shift or two at Jerry’s. Always happy to help the man who helped him the most and probably the only healthy father figure he had.

He was making a check on the last exhibit; paintings of Pissarro that featured mostly beautiful but lonely sceneries. All an invitation to travel and maybe…getting lost in a forgotten and cozy cottage with his man…And who knew…

-So, you lie to my face and then try to disappear on me? Such an ungrateful brat you are. -His spine tensed with the words. The tone making him turn as he clenched the clip board he held, tight to his chest. Trying to keep his heart that was a second before flying to fall to his feet and keep it at his ribs.

-Cross… -He murmured. A single red eyebrow that was shot upwards in an annoyed gesture that he regretted provoking.

- “Cross”? Now we get into first name basis? I thought I taught you better, useless apprentice. – Allen gave a step back looking behind his stepfather for someone else to call, someone else to notice…but the hall was empty, and the exhibit wasn’t open to visitors yet. With no hope to cling on. -Hear me out kid. I know all about your little romance with the heir of Bookman; so, let’s do both a favor and just tell me what I want to hear. –
-No. -Allen answered quietly. His hands shaking, his eyes glued to a specific painting trying to be serene; the Boulevard Montmartre Night. A place in Paris, a picture of a time that was a fairytale on its own. Lazy lights, gentle rain and people that didn’t know each other; a place to be whatever you wanted to be.

He recalled his therapist words on trying to concentrate in the good things while he was fighting to keep away the bad. He thought about traveling with Lavi and tried to picture them walking at that same Boulevard and being part of that painting. Being a piece of art.

-No? -Marian let a laugh bubble from his dry lips. The missing cigarette that he couldn’t light without triggering every smoke detector making him irate. – *What the fuck do you mean with “no”?* -He was now grabbing him by the face. His gloved hand squeezing his cheeks crudely. Hurting him. Trying to get again his iron grip of control on him.

Allen yanked out of his touch and looked at him in the eyes; pushing every centimeter of self-confidence he earned in those two years of therapy. Of support.

“Of love.”

-I mean I will **never** give Lavi to you. And you will leave **me** alone. You will leave **us** alone! -His voice sounded small, but the silver haired heard it like a scream. His courage all he had there to defend himself. It didn’t matter that Yuu trained him; he was aware that Cross was taller, stronger and worse…that he knew his movements. So, trying anything would not only end up in failure but also in pain. His mind now trying to tame the fear that screamed…but wasn’t enough to dim that light that finally lit his soul.

-That’s funny…- His stepfather bent to his height and he jumped backwards; triggering without noticing a sensor from the painting that would silently light up in the control room. Blinking and alerting an old man that just by chance…was verifying a few things around.

Cross passed the back of his hand over Allen’s left cheek and then with a quick movement he held him so he could trace the scar that crossed his features. Pulling a gasp of an expected hit that didn’t arrive.

-It’s really funny…because I remember that this star here in your forehead… -He pushed his finger against the red mark making him close his eye in a childhood reflex. -Was what you got for being a misbehaving kid…or…wasn’t it for being a good boy? It’s a bit hazy right now. Should we get a reminder? I still have a lot of teachers that would be glad to give you a lesson…Allen. –

A horrible memory that froze his blood.

He was barely five. He told the collectors he didn’t have the money that his master owed and they…

“-Ain’t you a good boy? You deserve a star for doing your master’s work. Let me give you one. I have it…right here.”

He had a knife. He craved it on his skin like he was a Halloween pumpkin; while he moved and cried and screamed…but nobody came for him. Nobody rescued him. There was no one there for him.

Instead Skinn Bolic and his sidekicks had the fun of their lives as they kept drawing. A wave and a tear. A star for the good children. A trace for his never-ending crying.
“Crybaby.” The first time someone called him that. His tears were mixing with the blood and now, more than twenty years later, his skin still burned and hurt like when they did it. A memory that his body held close. A trauma that he tried to get rid of. A brand over his soul.

The shortest was now against the painting as he pulled away from Cross; his tears already falling; but his nerve was still standing.

-I’ll never let you touch him. If that’s the matter I rather die. – A fierce stare under those twin salty rivers. Not a challenge but a warning; something that the eldest hated.

-Really? Well then, I hope you have enough time to be taking care of him twenty-four seven… Because he could disappear at any given moment and you two are really clumsy with social media. Congratulation on your graduation by the way! I bet it wasn’t hard with the extra classes with that personal teacher of yours. Mh? -He showed him a picture of Lavi. He was hugging him while sat on his legs; the graduation cap over his silver hair. Both staring at each other with equal adoring looks. Impossible to deny. -Who knows? Shit happens and… -

-And it better not happens to either of my grandsons, Marian. Or I’ll be the one that founds you and be sure you have an unfortunate accident…-

It is part of the art of war to know when you are meant to retreat; and as Cross Marian turned to face the old Bookman, he decided it was better a lost battle than a lost war. Offering a smile as he observed that he wasn’t alone. His grandson beside him with crossed arms and fearless mismatched eyes together with the Chang’s kid close to them; already calling the security department that took no time arriving. Next to column a tall man that resembled a vampire observed him angrily and he identified him as the baron that was next in line when his friend lived. So, he should be… “Alistair Crowley the…Third?”

Allen stood his ground and Marian thought it was now too much work getting in touch with the boy. Surrendering.

-I get it. We all play nice here. – And under the steel gaze of Lavi’s grandpa, he let the security team escort him outside; never letting them touch him. Giving a last look to his adoptive child as he vowed that sometime in some place…he would need him. And Allen would have no other choice to look for him. So he would wait.

“Until that day.”

As he disappeared Lavi gave a step towards Allen, the shortest running to hug him. Burying his face on his chest as he held him tightly.

-You were brave, Love. I’m proud of you. -He whispered, kissing the crown of his head, rocking him softly. -I’m really proud. –

-I love you. -Allen murmured as the redhead touched their foreheads together. Closed eyes and an honest smile that was softened in the edge by relief.

-I know. And I love you, Allen. I really do. –They kissed hesitantly, until Lavi pulled him closer, making him threw his arms around his neck, letting him do. Kissing slowly but with a fire that made Bak blush as he turned to make an escape to his own office. His heart racing like he was a teenager that accidentally spied on his brother’s date.

-Hey, there are still other people here, you children! –Lavi groaned without opening his eyes, trying to dismiss his grandfather as he held Allen’s cheek with his left; although his partner started
laughing until he pulled apart to face his relative with an angry pout. -If you want so much to be a pair of sick lovebirds then pick your stuff and leave! Go away. –

He had his wrinkled hands around a poster that, after using it to hit the redhead on the shoulder, he threw to his poor assistant. A girl that Lavi pitied for having to work for his grandfather and a little more for her unmistakable and impossible crush on Allen; whom was more than oblivious to it.

-What’s that of “Go away”? We might, old man! -He squeezed his boyfriend in a tight embrace, lifting him pushing out Allen’s bright laugh that filled the room.

-Good! Leave! Discover the world! Get married! I don’t know! I’m tired of your sweetness; you are going to give all the staff diabetes…So get out of my face! You make everyone delay their work. -

-You heard, Love. It was an order. –He stood straight, carrying Allen with him while the silver haired was still holding him by his neck; his feet a little above the ground now.

-But my work…! –He protested, looking for the clip board that was now forgotten on the floor.

-Your work will be here when you come back, Walker. Now go. Or I’ll fire you two, so you’ll do what I said! –He was already heading back to keep with his job and the two were left alone in the hall. Nothing but white walls and paintings to judge them.

-Paris? -Asked Lavi, moving the shortest to fully carry him. His legs around his waist, his face close to his.

-Rome…Praga…Amsterdam…Romania…There are a lot of places I want to know. -He was now playing with his hair, his fingers caressing the shortest part of his cut. Making Lavi shiver as he talked using the same tone that he employed to convince him to leave whatever he was doing at the library and follow him upstairs. A dangerous game to play out there in the museum; with all its dark places and his poor self-control. -As long as you come with me. –

-Oh, baby…-He laughed knowing how that conversation would end. Allen getting close to his lips. Now brushing as he spoke. -Just say the word…-

A whisper that transformed into a kiss. A sealed promise.

Soulmates that found love.

Chapter End Notes

Heyo! It’s a me, your favorite tragic-romantic after Shakespeare and basically every shojo writer. I’m utterly happy to announce I finally wrote the last chapter of this fantabulous fanfiction. Of course, this isn’t the one, as it’s marked, the last chapter is the 17. Are you excited? I hope you are. I am. I’m going to keep my really long speech for the end, but believe me, I’m already celebrating.

This was a chapter that took me a little longer than I expected but, in the end, got exactly how I wanted it. Honestly, I messed up my songs since I just finished chapter 17 and I don’t really remember with which I wrote this one. Except for When I kissed
the Teacher ABBA/Mamma Mia! Do I love musicals? Yes, damn yes. But well, sorry for that.

I’ve been told that this chapter was NOTHING like they expected but in a good way? Hope this happened to you guys as well. Specially for LeadPotato, you seemed stressed my friend and it was hard not telling you that everything would end fine. Anyway, remember therapy is really important. Sometimes life is mean and awful and terrible. Sometimes problems just keep getting one after the other and punch us in the face without mercy, kick us on the floor…but that doesn’t mean we should stop fighting, stop looking for help. This has a personal note and a social service? As I think therapy is vital for every human being. Don’t let prejudice or other people or circumstances to convince you otherwise: There’s nothing wrong in asking for help. Sometimes…that’s all we need. Don’t give up now. You can do this.

I finally announce you that the Holliday specials will start with Halloween and will be segmented in 3-4 time skips. As well, Crybaby will finish before that date and around the 25.

Aaaand that’s all. I’ll be uploading refined/corrected versions of the past chapters before the 25 of course, so you can enjoy this work in all its glory and how it’s really meant to be.

As always, thank so much for your company, for your kudos, for your comments and shares. You make me happy every time I read about your thoughts. Remember: For a writer it doesn’t matter if it’s a line, an expression, a testament, a paragraph a poem or a quote. EVERY piece of your mind, everything you share with us (or at least with me) makes our day. If you feel you cannot express yourself you can tag me on a meme on twitter @noctomata. Sent me a gif, quote me, whatever you wish. I write this for myself, but it makes me happy knowing you liked it as well.

Thank you so much! And see you the 25 for an spectacular end!

-Your dramromantic writer friend, Noctomata.
Gingerbread Man

Chapter Summary

On the last night of a couple where the stars shine and the hearts beat at the same song...What words could be said that would fit more than "I love you"?

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Insomnia was no stranger to him. At this point of his life it was like an old friend or a distant relative. Its visits less and less regulars since Allen started living with him.

Yet, that night Lavi sighed, more annoyed by it than ever; missing the precious hours he could be getting the rest he needed. He had an arm behind his head and the light of the portable console shined over his irritated features as he played taking meaningless decisions that he already knew by heart. Pressing the x button over and over as the dialogues passed quickly without being read; the characters trying to explain to him a mission he had done a million time before.

Why was he playing then? Habit. Tradition. Custom. Comfort. He didn’t know.

"Why isn’t life this simple?"

His earpieces were on but still, he listened the voice beside him when it murmured calling him. Making him get rid of one, his eyes still on the screen after a brief glance making sure it was his better half and not some random Italian ghost that wanted him to make a journey to set him free from an ancient curse. His thoughts far to the day that followed, a mess between the decisions he had yet to make and nonsense that mixed with that game.

-Can’t sleep, handsome? -Allen was facing the window. The white curtains protecting them from indiscreet eyes; nevertheless, letting them see outside.
- Holly fuck…-He laughed trying to relax; the inflection on the other’s words getting him cornered on his own thoughts. A paranoia that extended through his body with each beat of his heart. The venom of a silent scorpion for him to be afraid. -I thought you were already asleep, babe. You scared me. –

Allen giggled, still with his eyes closed. He scooted closer to the redhead, cuddling against him; hugging him loosely by the chest. The intense rhythm of the other’s heart acquiring an easier pace with his touch, as if he knew he needed it. A magical solution to his tribulations.

The taller figured his lover was asleep before and only woke up to get into a more comfortable position, founding him awake. The silver haired didn’t ask again, but he elaborated anyway, knowing he would be waiting for his response, both accustomed to each other.

-Yeah. Sorry to wake you up, babe. -Lavi kept playing; his eyebrows close as he remembered that scene on the game shorter, trying to concentrate in the menu to not let his true feelings slip. His fingers not pressing on the buttons shaking almost invisibly as he tried to keep his coolness.

-Mh. Are you ok? Have you slept at all? - He was still more sleep than awake but being used to the
presence of each other all the time, he was more than capable to maintain a conversation with him. Lavi listened at the same time the voice of the character inside his game say something on the earphone he still had on. While Allen rolled on his position again, facing the open window. The glass pulled aside letting the sea breeze in while it moved the drape, allowing the stars to be seen. He felt Lavi’s chest raise on a deep sigh and did the same without realizing as he got cozy.

-Not really. I guess I’m only nervous…it doesn’t matter. –

-Nervous? -And it was at that moment when the redhead realized that that was a conversation he wasn’t supposed to be having. He pursed his lips and closed his eyes tight, recognizing his mistake.

“You better answer or this is gonna get worse.”

Staring at the white ceiling, he considered his answer. The posts of that wooden bed that both shared on their little but intimate hotel room, watching from above. Carefully carved lines that were surrounding the things, hidden behind the delicate and almost invisible veil that extended its domain down to the occupants of the mattress. Like a privacy bubble for just them to exist.

-Because…Because tomorrow we go to Rome! Hahaha, yeah! I’ve never been in Rome! It’s the home of many, many years of history. And art! You can say I’m excited! That’s it! And the walk over there is going to be super long; I don’t even know what to wear! –

“Genius. Way to make it all look really suspicious.”

He knew Allen wouldn’t fall for that. And if he was honest to himself, he hated having to lie to him.

Since they started dating officially and after Allen’s graduation when they moved together with the cat, a lie was hardly ever pronounced between them. Lying to each other was now an almost impossible task; and even if that made giving each other surprises really hard, it was something that he adored in their relationship. Absolute trust. A love that was based on a friendship that never ended but instead, only got them closer. However, even when this was perfect for both; this was a lie that he was determined to maintain as he had already planned everything, and at least four people were behind his back taking wagers on his success. He couldn’t afford failing.

Quickly, his eyes traveled to the jacket he always wore when they traveled. The inside pocket guarding the little velvet box that had him so nervous.

-What? But we’ve done longer walks…and if you don’t feel well, we can take a cab and… -

Once, Lenalee told him that every time he was around Allen, he seemed to lose control over his own braincells. Everything he did a stupid impulse that was driven only by the smile of the silver haired. And now, knowing that if Allen was mostly awake, he would ask until he had no choice but to confess; he did the only thing he could think about.

He bullshitted his way to success.

-Honey, sweetie, Love! -He started; leaving the videogame on the nightstand together with his headset. -Light of my Life, my dear, my precious Snowflake! -The redhead turned to him and passed an arm over his waist. His mind amused that Allen kept that ritual of using his shirts and sometimes nothing else; looking adorable swimming in a size so big for his frame.

-My name is Allen. -He was making a pout, but his eyes were closed and Lavi smiled knowing he was just playing. Sparing his previous and clumsy rant, giving him an entry to start something else.
He pressed his body to his and skillfully pulling the sleeve of the shirt he uncovered part of the shortest shoulder and a little of his back.

-Oh? I know that, Snowflake. -His voice sounded deep and vibrated through his skin, making Allen bite his lower lip and barely open his eyes, waiting for him. -But I call you Snowflake because it has something special, don’t you think? -Before he could reply, the redhead kissed him over his now naked skin. A point on his shoulder that made him gasp as he let him do. Like all the other times that he asked for his permission to proceed. A silent consent that was between them like a tradition and a warning. -Besides…Do you think I don’t know how do you get when I call you by your name? Allen…-

Lavi then bit him in that special place, on the middle of his back, were his shoulder blades couldn’t touch; making him push against him and moan loudly as the redhead kept him on place, the collar of the shirt pressing lightly at his throat. Then, he turned to caress Allen’s naked legs until he reached his ass, slowly and firmly. A distraction that would be good for both.

For Allen so he wouldn’t know about his plans and for him, so he could get tired enough to sleep.

-Nh! L-Lavi?! -He didn’t say no. His back fitting with the curve of his body as he grabbed the pillow, letting him touch him; his legs moving just enough to let him know he was welcome.

-You seem to be restless too, my Love. How about… -A skilled hand that followed the line and teased down to more sensitive skin. -…we have some fun until we have no other choice but sleep? Or should I call you by your name then? Pretty, Allen. –

-That’s…ah…that’s not…-Allen panted. Already blushing furiously, the years they had living together meaning nothing to his feelings when it meant being with that man in bed. Always like the first time and worse. Everyday feeling more in love with him. More defenseless to his mercy. To his wishes. As his heart and his willpower melt against those eyes he adored so deeply. He usually was the one who called the shots there, between the sheets. But when he bossed him around…that had a special taste that made him faint and surrender to his touch.

-You’re a bad liar when it’s about us, Allen. Don’t try to tell me that’s not true. -He grinded against him and bit him again, knowing his back was his weakest point; not letting him move. -I know you. You’ve been like this since the first time I called you. Haven’t you? –

-Ah! N-no…I…I haven’t…Ah-I…! -The words were starting to get slurred on his lips, getting transmuted into short gasps that strained into moans. His negative only another form of the game they came with, as their nights became too short and their days were fueled with teasing. Half of their time they were apart; Lavi keeping his job at the university once every rumor was taken care of, while the other half they spent it together at the museum, with not many opportunities to sneak out. His grandfather watching his grandson like a hawk. Knowing his thoughts and ways. As well as his sneaky hands and tendency to lose his mind around his boyfriend.

So they did what they could; making it better at home.

-Then I guess I’ll have to remind you, kitten. -The redhead snickered when his hand slipped down Allen’s clothes and found no underwear. The silver haired letting him do as his hands got more adventurous, allowing his quick breathing to be hard as more anxious moans filled the room in no time. Lavi barely touching him as he traced his legs and up until he cupped him; pulling out another chain of panting that evolved into harsh mewls. The body of his lover relaxing, allowing him to turn him over to top him.

-It was…it…mh…It was…-The light of the nightstand was on, a faint and almost dead illumination
that gave him the colors of a flashlight that filters through a pillow fort as it touched him. Lavi opened Allen’s legs in a single gesture with both hands as he caressed them; the shirt already pulled over, exposing his nipples and folding in multiple fabric wrinkles under his chin.

He stopped after positioning in the middle. One of his hands over his hip bone, his skin hot and inviting him to leave a mark on that pristine spot. He offered Allen a smile inviting him to continue; the other raising his palm calling him closer to him. Lavi compelled happily and the shortest smiled to him with that mischievous way he had that drove him crazy.

-What is it, my Light? -They brushed their noses together and Allen tried again to talk in between his fast respirations.

-It was…when…when you called me by my name…the night you…the night you stayed over… when I sat…over you. -He was already too worked up and that single sentence required all his control. One that was quickly vanishing as he kept staring at those different colored eyes. His eyelids heavy with desire and recent dreams.

-Mh, well you do like to do that, don’t you? Sitting over me. -His tongue was warm, and Allen let out a whimper as he closed his eyes to follow the kiss; holding to him by his shoulders. The kiss went on and Lavi touched Allen’s hand as it went over the spot his heart was under. His shirt missing as it was being used by the other, but not for long.

He briefly broke the kiss to get rid of the piece and he tried to take space, holding him by the wrist; the other following with that hunger on his hooded silver eyes he knew well.

-Let’s switch this up a little. -He whispered against his lips, kissing him briefly before he turned him, bending him easily against the mattress. Knees and hands over the sheet.

-If you are too rough…-A pink blush that dusted all over his cheeks and his nose. His lips were red and were parted as he breathed harshly; his eyes glassy and with that expression that required all his will power to remain still and not just do as he wanted. He was looking at him over his shoulder, the mark where he bit already showing. Lavi licked his lips and listened to his pleading voice that warned him and asked him for him to ignore it anyway. The only solution for him being responsible for his actions.

-I’ll carry you if you need it. I promise. -Sincere words that were received by the other. Allen nodding and letting that precious face fall onto the bed; finally conceding him to do as he wished. Between them and after almost three years of dating, a bottle of lubricant was always at hand and Lavi wasted no time in getting ready and helping his partner to be; pushing in one movement inside him.

Lavi had him with his face against the pillows, pressed just a bit tough. His hands trying to hold to them as the redhead thrusted rapidly and knowing now all the right ways to do it. Tears were on the corners of his gray eyes as he let him have control; his mouth open and is legs parted as his lover held him by the waist. His hands would surely leave a mark the day after, but now that it was only about them, he couldn’t care less for him to do it. In fact, in certain way he liked it.

He followed his movements, trying not to end their encounter quickly as his senses were filled abruptly by the experience, being awoke so shortly before. His skin felt every brush, every scratch, every breath that was made against it and the electrical consequence of it was threatening to make him finish.

It wasn’t common for them to have rough sex; the two either laughing or getting worried about the other too early to even get there. But when they did manage to do so…both got sure to cross the
At that hotel, in the middle of Italy in a forgotten time by the tourists, with no one to know them or to judge them, Allen let what was left of his discretion slip. Moaning loud until his voice was lost, his short and rapid gasps the only evidence that Lavi needed to know how good work he was doing. For him, as he held him by the hips, moving at a quick rhythm, everything about Allen was a matter of observing at that point. How he arched his back, how he moved with him, how his legs trembled, or his breathing pattern changed. All were clues that needed no words for him to understand what his other half needed. A synchronized number practiced to perfection.

Still, it had a special boost to everything inside him when he actually verbalized his needs. Sometimes only saying his name enough as well for him to finish.

Indeed, it wasn’t common for them to have rough sex, but as Lavi leaned to touch one of his nipples he screamed against the fabric of the cushions in pleasure, more than grateful of that sudden outburst that was now making him feel in heaven.

-Ah! Lavi! -In a flash, his right hand flew, taking with a swift but strong movement the ponytail in which Allen had his hair now that it was longer. Pulling him back.

-Fuck…-It was easy to know when they were like that when Allen was about to end. Yet, Lavi kept moving, barely realizing he was moaning equally louder as the silver haired started to get into his knees; making him held him by the chest. Their second favorite position as it was the one they took that first time they decided to have sex being sober. The memory stitched to their hearts.

-Yes! Yes, like that…! Ah! Ah! -Allen pushed against him and his back arched as he came, resting his head against the curvature of Lavi’s neck. An orgasm that basically knocked the lights out of the shortest vision, already tired, to begin with.

The redhead tried to think a snarky comment as he still wasn’t there just yet. But his mind was too busy taking on the experience that was being with Allen; every time he touched him the spark that set aflame his passion. Instead, he decided to bite him again, leaving marks on his back that were rewarded by those mewls that were enough to get him. Every noise that exited those lips a direct hit to his arousal. One hand supporting him and the other brushing his chest in that way that made the other flinch; until Allen’s hand was over his. His fingers intertwining. A romantic final push for him to be done. Lavi felt him tense again as his fingers brushed his torso, kissing him behind his left ear shell, letting himself go; his breathing heavy and quick, his arms only responding to him for the habit of taking care of Allen, more than a matter of remaining energy. After he came, he kissed him over every red spot he made; tired gasps that let him know he was too sensible for him to try and make any move.

-I love you, Allen. -He whispered against his skin, touching his face with his free hand.

-I love you too, asshole. -A lazy smile appeared, his eyes closing as the tiredness conquered him. The previous conversation already forgotten. Lavi kissed his cheek lovingly and helped him to get comfortable again in bed. Laying against him as their bodies tried to settle down, looking for the covers without turning to see if it were still there and not lost at the floor. The redhead hugged him as the sheets finally found their way to his hand and he sighed, thankful that his mind was at last quiet.

Now tired enough for his nerves to be gone.

“I guess tomorrow will be a good day.” Outside, nothing but the waves murmured.
“Wish” was one of the most interesting words to Lavi. It could mean someone was sad and longing for something. It could mean desire. It could mean that you hopped for someone to had great things to come.

A word with three completely different aspect of the human emotions. It could be positive or negative. Selfish or selfless.

And yet there, at the Trevi Fountain people threw coins behind their shoulders to assure a trip back to Rome. Mostly doing it without knowing the reason or how it worked.

Allen petted his hair and rested his chin on his shoulder, distracting him from his thoughts.

-Do you have a wish, handsome? -He was carrying him in a piggy ride over there as he promised the night before; and he smiled to his boyfriend resting his head against his.

-Yeah, a little one. –Allen seemed to wait for the rest of the answer but as his nerves stroke back, he tried to change the subject. -But I’m not sure it’s one this fountain can grant me. I’m not that good at understanding magic. –

A giggle and a pat on the shoulder that he knew was his cue to let him down.

-I know a bit. Magic it’s not far away from art. So, why do you say that? –

-It’s just that Trevi’s legend is that the roman soldiers used to throw a coin to wish for luck to be alive and come back from the war. So now people do the same to visit Rome again. -He shrugged, looking at him get over a rock to be more at his eyes level. -I don’t know. Is it going to grant me my wish if the wish per se isn’t coming back here? Or home? Should I look for a different fountain? What do you think? –

-I think that if you wish enough for it to be real it will be. At least that’s how magic it’s supposed to work. A form of the human willpower that influences other forces to accommodate. -He smiled after observing how blue the sky was, concentrating on him after. -Aaand, I bet you would be an amazing tour guide. -Allen was wearing a semi see-through shirt in cream, the fabric letting imagination go wild as it only touched his shape around the waist, were it lifted now and then when he moved. The sleeves were wide and looked like bells as they got closer to his wrists and he used to hide his hands in them whenever he felt a little uncomfortable with his surroundings. It still had a cleavage that went a little down his collar bones and showed the necklace that the redhead gave him a year ago on a valentine’s day.

A moon and some stars scattered on it, an exquisite job on silver and opal that reminded him of his eyes.

Comfortable jeans and a pair of blue slip-on Vans finished the outfit, the sole a light brown, like tanned beach sand that gave color to it.

-Really? It’s probably because I’m a professor. It’s a habit now. –He took his hand as they got closer to the fountain. Lavi’s vision tainted in pink as the colored sunglasses framed his eyes with its round shape. He smiled at his lover and leaned to kiss him on the cheek, the little box hitting his chest as it moved on the frontal pocket of his leather jacket.

“Today is the day.”
I like it. I keep learning stuff. They’ve got a pair of popsicles even when the air was still a little chilly, spring rains and all. Yet, Allen was already biting on the wooden stick as he observed the monument in front of them. The water sparkling as if was filled with diamonds instead. The carved stone like living people, waiting to move in any second as their perfection was fixated to the place since centuries.

Do you want to make a wish too? It’s not historical, but I heard people say their wishes do come true. Although, they were all about coming back here so… –

Allen observed the redhead; his left piercing reflecting a little of that light. His recent undercut calling for him to pass his hand over it until it reached the longer part of it, tangling his fingers with the copper strands. He reached to touch his punch t-shirt, grabbing it by the v neck and pulling him down again to his level to kiss him properly.

-I’m not sure if I can wish for anything more than you, mister. -Lavi held what was left of his ice cream away from him, trying to keep his concentration on his eyes and failing. His sight following to his soft lips and then to that red mark that he left on his skin, that now peeked from under the shirt collar. -My luck it’s probably out since I got everything I wanted…and a bit more. –

The yellow sunglasses slithered down his nose and he had a firsthand look to the gray orbs that shined with love and desire that went from his face and down without shame.

-I…Maybe…I mean…-His blabbering made the shortest smile, kissing him again and letting him go, knowing that if he pushed anything further Lavi would have a problem that they couldn’t solve right there in the middle of the square. Or maybe they could but having to sneak from the Italian police too much of a bother for that hour of the day. Still tired from last night.

-But I think I can wish for something for you. It will be fun! -He started to look for a coin in the little backpack that he carried for their adventures and Lavi felt like he could think again as he continued with his dessert. The cold inside his mouth letting him cool down as his impure thoughts were chased away.

“I hope I can pull this right. I can’t go home and tell the guys I fucked it up because I was a chicken… Lenalee is not going to let me live by that.”

Twin coins with a low value but deep meaning hit the water at the same time, after counting to three; a splashing noise that seemed to echo in the almost empty place. Tossed like salt over their shoulder for a good luck that the taller certainly needed. A hope to exile the demon of the cowardice from his intentions.

Then, what did you wish about? –The redhead smiled, thinking on how pink Allen’s cheek turned when he was outside in a sunny day.

-For me to be with you forever! -He smiled brightly and Lavi’s heart stopped for a second; trying to keep all the love he felt for him to not explode inside it. -For a rich kid, you don’t know how to make proper coffee and you surely need it when you work. So, I’ll be there for you, always, if you want. And you? –

-For you to say yes. -It was a quiet answer and he touched his cheek, closer to his face.

-To what? -His hand was over his, his eyes on him and nothing else. Nothing to interrupt them anymore.

-I’ll ask you when it’s time. Be a little patient my Love. It won’t be long. –
Another kiss to seal that promise. One that tasted like ice cream and the eternal summer that exist in their hearts.

Almost three years he looked at that face and loved every millimeter of it. Almost three years he woke up and the first thing he saw was him. His name was the first thing he could think of in the morning and the last when he was about to sleep. He knew his weaknesses, his virtues, his bad days, his good ones, his talents, his fears, his tastes and his wishes.

He knew where he tickled and how many moles he had. He adored how deep were his dimples and how they started to leave a mark over his round cheeks now that he was almost always smiling. Someone could say he was used to be around him, to see him, to have him.

But seeing Allen sitting in front of him, with his hair tied with a blue ribbon that caressed his neck; his gray eyes full of joy, his beautiful smile that was the reminiscence of a laugh that made people stare as it sounded like music… it was always too much for him. Nor the temples they visited or the pieces of art they saw had a similar effect on him. They didn’t even get close to what he felt, only sitting across him and talking about all the topics that life had to offer. It was something he wished to live forever, it was the wish for every fountain, for every star, to every bone.

“To be with you forever.”

-Hey Allen… About that question… -His lover raised his eyes from his meal and waited for him to continue, his gaze reminding him of the weight of his words.

“Come on, buddy. You said you wanted to do it over a romantic dinner in Italy. And here you are.” Lavi swallowed, the words like a rubber ball that went up and down his throat. Difficult to pass or to say. It was a simple question. Four words. One sentence. Fifteen letters. It wasn’t that hard… right?

“Just tell him, coward. He is looking at you and… god you are right he is so beautiful.”

-Yes? -The candlelight in the middle moved with his question and Lavi felt himself starting to shake as he played with the box, now in his hands, under the table.

-I w-wanted to… to… to ask… you, if you… would… m-ma…? -In a movement that ended more being like a jerk, he put the box over the table to hand it over to him, accidentally knocking over his glass of wine, which content flew to end over catastrophically on the neat white shirt of Allen, making him stand up in a flash; the fabric sticking to his skin. -Oh, fuck! I’m sorry Love…! -


A serious but efficient waiter quickly appeared to Allen’s side and offered him a napkin that he accepted with a discreet smile. A waitress did the same with him and Lavi realized he knocked the thing off so perfectly he was now too soiled in red. Something less noticeable due to his color choices.

The smell was strong and as he shook his hands trying to get the worst of the drink out, he decided that wouldn’t be the way.

-Sorry… -The redhead said again, the embarrassment pushing his way down, opening a path to deception. A single moment for years planned, ruined in one single move.

His boyfriend, unaware of that, giggled and walked to his side, holding his arm; trying to get him to
relax. Ignorant to the true meaning of that situation. Maybe, it wasn’t the moment. Or the way. Or maybe…he just tended to fuck things up.

-It’s ok. Nothing happened, handsome. -He took his hand and tried to have his attention. Lavi’s eyes staring at the table as he was hostage of the emptiness that was left when everything feels like crumbling down. The cold eyes of the blond waiter reminding him a little of Yuu’s. His parting bangs showing twin vertical points that seemed familiar. -Let’s go back, you seem tired, Lavi. -Allen pulled him from the jacket and kissed him like there was nobody else in the room. Both of the members of the staff trying to hide equally amused smiled as Lavi blushed, finally snapping out of his thoughts. -Could you get us the check, please? –

Addressing at the waiter that left after nodding, a polite smile that empathized with the redhead as he gave a formal but discreet bow.

The shortest pulled his hand and Lavi felt the weight of the world as they walked to the entrance after paying. Perhaps the initial shock was now forgotten, but the sentiment of failing held still to him as he realized that the opportunity he so carefully planned for, was now over. The stars leaving the alignment for another prophecy that wouldn’t be his own. Wasn’t that like being the god of the underworld and losing all for a tiny mistake of nerves and love? Persephone would be gone if he was Hades. He was convinced of.

He walked behind Allen trying to be back to earth as his steps felt light and clumsy, the stones on the path strange miniature mountains that transformed each one in a journey on its own. Outside, a street band was playing. The sound of a violin and a cello that dignified the performance as divine and away from many others. Would that be the symphony of his downfall?

“You’re such a moron. It was just some words. How hard could that be?” For him everything was lost. And it was possibly dramatic, he knew…yet…

They were already outside when the waitress reached for him.

-Excuse me, sir? I think you forgot this. -It was the signature black packaging of the place, the size perfect for a two serving meal. The logo of a red pomegranate gaining his attention as the myth resonated within him once more; nevertheless, the content was nothing they asked for.

The idea of them taking the ruined dinner, drowned in wine crossed his mind. The ridicule aspect of this making him pause with an eyebrow arched. His sunglasses on the collar of his shirt, some drops of the red liquid still on them.

-But we…-The redhead started, Allen two steps further, still holding his hand as he stopped, their arms stretched. The shortest curiously trying to look without getting closer.

-It’s on the house. -She was a fairly cute brunette. Her hair tied in a bun with twin curly strands that framed her face and her pretty brown eyes. The tag read Claire and she had a sweet smile that reminded him of a nun he met a long time ago. In another life. -Congratulations. –

This last she said as a whisper, murmuring her words as she smiled. Making him let go of Allen’s hand to hold the package when she didn’t let it go at first. Using both hands and feeling under it the ruined velvet box that she carefully put there to avoid the other’s sight. -It’s sfogliatelle. Hope you like it. -

-Thanks… -He finally smiled, and she mirrored him. Satisfied. Going back to her workplace to gossip with her friend about the cute couple that she was sure…would be getting married soon.
"Maybe, there was still a chance. The day isn't over." The redhead thought as he skillfully hid the little box away. Taking again the hand of his lover whom asked no more than the content of the present; counting the seeds of the drawing pomegranate which, as the planets remined in their place of alignment…were six.

After a warm shower that helped him ease his muscles Lavi sat at the balcony of their room. The stars shining in distinguishable shapes; easy to follow with barely imaginary lines that draw them together. Sewing stories among their paths for cultures to tell each other until their lives were part of the ground and there was no one left to tell the tale. Italy being understandably the birthplace of many of those.

He had a book on his left hand, but it rested open and face down as his sight was fixed on the sky. The book had no name on the cover, but it accompanied him since his grandfather lent it to him, one day three years ago when his feelings were a hurricane of doubt on his already afflicted brain. Just like then. Lavi was wearing an open hoodie instead of a shirt as he always left it for Allen to use; the contrast with his pajama pants something he was already used to. Black against the soft blue flannel. He figured it wasn’t the best outfit that he could chose for such occasion, but at least it was one that portrayed well his relationship with Allen. Sharing and trust. Being comfortable with each other.

The redhead touched the ring inside the right pocket of his hoodie again, a little nervous of losing it; as the box was now discarded in the trash, ruined by the wine. He passed his fingers through the shape, knowing the design perfectly. He recalled the month he spent looking for it, and how he found it at a lost store of a forgotten town in Scotland. Lenalee approving the ring the second he sent a picture of it. The first step to the adventure he meant to ask that same night…

-The fact that you are quiet is creeping me out. -Lavi snickered as he turned to see Allen sitting by his side, hugging his knees as he stretched the redhead’s shirt. -What are you planning, a murder? –

-You are always so mean. -He closed the book at softly patted him with it, making him laugh.

-I’m just saying, whenever you keep it to yourself it means you are either plotting, all upset or depressed…-Allen rested his chin on his arms, his bangs framing his face as his mouth got hidden. His hair loose as he was fresh out of his bath. -You are not depressed, right? I hope not. But you’ve been acting weird since yesterday and if there’s anything you want to tell me I promise I’ll listen, and I’ll do my best to…-

-Snowflake. -He cut him out. Allen looked at him biting his lower lip and Lavi smiled lovingly, knowing that that was the moment. A greatest force, destiny, fate…love. God? Who knew? The moment was then and looking at those beautiful gray eyes that had love and worry for him…all he could do was surrender. -There’s actually something I want to tell you. Could you lend me your hand? –

Allen did immediately and without a word he noticed how Lavi’s hand was shaking making his heart do the same as he got anxious for the words he had no clue were coming.

-Yes, handsome? -He murmured quietly.

-When I met you, I knew you were one of a kind. When I started going out with you, I knew I had a crush on you. But when I started seeing you every day…talking with you, really knowing you…
I… I honestly didn’t know what I was feeling. I felt… always nervous around you suddenly; you know? That never happened to me before! When I saw you smile to me with that special way you have…-The silver haired smiled in response, blushing. -That! With that. Honestly…I felt like…the world cracked in half and I was staring at heaven and God itself granted me a miracle even with my disbelieving sinner and condemned self. I felt like floating, like crying, like dying in the best of the ways. Like Nirvana was always a person and that was you and I was allowed to understand it. To experience it…Every time I closed my eyes you were there, and your voice was the only thing that chained me to life. You, calling my name…Snowflake, I swear that’s why I remain in this earth. And I didn’t know what to do with that! So, I went to the library… and my old man was there… -He let a nervous laugh out as he recalled the moment. -He told me that I was in love with you. That he could tell even if he never met you. And that if I wanted proofs, I could read a book. This book. –

Lavi used his free hand and showed it to him, Allen’s eyes following his movements as his heart felt like a butterfly in a bottle. Its wings caressing the glass like paper. Faint movements that with every breathing felt like going up his carotid.

-And… did you find them? The proof. -The shortest asked, twisting the low ponytail he put his hair into as he got nervous, with his other hand.

-Yes. I found a lot. It’s a book of poems and you see, my Light… Every one of them… was about you. And I know it’s cheesy and I bet this is not how you pictured it, but there is one that the moment I read it… I felt it was written… from me to you. For a professor I’m pretty bad at words; so please, allow me, my Love, to tell you in the words of someone else, how much you mean to me. For I lack the gift to let you know how much does much means. –

-Tell me, silly rabbit. -He whispered, feeling the warmth inside his chest invading every millimeter of his skin as that butterfly melted and transfigured into gold with unforeseen alchemy; listening to the right words.

Allen expected him to pull out a paper, or to open the same book he was caring; but Lavi remained on his seat. His eyes fixed on his. His mouth moving as the words came out in a perfect carbon copy of the text he memorized not for that day, but for it was exactly what he felt for him.

-How do I love thee? Let me count the ways. I love thee to the depth and breadth and height. My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight. For the ends of being and ideal grace. I love thee to the level of every day’s. Most quiet need, by sun and candlelight. I love thee freely, as men strive for right. I love thee purely, as they turn from praise. I love thee with the passion put to use in my old griefs, and with my childhood’s faith. I love thee with a love I seemed to lose with my lost saints. I love thee with the breath, smiles, tears, of all my life; and, if God choose, I shall but love thee better after death. –

The redhead swallowed and wetted his lips as he was sure it was the moment; pulling out the ring from his pocket, supervised by the blindness of those stars. His anxiety winning over and making drop it as he was getting on one knee a collective sigh from all the gods that truly existed on those lands and those tales, rooting for them to consolidate their love in a tangible way.

Allen, oblivious of the what the object was, tried to help him, looking for the small thing that made a metallic sound against the balcony floor. The prophecy of what was supposed to happen quivering with the innocence of the virgin of love that doesn’t know the evident. Lavi stopping him as he spotted it under the chair the other was sat. His hands over his naked knees, the balance of fate reestablished at once.
-Don’t move babe, it’s ok. -He picked the ring, cursing his luck but decided to follow through. A protagonist in a discreet epos. An event for the whisperers and the night only.

Allen stared as he blew his hair away from his face, smiling at him. He got lost at how the copper of his hair shined with the light from inside their room and how beautiful his eyes were, with that spark of excitement he loved so dearly. He didn’t notice the moment he got closer, still on both knees, presenting a small object that his mind chose to not understand until the words were pronounced. Like the last remnant of a spell meant to keep it perfect, even with everything that happened. An early gift from that divinity that was finally watching over them.

-Maybe that’s not enough and the words aren’t sufficient to tell you, to prove to you. To let you know…And I know I’m supposed to do this on one knee…But I’m no knight and honestly, I think I need to plead, because to ask this to an angel like you…I’m sure begging is the only acceptable position. So…Allen, will you marry me? -He showed him the ring, a smile that kept at bay his nervous laugh. -Maybe that way I can show you with more than words that I truly mean forever. –

At first Allen stared at him. His face wrinkling as his nose moved, like a cat that is scared. Then, his white eyebrows twitched, trembling as they try to meet. The universe a silent agreement to keep it motionless until his answer. Not even crickets or the nearby waves to make a sound. And Lavi payed special attention at his eyes, that started watering, getting that clear gray that looked so much like crystal. His lips opening a little as he let his breath go.

The redhead remained at his position, waiting. His mind a little worried that he mistook the moment and ruined it; his inner voice rumbling gibberish as it didn’t know what to do as well. His heart beating on his ears making him wonder if he answered and he didn’t listen it.

“Answer to him, jerk!” A push of a voice that’s only his and has nicer things to say to him after his therapy.

-Y-Y-Yes… -He blurted. His words broken and coercing his tears to fall as he blinked. -Yes. Yes, I will. -A single laugh came out as he let Lavi put the ring on his finger. The tears not letting him see it.

-Why are you crying, baby?! –He hugged him, and Allen let himself go as he cried on his embrace. -You’re gonna make me cry as well, I hate to see you crying. Is the only thing I can’t stand. Torture would be paradise compared to it. –

-I’m sorry, I tried! -Allen sobbed as he used the sleeve of the pajama in an attempt to clean his tears. -I’m just so happy! I’m sorry! That’s why you were acting so weird and I’m here crying! –

Lavi pushed him a little to see his face and smiled, his different colored eyes letting twin rivers fall as well. His hands clumsily moving in an attempt to clean his tears, still shaking as the emotion took over him.

-I love you, Allen. –

-I love you too, Lavi. I do. I love you. –

And then the cosmos reanimates its pace. The gods pleased, for now.

The next day Allen woke up with the sunlight over his arm and his hand held by his boyfriend…
no, his fiancé. He blinked twice and saw him smile as his phone is resting on his other hand, the position familiar to him; having seen it a thousand times, already used to his influencer lifestyle.

-If you are taking a photo, I better look good or I’m going to murder you. -His words get muffled as he hid his face against the fluffy white pillow that was close by. A chuckle of the redhead making him turn to peek.

-You look like the gorgeous piece of art you are, Snowflake. Don’t worry. -Lavi kissed his hand making him smile. Pulling away from the pillows as he decided to crawl his way to put his head on his lap.

-Let me see then. -His right hand touched his face and the left one his arm and the redhead turned his undivided attention to him as he finished typing on the phone. He let him have it and observed his reaction as he scrolled through the secret chat group he had with Yuu and Lenalee. A smile plastered on his face as he knows what each text said, and Allen reached to the photo he sent to them. –YOU TOLD YUU?! ARE YOU INSANE?!

Lavi laughed as the face of the other turned red in less than a second, his eyes running through the text lines anxiously again, knowing that the first people that were aware of their engagement was his best friend and his ex-boyfriend.

-Baby! I already told you a thousand times he is cool with it. You are the one that refuses to talk to him. –The redhead snatched his phone away from him, getting close to his face.

-I CHEATED ON HIM WITH YOU; YOU MORON. HOW IS THAT COOL?! -As he took his face, he was finally conscious of the cold sensation of the engagement ring on his right. Where he preferred it.

Allen stared at it, the piece of jewelry a delicate design in rose gold. A lavender stone in the middle, cut like a square, accompanied by two small white diamonds at the sides of it. Two symbols of the trifecta with the metal. One at each end. It was flawlessly crafted, and it left him without words as he observed the strange but beautiful ring.

-Do you like it? -Lavi asked him, so close to his face that his noses were brushing. A smile on his lips as his eyes reflected nothing but amusement.

-Yeah. I think I do. -His arms extended a little more to hug him by the neck, holding him down for a kiss that was slow and meaningful. Each movement of their lips a trace to draw each other in a painting of their love. -Still, I think you should’ve told him personally. If you say he is fine with it.

-Nah. I texted them as soon as you fell asleep, those jerks bet I wouldn’t have the balls to propose so…they owe me now. -Allen smiled, kissing him briefly again.

-Ah yes, I would’ve hated if you lost. -He sighed, letting him go. -I guess I have to call Bak, otherwise he is going to kill me if he knows someone else got the news before him. –

-About that, babe… -The phone vibrated again and as Allen hurried to pick it up, he noticed a small phone symbol that signalized the missing calls he didn’t know he had.

-Hello?

-YOU ARE GETTING MARRIED AND I GET TO KNOW THIS BECAUSE OF FUCKING SOCIAL MEDIA? WALKER YOU ARE DEAD! YOU BETTER BE NAMING ME YOUR BEST MAN OR
“THE GODFATHER OF YOUR CHILDREN. BECAUSE OTHERWISE I SWEAR TO GOD, I WILL PICK THE WORST WEDDING GIFT IM ABLE TO FIND! –

-B-B-Bak? -He stuttered as he held the phone away from his now throbbing ear. -I…I was about to call you, how do you… -Lavi turned his own phone to him. A picture of the ring on his hand that was taken no longer than five minutes away. The light shining perfectly over the stone, his face blurry as the focus was the ring; yet his smile obvious his other hand covered by the pillows, over his eyes. Everything from the sheets to the walls in white, his silver hair making a perfect match. Only the wooden posts of the bed bringing color at the edge of the frame, the center of the whole picture the jewel. A simple description that said enough: “He said yes!” – Oh. –Already too many likes for a five-minute post, in his opinion.

“His students must be so disappointed.”

-DAMN RIGHT, OH. YOU BETTER HAVE A GOOD EXPLANATION OR…-The redhead took the phone from his hand following the conversation, giving his fiancé his own. Allen getting entertained as he read the comments. A mix of power and pity as he saw the reactions of Lavi’s followers.

-Hey Bak. I’m sorry man, Allen fell asleep yesterday before telling you and I couldn’t resist posting it, I’m sorry. Don’t get mad at him. It’s my fault. Get us a pretty gift and we will be nice in your wedding. –

-…Did he cry? -A sudden change of his tone that made him smile.

-Yeah, a little. –

-Hey! -Allen pouted as he was still listening, lifting his eyes from the device.

-Fine. I forgive you. Hit me up the moment you are back, you disgusting lovebirds. –

-Will do. –He hung up and Lavi smiled to the other. Earning a smirk as he handed back the thing.

-Your admirers seem sad that you are gone from the game. -He teased; the shirt drawing curves over his pale thighs that were a treat for the redhead.

-Oh please. I was out the moment I looked at you, Snowflake. -Allen giggled moving to sit over his lap.

-I guess they were a little hopeful…-He said, now with his arms over his shoulders while Lavi’s rested over his legs.

-I don’t think so…-His voice acquired a seriousness suddenly, his eyes on his.

-No? -His voice became a whisper, his breath mixing with his. -Well…if it’s worth anything… Even if I was with Yuu, I think I was done as well when you called for me the first time. And again…when you kissed me. And again, when you said you loved me. And once more when you touched me. And every time you look at me with those eyes…I might be no one’s to take but surely…I belong with you; my dear mister. –

-Mh…I think is worth the world, my Love. -He let himself drop back at the mattress as they kissed. Allen on top of him, the sunlight filtering through the balcony and warming his back.
That door had the echo of another, now distant, situation. It stood before him like the entrance of a haunted manor or perhaps the first step before a dragon’s cave.

Lavi swallowed, wishing he was instead with Allen, talking with Bak and Wisely about the wedding. How the cake was supposed to taste, or which flowers would be chosen.

He sighed, rubbing his eyes to later pinch the bridge of his nose, rehearsing under his breath the words that he was supposed to say. The wood in front of him the back of the tarot card he already knew well. “Death.”

“…And I think you would be perfect for it.” Yes. That’s fine. Whatever. -He knocked on the ominous black rectangle that years before he considered nothing more than a passage to see the pretty face that he would be marrying in less than twelve months. Trying to remember that sensation and ignore the constant feeling of a predator breathing behind his neck, ready to bite his head off.

“How couldn’t I just send him a message? Hey Yuu, how about…?”

The door opened and the same angry face he had known for more than ten years received him, an eyebrow instantly shooting up at his recognition.

“What is it, Junior? -Lavi noticed first the long braid he had resting over his shoulder. A dark green ribbon maintaining its complicated shape. Then, the loose hand-knitted sweater in sky-blue, a color that like any other light color, seemed strange on the Japanese, like painting a grave with cake; and finally, the fact that his voice and his features seemed a little bit softer than always. The snarky tone still there, but the sourness gone.

-H-hey. -His voice broke and he swallowed, clearing his throat, trying to recover his lost dignity. -Hm. Hey Yuu. May I…borrow you for a second? If you’re not busy. If you are that’s fine. Whenever you have time. Actually, I should’ve called. I’m sure you are. I’ll be going and… -His words overlapped as he kept yapping at a speed that would be illegal if he was on a motorized vehicle instead.

“Really?”

He was about to turn around when that signature iron grip held him to his place. Cold sweat starting to run at his back.

-You already knocked on my door, jerk. You came here on your fancy car, from the other side of the city and left that bright new fiancé of yours to talk to me…so, you better spit it. What’s so important it made you leave the side of your future mister the moment you two came back from Europe? Don’t make me repeat myself: What the fuck is it, Junior? –Kanda pulled him inside his apartment and now, with the closed door, stared at him. His crossed arms over his chest as he waited for his response.

-Man…Uhm, well…you see, I want to ask you a favor? It’s a favor. An important one. Look, it’s fine if you don’t want to. I understand after all we passed. It’s not like you have to say yes. I can ask Crowley if you don’t wanna. And it’s kind of stupid. I bet you would hate it. And after what happen with Allen…I’m sure that…-

Yuu rolled his eyes and his gaze paused at his left, where the kitchen commenced. A discreet smile was drawn over his lips and in a second his stare went to the floor and again to that point invisible
to redhead. A glimpse of a secret that disappeared the moment Kanda focused again on him.

-Are you proposing to me? Because I don’t do double timing. Maybe that’s a thing between you and the beansprout but really, it isn’t my cup of tea. -It took him more time than he was willing to accept to realize that his friend was joking. And already feeling more anxious than when he asked Allen to marry him, he blurted out the question that he had thinking before he even had someone to propose to.

-Will you be my best man? -Kanda raised both eyebrows. An honest and simple expression on his clean face. The redhead noticed, maybe for the first time in all those years how his eyes acquired a certain curvature as they had the shape of an almond. His dark eyelashes curled down, giving him his usual threatening stare and extra injection of elegant disdain. His lips tightened for a moment and there, resting his shoulder against the wall as he usually liked, he shrugged it off with a little curve to the right on his mouth. A smile that was a confidence between old friends.

-Yeah. Why not? –

Like nothing ever happen. Like everything did. An unspoken promise between teenage members of a brotherhood.

Lavi was so happy by his answer that between the accelerated blabbering of an overly sugared toddler and his constant movements, he left without saying anything more concrete than a thousand “thank you”. Yuu closed his door with a relaxed and private laugh that was barely audible, but that his guest listened without problems.

-You made him really happy. –

-Sure. -He shrugged. -Do you still think is fine? I’m not sure the beansprout will be too happy about having his ex-boyfriend at his wedding. After all…he haven’t talked to me since then. –

Lenalee held her cup with both hands, her hair braided back in a fish tailed form that created paths down her back. A single orange bow that gave it color.

-I think that if Allen wasn’t comfortable with you there, he wouldn’t have allowed Lavi to ask you about it. -She was wearing a white blouse that was tucked inside her long, also orange, skirt. Barefoot, her blue shoes rested at the front of the couch, near the coffee table that had an empty glass of wine that held company to an equally empty bottle of beer. -And to be fair…you did kiss him that last time. I bet he doesn’t want to give you two gentlemen, troubles. -

-I don’t know. -He sighed, stepping inside the kitchen where Lenalee kept an eye to a pie that neither of them was sure to be at the right temperature for a proper cooking. Both not really into the culinary arts, but willing to try. Her comment ignored for the sake of seriousness.

-Everything is going to be fine. Just…try to be nice. -It was a long journey. One that they were still making, their goal maybe far but not impossible. But what mattered to her was that at least now, they were together. A broken cup and hopefully, the right superglue.

She was proud of him. Going to therapy was honestly a titanic effort for the man itself; and now, years later and with the beginning of an entirely different type of relationship, she could see how much he had changed. He was still grumpy, and he still complained a lot. Sometimes he got upset out of nowhere and his tolerance to frustration was close to nonexistent and yet…Yet she caught him smiling, or laughing, or willing to try something new with her. It didn’t matter that only they knew about their relationship. What mattered was that Kanda slowly but surely…was starting to remember what happiness was about.
“Didn’t those two started as a secret, as well?”

-I’m always nice, missy. -Lenalee couldn’t help her laugh as he kissed her on the forehead. The idea of him being nice at their best friend’s wedding a cartoon of himself.

“This is going to be fun.”

Everything was silver. From his hair to his shoes. The robe he was wearing, his eyes, the delicate tiara that had a moonstone supported by a chain of trifectas, the sides getting lost on his hair strands. He blinked, trying to associate that picture of himself with reality, everything seeming too far away from his touch, too mystical to be real.

-Do you want me to apply makeup over your scar? -Allen smiled and turned his eyes to the tall and severe lady that was in charge of his wedding. Her black and tight ponytail barely moving with her as she did, only her short and perfectly straight bangs following the rules of physics, letting the wind pass. Her yellow eyes peeked over her dark oval sunglasses and her thin eyebrows repeated the question without any emotion in it.

-No, it’s fine. I had it for so long I think I wouldn’t be myself if I didn’t have it. -She nodded and closed the small case where she kept her beauty tools.

-You are good to go then. Whenever you are ready, I’ll give the cue for the musicians. But please, try to consider the sunset. The night will begin to fall in half an hour and I’m sure your groom will be delighted to see you with the last light of the day. -Her words had no inflection and yet, Allen blushed as he listened her.

-Thank you, Lulu Bell. –

The moment she left the tent, Bak scooted a chair behind him to brush his hair again. Thin braids here and there with small stones at the end; only enough to keep his locks to fall over his face. The blond had chosen for the occasion a violet mantle, the thematic wedding allowing him to wear his most extravagant fashion choices. He recently cut his hair and as he brushed the other’s, thought of the waste it was to do it. Blaming Foh for convincing him.

-You look great, Allen. -His voice was soft and for the hundredth time that day, Allen felt like crying. He bit his lip and nodded again, his tone striking his heart. -I’m so happy for you. I know I always bothered you guys about getting married… but…finally being here…it just…-

The weight in his shoulder made him look at him through the mirror. The blond shaking as he quietly cried, making him smile sincerely.

-If you keep crying you are going to make me cry too! -He pushed his friend playfully and Bak raised his head exhaling deeply. Blinking rapidly to scare away the tears that weren’t spilled yet.

-You’re right. You’re right. This is your day, Dimples. Go make me proud. -They laughed at the same time until the entrance moved suddenly, making both squeal in surprise.

-Are you ready? Because I feel like Lavi is about to pass out back there. -Lenalee finally turned to face them, the silver haired standing up his chair to greet her. She was wearing a green velvet dress, the sleeves falling from her shoulders into fabric arches that now and then framed her small waist. Her face lighting up as she stared at his soon-to-be-married friend. -Oh, Allen! You look
He smiled widely at her, the robe he wore a second skin that enhanced everything to make him look picture-perfect. The neck started round and slowly descended into a small v that was discreet enough to be interesting and yet playful; the sleeves wide as he always liked freedom to move and the fall just enough for him to have enough room without getting problematic. It had a belt that was made of a dark blue textile, hanging loosely at his hips with a gold rose brooch that resembled some kind of a golem keeping it place where the Celtic knot closed. The creature round with a tail like blurry cloud, tiny paws and tinier horns. Long wings that were extended as it flew over there. It was supposed to bring good fortune, and he used it gladly as it reminded him of his cat; the rounded shape that hid something temperamental a clear reflection of Tim. A present from Komui that didn’t overshadow his true gift, hidden probably in the middle of all the others at the inside of one of the cabins of that place.

-Time to go then! -Allen turned to Bak, his smile vanishing letting place to a scared expression that he considered adorable. Making him call with a gesture of his hand to his past crush to help him. -You heard the lady. Your man is about to faint and if does…he’ll better do it because of how gorgeous you look! –

Lenalee took him by his left as Bak held his right arm, both guiding him outside. His body tensing with their touch as he realized there was no way back. The time arrived and even with his nerves… the clock marked twelve and his reality finally struck.

“I’m about to get married!”

-Get the music, Lulu, because in a way, here comes the bride. -The blond called for the woman, whom only pressed on the microphone that held from his left ear; already ready for everything as every wedding planner would be.

-I feel like I’m going to die. -Kanda rolled his eyes for the tenth time that hour, quickly looking at Crowley, whom shrugged comically while moved a sheet of folded paper in front of the redhead’s face, fanning him.

-Junior, honestly. Be a man. You asked him to marry you. You’ve been feeling like dying since you woke up. -Unmatching eyes stared at him worryingly and he sighed, smacking his hand on his shoulder. -If you think I’m going to let you out of this just because you are scared you are dead wrong. Everything will be fine. You just have to say your vows or whatever, then you say I do when this dude says your name. That’s all. It isn’t that hard. Can’t you use your weird magic eye and see that everything ends fine? –He pointed to whom he thought it was the priest. A strange but serious man that was a few centimeters shorter than him. Peculiar marks under his eyes and twin dots at his forehead.

He knew he wasn’t catholic, and if anything, he imagined the man probably had some legal empowerment as well, the idea of Lavi getting married without a real judge something that sounded dumb even for him. Not to mention that it was something his grandfather would never allow.

-His name’s Madarao. And that doesn’t work that way! -The guy gave him a polite and short acknowledgement bow. The six pearls on his thin strands of hair that were longer than the rest of
his cut, moving musically behind him. His eyebrows were scarcely noticeable and for some reason, Kanda thought that that was a trait worthy of a pagan priest.

-Why does that matter now? –The start of a doubt that pondered Lavi’s sanity.

-I don’t know! That’s his name! -Yuu’s random thought chased away by the touch of something cold near his hand. He turned his eyes to a dark-skinned man sitting at the front rows, his hair messily combed in a low ponytail. Interesting golden eyes that made him flinch internally. An uninterested look of his own shot at him, earning one of apology in return. He noted it was a glass what was being held against his skin, a caramel colored liquid in it.

-It’s rum. -He stated. He was dressed in black and the Japanese spotted that the girl that accompanied him was oddly wearing a common dress in the same color. His stare wasn’t unnoticed, and the man sighed, still extending the offering. -It’s my sister. She didn’t believe me when I told her this was a fantasy wedding. Please ignore her. I think our friend here needs this more than me. – Kanda took the drink and gave it to the redhead, who performing and incredible act of sorcery, according to the motif of the event, vanished the thing in the blink of an eye, returning the glass as he moved in the clothes that complimented his hair. A shade that he thought was impossible to achieve for any earthling company. He observed the tallest of the three touch Lavi’s shoulder and try to fix the braided crown that settled with an emerald in the middle, some branches that reminded him of deer antlers surrounding the stone. There wasn’t much to do, his short hair allowing Crowley to solve the situation quickly. He dusted his own blue robes, that, even when he told Lavi he hated them, he secretly enjoyed the garment. His mind driving off to the pretty four floored cake that he saw at the reception tent. The white that disappeared here and there exposing the brown reminding him of wood; the wild berries and golden heart cookies giving it the perfect touch of a mystic forest. A place that he associated with his father’s paintings and hours of childhood games with his two brothers, before he even was aware of what being depressed was.

It was a good start for them, he supposed. The taste of some secret woods for a fairytale. He let himself smile again and as he raised his eyes his gaze stopped on the only figure that was allowed to wear that silver white tone.

A moment without sound and gravity.

Allen was walking down the aisle, beside him was Bak and behind him his friend in common. On his hands a rustic bouquet that had pinecones, dried herbs and fruits, as well as a long gray father from a bird he didn’t recognize. He recalled Lenalee saying it represented the past. As it was being threwed back, the bride (or in this case the other groom) got rid of what was dead and useless. Of the things that had passed. A representation of letting go.

His relationship with him ran through his mind in a flash. A single recollection of something that like that bouquet…was dead.

But that didn’t matter right then.

Their eyes found each other and against everything he believed, the other groom at that wedding smiled brightly at him. Like a ray of sun.

There wasn’t resentment. There wasn’t blame. He couldn’t even detect a pinch of unease on that look that only said: “Hi friend.” As he walked in a calmed, steady pace.

Kanda smiled back; without anything else but gratitude. Something that happened once and now as
interesting as life was, managed to close, without anything else to be done. A dried bouquet that was threw without a second thought; allowing them to begin again. And as the sound came back and he listened to Crowley and Lavi mumble, he turned to hold his best friend by the arm. Ready to take his place at that play. Knowing now, finally, what his part was.

-Lavi. -He called him firmly but with the real sentiment that he held for who he was. Now proudly to say it was his best friend; gaining his attention immediately. -You’ll do fine. –

A step away and there he was.

Lavi was sure he would faint. He was sure about that the first time he imagined that moment. He was more than sure when his grandfather started making lists about what they needed for the wedding. And he bet his whole fortune on it the first time someone congratulated them together and Allen held his arm and smiled like a star, pink dust over his round cheeks for him to die; his engagement ring shining as it rested on the hand with which he touched him.

But as the moment had come, he was surprised when his hands stopped shaking and his feet stood firmly on the ground. When his heart ceased pumping like a mad and broken clock and started moving calmly, every pulsation a drum beat that summoned his soul back. Slowly recovering him to that earthly vessel. And as he stared at the man he had loved since the moment they met, a pair of matching tears fell just once, in a blink of his different colored eyes. His soon-to-be-husband arriving to his side.

-Hi, handsome. -He whispered under his breath. His eyes like the moon itself.

-Hey angel. -The redhead answered him the same way; Allen giving him a sweet smile that had innocence and flirt on the same trace.

-The cord, please. -Madarao asked.

Lenalee gave a step forward, a red and long piece of silk on her hands. She handed it over to him and as he moved, all the eyes at the ceremony landed on a little blond young girl. Her bangs were pulled back as a half ponytail. Her waves and her light eyes giving her a witchcraft aura that was impossible to know if it was real or only a matter of the place and the moment. She got over a small stair. Three steps up to reach the height she needed to begin.

She had the same marks as Madarao, yet, she had short but thick eyebrows that even when it might made others look angry, on her it only added mystery to her childish features. The perception of his age now an abstract concept.

-Tewaku, if you may. –The girl nodded, the hood of her blueish gray clothes falling down. Her status as the higher priestess evident to at least the guests that worked at the museum as well.

The sun was starting to die in pink blood, an autumn night getting closer as the seconds ticked by.

-We are gathered here today to unite two souls as one. -She started. Her voice steady and authoritative. Nothing else that interrupted the sacred rite. -Do you Lavi, heir of your clan and Allen of yours alone, join us here of your own free will, to acknowledge the eternal bond shared between you? –

Tewaku addressed them as she said their names, her almost transparent eyes in a warm tone
scrutinizing their souls. Both grooms unmindful of this; lost in each other’s eyes. Only a correspondent nod as they were called, before their vows.

-My Love…-The redhead started, ignoring all the people but the one who was in front of him. His world in that beautiful face. -You are the one person with whom I can share all that I am. I promise to trust you and to be honest with you. I promise to listen to you, respect you and support you. I promise to laugh and play with you and grow and bend with you. I promise to cherish every day we have together. -He extended his hands to take his. His own skin cold against the warmth of the other. -These are the hands of your best friend, young, strong and full of love for you; that are holding you on your wedding day as we promise to love each other today, tomorrow and forever. These are the hands that will work alongside yours, as together we build our future. These are the hands that will passionately love you and cherish you through the years, and with the slightest touch will comfort like no other. These are the hands that will hold you when fear or grief fill your mind. These are the hands that will, countless times, wipe the tears from your eyes; tears of sorrow and tears of joy. These are the hands that will give you strength when you need it…And lastly, these are the hands that even when wrinkled and aged, will still be reaching for yours. Still giving you the same unspoken tenderness with just a touch.

Still holding him, he ventured a little closer, caressing his cheek as he always did when they were sharing a moment together. Their touch a signature of their private world. A code and a promise of their feelings for the other. Allen letting him do, trying to hold back the tears that were already spilling, a smile that left his cheeks plump and red like apples of a perfect tale.

-Sun of my days… -The name surprised him. A knot on his throat as he realized that Allen never used such things. The importance of the moment there. -You cannot possess me, for I belong to myself. But while we both wish it; I give that which is mine to give to you. You cannot command me, for I am a free person. But I shall serve you in those ways you require, and the honeycomb will taste sweeter coming from my hand. As for I will always be by your side. I pledge to you that yours will be the name I’ll call in the night and the eyes into which I smile in the morning. -As the words flowed, he closed the distance a bit more. The habit of getting so near him still there. A magnetized attraction that was undeniable since the very first time. -I pledge to you the first bite of my meat and the first drink of my cup. I pledge to you my living and my dying, each equally in your care. As even when I belong to myself, my heart is yours to hold. -His eyes were fire and his words kept steady yet excited. Each a promise that he knew, held nothing but the truth. -I shall be a shield for your back and you for mine. I shall not slander you, nor you me. I shall honor you above others, and when we quarrel, we shall do so in private and tell no strangers our grievances. For I am sure, we will always find a way to be. This is my wedding vow to you. -A big smile that settled with his agitated breathing. A child telling their most passionate interest there. And that interest… was him. -This is the marriage of equals. I would rather share one lifetime with you than face all the ages of this world alone. For I love you Lavi, like I never loved before. –

It took a moment for Kanda to move, his eyes fixated on such display of love that made him feel that everything else was a dream, but this. A shiver that shook his core as his mind brought back how loving Alma was. How loving Lenalee was starting to be…She tugged from his sleeve as discreetly as she could, and after facing the two grooms who smiled at him amused; he stepped to his respective side, together with Bak and the other Chinese. His face red to the neck as the embarrassment showered him, feeling like he was peeping between the curtains of a private date.

-May the road rise to meet you. -He quickly recovered, clearing his throat. His voice low and rough. Not because he didn’t mean it. But because he hated speaking in public. But then again… that was something he was doing for the three of them. For Lavi as he was his best friend, for Lenalee, because she asked him to and for Allen…that he owed. -May the wind be always at your back. May the sunshine warm upon your face, the rains fall soft upon the fields. –
Relieved, he gave a step back, allowing Lenalee to continue. Thankful that his brief participation was already over. The speech already too much for him to remember correctly.

-May the light of friendship guide your paths together. May the joy of living for one another trip a smile from your lips, a twinkle from your eye. –

She was looking at them, her voice filled with joy. A smile that installed on her eyes gifted to them.

-And when eternity beckons, at the end of a life heaped high with love; may the gracious gods hold you both in the palm of their hands. And today, may the spirit of love find a dwelling place in your hearts. For you to find home in each other’s hearts. -Bak finalized, his tears falling while he spoke refusing to see them; afraid that his voice would fail. Proud and happy of his friend having finally, the happy ended and beginning he so rightly deserved.

-Here before witnesses Lavi and Allen have sworn their vows to each other. With this cord -She took the piece of silk, skillfully encircling Lavi’s and Allen’s holding hands. -I bind them to these vows. However, these binds are not tied so that neither partner is restricted by the other. The only true enforcement of love is the will to love. -Both nodded, Allen starting to giggle as the redhead couldn’t wait longer and was already meeting his lips with his. The high priestess continuing without blinking. -A kiss to seal this vow, this pact. May the love today follow you for eternity beyond.

-But I couldn’t say I opposed to the union! -Road, the sister of Tyki murmured as everyone clapped. -What a weird wedding! -

-I swear Road. I only brought you along because you were annoying and because Wiseley and Lulu Bell were here anyway. So, I could leave you with them. Could you please behave, meanwhile? He is a married man now, sister. He’s gone. -His cousin passed him another drink from the seat behind his and both smiled as the wedding kept going.

At the altar, a kiss that started everything.

A kiss to end it and yet…a kiss for a new beginning.

It was slow and tender, but it held passion. And as it kept going, Allen held his new husband by the high collar of his clothes; the redhead unable to resist longer and carrying him. A spin that had both of them laughing, the sound of fireworks in the distance as the night arrived and the lanterns were lit.

“So, this is love.” A single idea that probably, everybody thought.

Orange and waves of delicious heat. A bonfire in the center, all their friends surrounding it. The reception was reaching its end, but the only thing that mattered then was the fun they were having together.

The light inside the cabins they rented for their guests was on, a discreet path for those who called it a night and could party no more. It was an enchanting wedding, the seats simple and the tables white. A menu that satisfied each mouth, flowers everywhere, and at the distance the silhouette of the Dunluce castle. Which ruins contemplated from the beginning of the ceremony to the end of the party. As the candles got lit one by one to give each table a romantic concept on their own.
A new ring on a special finger. One that was like a golden rose crown and the other that had the same design on the inside, protected by a charcoal iron band. Two rings from one piece. As there were two hearts from one love.

Allen had his head resting at Lavi’s chest, his hands together as both observed the fire move like it danced. A quality of that element alone, no matter if wild or small. The redhead’s grandfather already soundly sleeping at a cabin, more than satisfied. His assistant not so much, sitting with Road at the open bar and a common tragedy that passed inadvertently to the silver haired. The sound of the heart of his husband his only interest then.

Everyone else was speaking with each other calmly around the fire, until a voice that the shortest of the pair recognized spoke. Severing the murmurs into silence.

-And what about a story? I never heard of a bonfire that has no stories. -Wisely was sitting together with Bak and Foh, his friends breaking up a kiss that they seemed to have hope to be discreet. His relationship already of public knowledge, regardless of their attempts to be otherwise.

-A story sounds nice. -His cousin answered in not so secret agreement at the other side of the bonfire, complicity in every letter. No one but the alcohol to keep him company. -How about our hosts? I bet those two have interesting stories on their own, don’t you think? A historian and an artist surely form an interesting pair. –

-Unless you are all up for a lecture in the middle of a party…I don’t think I’m the man you’re looking for…-Lavi defended himself immediately. It was a lighthearted answer and he stared down to his husband, whom rolled his eyes as he left his weight fall on his body; a playful betrayal already in their first hours of marriage.

-Then, how about a song, Allen? -Lenalee followed the teasing, sending a look to Miranda who laughed and applauded the idea.

-I know a song that is a story too…But I bet you all heard it before! -His friends laughed but cheered anyway. A ritual among dear fellows who just like to see each other play. -Ok, ok then. –

He took some breath and knowing how to give a show among friends, he started the song that everybody knew, but all of them enjoyed:

-There will come a soldier who carries a mighty sword, he will tear your city down, o lei o lai o lord! -His voice was sweet and a glorious musical pitch that Miranda, Lenalee and Foh followed instantly. Eliade waiting for few more seconds as his husband cheered on her.

-O lei, o lai, o lei, o lord! He will tear your city down, o lei o lai o lord! -With their voices, he stood up. Telling the story as they kept singing; Tyki leaving his drink a side to play it on a casted off guitar that was nearby. Its owner sleeping on the ground. Johnny’s glasses at the point of his nose, moving when he breathed; a pair of beers proving worthy adversaries to the Dungeon Master.

-There will come a poet whose weapon is his word; he will slay you with his tongue, o lei o lai o lord! -The choir grew stronger as the song was popular among the group and it was true that all of them knew it, his eyes looking for Lavi’s, flirting with him as he was no longer close to his touch. Knowing how a look would fetch his heart.

-O lei, o lai, o lei, o lord. He will slay you with his tongue, o lei o lai o lord!

-There will come a ruler whose brow is laid in thorn smeared with oil like David’s boy, o lei o lai o lord -The clapping came along and most of the guests stood up to move with the music. The green
and the golden tied to his movements. Lavi’s hand supporting his cheek as his elbow rested over his knee; biting his lips with every suggestive but discreet gesture. Aware of Allen’s intentions to play with him.

-O lei, o lai, o lei, o lord. Smeared with oil like David's boy, o lei o lai o lord O lei, o lai, o lei o lord. He will tear your city down, o lei o lai –

And then a pause on the rhythm and a favor on Tyki’s side to one of the grooms. Lavi waiting until he was close enough to hold his hand and dance with him until the rhythm changed again; having him chase the shortest as he crossed the place to pull on the hand of the only person that remained to himself. The redhead helping him as he noticed who it was.

Kanda could hardly believe his night when he felt his hand being pulled by no other than Allen, while his best friend helped him, pushing him from the back for him to stand up. Making him held Lenalee’s in an instinctive movement to stay with her; Lavi falling down as they parted. The girl happily helping his friends to make him dance as, at the same time, took Wisely’s hand. Starting a circle that would end again with the lead singer and Miranda; who tried not to fall as they all moved.

The music got faster as Tyki kept playing and the circle broke to leave a constant exchange of partner; one after another and friend by friend, moving. Each of them laughing with someone they knew, or they didn’t, but that were there for either or both of the recently married. Sharing a bond of happiness that was pure magic under the starry skies. And as the song got closer to its end, people got transformed into a blur, speed attached to each note. The switches, passes and jumps an integration of colors and electricity that was just like a Seurat. A clean representation of how pointillism felt in real life. Allen laughing and only noticing with whom he ended as the guitar stopped.

-Is this fate? -He asked, out of breath, to the tall ginger as his rings touched, their hands together.

-I bet. -Was his quiet answer as he bent a little to have another kiss, completely drunk in his love for him.

-Are you coming? -He didn’t call him that loud, but the bathroom was big, and his words easily bounced on the white tile walls. The water filling the jacuzzi he was dearly grateful for; his shoulders begging for some rest as the tension of screwing up his own wedding, faded with everything going smoothly. At last alone with Allen.

-Yes! In a moment! –

Lavi shrugged it off and got rid of his clothes, careful enough to drop everything at a chair that he had no clue why it was there to begin with, but he questioned no further. As the water got higher, he waited with only a towel around his waist; the last strings of his attention to the movement the liquid made as it fell. He listened to the door of the bathroom opening and closing but he didn’t turn. His thoughts empty as the only thing he wanted to do was taking a long, relaxing bath with his beautiful, precious husband.

-I know you’re tired, handsome but…well if you are up for it…-Lavi made himself turn, the same sound of the water running now inside his brain.
Allen had a silk black night robe open and underneath a white lace one piece of lingerie that left the redhead about to let go his towel without the fear of it falling on the floor, something else on his physique maintaining the cloth suspended. Suddenly hard.

-W-what? -He managed to stutter as the shortest remained with his back against the door.

-Wisely it was a good idea. -His face was red and as Lavi tried to close the tap without seeing it, he noticed the iridescent collar he also wore. A heart instead of the ring the other he owned had.

-Wisely is a fucking genius and I love him. -Long steps to corner him. Allen turned to the left, still blushing, unable to meet his gaze as his arms caged him against the door. -Married and you still get embarrassed? –He whispered as he kissed him below his ear, the other holding to his arms as he had no place to run, moving his head to give him space. A deep breath as his lips touched his skin, trying to make

-Embarrassed? -The tone stroked a nerve with which Lavi forgot about his tiredness. Moving his lips to his shoulder, softly biting there as his hands traced down to his legs to play with the stockings and the garter belt that would disappear soon. -No. Never. Never with you. –

-That’s what I wanted to hear. -Allen held his face as the words came out of his mouth and kissed him like his life depended on it. Their breathings fast and loud as the kiss escalated. The robe forgotten on the floor.

-Ah…-He moaned over his lips as Lavi squeezed his butt cheeks. His hot breath hitting his neck a second later. The tallest turning him against the wall, moving his hair to kiss his back. Massaging, squeezing and rubbing on every place he could get without undressing him. The sight of that set the best wedding present he was able to imagine.

-Doing it against the wall is a waist for a wedding night, don’t you think? -Allen only looked at him over his shoulder. His mouth slightly open as he breathed heavily, letting him rub against him, his hands touching his inner thighs as they went up, near his already stimulated member as he imagined what was next. -Mh…Aren’t we a little excited? –

-I…I could say the same ah-about you, Lavi. -The redhead teased him, with the tip of his fingers, holding him tight with one hand over his right hipbone; the anticipation working on him harder. One hand on his thigh as it sunk his fingers on his skin, another under his chin to turn Allen enough to kiss him again, his passion on a wild movement that would leave them red. Unable to stop grinding against him. Moving with mere instinct as he felt the same desire for the flower he tasted for the first time three years ago. The cup of ambrosia still full for him to drink over that mouth.

The next time Allen opened his eyes after that kiss finding himself at his lap, the redhead with a finger in the heart ring of his collar. So close to the water that if he extended his hand just a little, he would be touching it. The pink surface like utopia for two as the liquid sparkled with the sizzling bath bomb.

-Will you be good tonight, angel? -Lavi asked with his eyes barely open. Gold and green shining against his pale eyelashes; the charm for him to surrender or to possess there. His chest up and down in quick movements.

-I don’t know, professor. I’m not really good at being good. -His hair was now on a ponytail and the tallest passed his hand through it, the intention of letting it loose obvious. Letting him do a small concession to him as his hair caressed his shoulders, the attention of the other in the movement of it.
-Truest words were never said, my Love. -He pushed a strand of hair back and pointed to the jacuzzi with a gesture of his head. A question and a suggestion.

-Oh, but you will have to help me out here, mister. I don’t think I can get out of this on my own. – His eyelashes batted like a swallow on its spring flight and that was all he needed to comply. Lavi sitting him at the border of the jacuzzi, getting on two knees in front of him, taking with patience and delicacy one of legs to get rid of the fabric, slowly sliding it down; and as soon as they are away, kissing the exposed skin until the inner side of his thighs. A sensible spot he discovered and exploited since they visited France, some time ago. Allen’s tongue showed between his parted lips; the redhead quick to let his hands reach to his shoulders to slither down the suspenders. The one piece going down without resistance, like the forbidden fruit, already ripe to the touch.

He then got into the water, holding Allen’s hand to help get inside without troubles, all clothes forgotten on the floor as their bodies met.

-Maybe you’re too tired. You look tired. -He whispered as he rested his arms over Lavi’s shoulders. His lips against his, his voice dangerous with more teasing that the redhead knew well.

-Mh, I’m never that tired, kitten. Don’t get me wrong. -As he strived for a kiss Allen tried to pull back, only to listen the water move and feel a grip around his neck tighten. His husband’s hand keeping him on place by the collar. His eyebrows formulated a question that was answered in the same way with a more defiant undertone, Lavi using his free hand to caress his legs and upwards as he kissed his collarbone. -But whatever you want, I’m yours. –

He let him do, feeling his hand move to his entrance, making him hold to his back with a single scratch that he knew would do what he wanted.

-You are. Aren’t you? –Allen whispered, knowing he would loose his grip, with the sensation allowing him to move.

-Ah…! Yes! -A moan that wasn’t loud, but inside there it was as good as a scream.

-I always loved this about you. Mh…! -The shortest said against his cheek as he accommodated himself to get into his preferred seat. – Ah, Lavi… -Immediately moving in a slow pace, one of his hands firmly on the curvature of Lavi’s neck. The muscles tensing and moving as he supported himself, the sensation enough to make his mouth water. His other hand letting him have some balance, the redhead’s right still at his collar, every time he got too high pulling down to brush against his body again.

-Allen…-His name was by then a conjuring. The letters drawing out fantasies like the very first time. Music for him that shook his inside to contract in a pleasure only he was able to give him.

-Lavi…nh…! -A whimper that made the other open his eyes, looking for the perfect frame of that face. Pink lips and lustful eyes. He knew his name gave him power as well, the sound of the water as they move already like a song. A brief moment where their pupils met. Allen got closer, his opened mouth and pleading tongue begged for a kiss without embarrassment; forcing the redhead to hold him by the hips as he moved. He didn’t let the collar go, yet the shortest hugged him by the neck, the distance destroyed as he kept the pace looking for the longest time together.

-Mh, Snowflake…! -A deep moan over his mouth in the middle of the kiss that sent the other shivering with the vibration everywhere. Jerking hard against him, pushing and moving as he knew he wanted him to do. Because with him, he would be sure he wouldn’t have to beg.

-Yes…! Yes, like that! Ah…Lavi…! -Lavi’s hands ended both over his hipbones. Love handles to
keep him riding on place and rhythm. A jazz piece that had blues and was mundanely named sex. As his resistance threatened to make him finish, he sneaked one hand to tangle it in Allen’s hair. Pulling his head back as he kissed his jaw and his neck, listening him moan. Harsh panting coming out of his own lips, his mind slipping away from his grip; not it vain calling his love an angel. As for him he was heaven, it was moon, it was dream. Every movement glory and taste of immortality. Did anything beside that body, that soul, matter? He thought it didn’t. On his soul there was only one song and it had that voice and those lips. Printed, tied, engraved, chained to him. With him.

-Nh, ah! Allen, oh...how much...mh! How much I love you...! - He never understood how words kept managing his way out of his mouth. But wasn’t that what prophets said? God put the words over their mouths to speak their blessings. And for him there was only one he would adore as his vows were made; until the earth was gone.

-AH! YES! YES! - His body tight to his, his right reaching for the longest part of his undercut to grab it, the pull making him feel dizzy as he was about to came as well. Every time the silver haired moaned a little closer to die. His heart pounding at that strange beat, slow motion for a muscle that only stirred when he rode him like that. -AH, LAVI! –

Quick respirations that were followed by the mix of a long sigh and a moan. His free hand leaving long marks on his husband’s back. A second of difference as both came. Only panting left with the swaying movement of the water trying to settle down.

-Ah...I...Congratulations on your wedding. - After a few moments Allen giggled and moved just enough to see his face.

-Same to you, big guy. I heard your husband it’s really cute. –

-You don’t imagine. He’s perfect. - He swallowed as he felt a light and gentle peck on the cheek, trying to ease his breathing. - Do you have any wish, any request for this first night as we start our married life, my Love? –

Allen touched his face, making him turn to see him in the eyes.

-Baby, how do I say this politely? - A pause for him to get against his lips. - Love me hard and don’t be nice, please. –

-Loud and clear. - A giggle that transformed into a cheerful laugh as he carried him out.

“I love you.”

“Forever.”
Hello, my beautiful great readers!
This is it. This is the end. Did you like it?
I'm not really sure what to say. It's been a year and a month. 134522 words. 310 pages.
17 chapters. And one huge story. I asked already, but did you like it?
I loved to write it, if I’m honest with you. Somedays I was sad, somedays I was worried, or busy or simply didn’t feel up to it…but in the end…I finally finished the project. This was a personal attempt to fix a mistake. It was an experience. I wanted to do something longer, something about practically my first OTP ever. Something that would be for me and by me. Something I could love.
And oh boy. I LOVED IT.

As always, the songs I used to write this were Soldier, Poet, King. By The Oh Hellos. Which is the song that Allen sings.
As well as the rest of that CD called Dear Wormwood.
Stolen Dance by Milky Chance, Unforgettable by Sia and the last song was Wait, Stay. Which I used to write their time at the bathroom. All you can find them at Spotify; I terrible thing that now I’m addicted to. Hahaha.
All the reference photos I will be uploading them at my twitter @noctomata were you can not only see them but also send me a message or tag me. I’m always happy to know about you. Remember that I edited the first chapters. Specially 1-9 have significant changes, if you want to live this story again.

But well, Crybaby has ended and today, my dear readers I am BEYOND happy. Not because this is the end of my story but because you guys are here to share it with me. Every time I felt sad or like I wasn’t enough, like I should leave the project or that it was a meaningless thing…I read your comments again and again and sometimes they almost made me cry with your kindness and your support. With your love for Crybaby. I am…so grateful!
Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.
Please, leave this chapter knowing that this was because of you as well. That you are part of this story, part of this writer, part of this heart.
Again. Thank you.
I want to give some special mentions, because I feel like I’m winning an Oscar or a Nobel with the fact of finishing this:

I want to thank my beta reader, that always read my disasters and help me with ideas, recommendations, notes and outfits. She drew some of the scenes for me and honestly, she made me feel like I was the greatest writer in the world. She loved it, she hated it, she cried, she laughed, she was one of the most important things for Crybaby. Thank you. I love you Rabbit. Sorry for making you part of this fandom, but as you can see, they are wonderful.

Then I want to thank Somnus_35 whom left me long, wonderful comments. I’m not sure if you’ll be here for the end to read it, but still, you were the first person to quote one of my lines. You made it special. Thank you.

I want to thank to LeadPotato, who was as excited as my beta or more. I loved that you left your ideas, your emotions and your opinions! I really hope I’ll keep reading them
in the Holiday Specials. Some days your comments made me have a great day and
every time I uploaded a chapter, I waited for you to appear. I was so fascinated when
you accidentally guessed the plot, thinking it would never happen. How do you feel? I
write angst but I also love happy endings. Specially for this two. I hope you liked the
wedding. I really do. I’m not sure if it was as heartfelt as you expected but I hope you
are pleased. Thank you, my Potato friend.
Also, to LovingDucks. I’m truly thankful that you chose my story to practice your
English. I know you didn’t want this to end but at least, I’ll still be working on the
Holiday Specials on Halloween to start and then sometime I will write another Laven
that I hope you’ll like as well. Your comments always brought a smile to my face and I
felt flattered that someone with another native language would take the bother to read
my tale! Thank you. I hope I’ll read about you someday again and that you liked this
wedding as much as I liked it writing it. Merci, mon ami.

And last, but not least…I want to thank you all my readers that were here silently but
liked it as well. Your kudos were enough for me and made me happy to share it with
you. If you didn’t know how to express yourself, if you were shy or if you didn’t know
what to say I want to tell you: thank you anyway. I appreciate your effort. I am
thankful for the time you invested in this story and honestly, I hope that you liked this
end.

Oh and I want to thank to my cats, but they don't know how to read. You were all my
Timcanpy's

See you at the Holiday Specials on October 31, dear crybabies!
Your friend and DGM sucker, Noctomata.

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!