Eat My Heart Out

by ReverberatingEchoes

Summary

"If you eat my heart," Mahiru tells him out of the blue one day, "You'll gain immortality."

Notes

Please read with caution!!!!!

Trigger warnings for blood, gore, injury, implied cannibalism, cannibalism, suicidal thoughts, co-dependency, unhealthy relationships, mutilation, implied dubious content, implied sexual content and other disturbing and dark themes.

This is a dark fic, but also vague and hazy and strange.

PLEASE READ WITH CAUTION.
On another note, I saw 'heart eater', 'eat one's heart out' and 'put one's heart in another's hand' and this came to life.

Happy Halloween, OrangeScribbles!!! I hope you enjoy this uh dark fic.

See the end of the work for more notes.

i. in our own world

"If you eat my heart," Mahiru tells him out of the blue one day, "You'll gain immortality."

It's a quiet afternoon and they're seated inside Mahiru's room sharing tea and snacks. Mahiru adjusts the sleeves of his robes as Kuro gazes at his cup thoughtfully.

"Will that be able to kill you?" Kuro asks eventually, setting his cup down and calmly regarding the other. Mahiru shrugs, a melancholic smile painting his lips.
"I don't know," Mahiru replies honestly. "I've lost a few organs in the past, but I don't think I've ever had my heart ripped out before."

(People have eaten my other organs before in hopes of gaining immortality, not that they succeeded in turning immortal, not that it managed to kill me, Kuro translates in his mind.)

It makes Kuro want to ask: Would you like me to eat your heart? Would you like to die by my hands or would you like me to live through you?

Mahiru crosses his legs together, a hand coming up to his chest, either to make sure his heart is still there or to imagine what his heartbeat used to feel like, Kuro isn't sure.

Mahiru's an enigma, in every negative sense of the word. Kuro can't really make sense of him, can't fully understand him the way Mahiru's craves to be understood. On some days, Kuro thinks that maybe Mahiru can't really make sense of himself either.
On some days, Kuro thinks that maybe it's the same for Mahiru too, that maybe to him, Kuro's an enigma, too, one Mahiru can never really make sense of, can't ever fully understand, at least not in the way Kuro wishes to be understood. It's lonely, but at the same time it's not. Not when Kuro's the only person who's ever come closest to understanding Mahiru, not when Mahiru's the only person who's ever come closest to understanding Kuro.

Sighing softly, Kuro moves the tea tray and snacks to the side. There's a routine that the two of them implicitly follow every time Kuro comes over to visit. It's taken Kuro a while to get used to it, but now he doesn't flinch anymore when Mahiru reaches out and slides a palm over his cheek. He doesn't bat an eye when Mahiru crawls onto his lap and settles himself there, legs on either side of his hips, arms looped at the back of Kuro's neck and cold lips pressed against his collarbone.

"Kuro," Mahiru murmurs against his skin, "Kuro."

Kuro's arms automatically wind up wrapped around Mahiru's waist, pulling him closer. There are a lot of days when Mahiru gets like this, eyes glassy and expression lost. Kuro has learned to deal with it by allowing Mahiru to take what he needs from Kuro, be it the warmth of Kuro's body or the low timbre of his voice offering words of comfort or affection or affirmation.

"I'm right here," Kuro whispers, "I'm here, Mahiru."
Mahiru's hold on him tightens and a quiet whimper escapes his lips. Kuro runs his fingers through the other's hair.

(And what a strange pair they must make, Kuro thinks, Mahiru, who cannot die, and him, who stares Death straight in the eyes every single day. A young man cursed to live forever and a young man cursed to die. It makes Kuro wonder what sick sense of humor the world has that it made their paths cross.)

"Kuro, I don't want to be alone anymore," Mahiru pleads weakly, "I don't want to be alone anymore."

It makes Kuro want to ask: *Why don't you ask me to stay? Why don't you ask me to stay by your side?*

Kuro wonders how many years Mahiru has had to endure solitude this way, secluded in his private residence and away from everyone else, wonders how many times Mahiru has opened his heart to other people only for them to betray him by stealing his organs, or for them to be taken by the flow of time, to be taken by the cold clutches of Death even before Mahiru can fully stave off his loneliness.
It makes Kuro wonder: *Will I be one of those faceless people that managed to hold you like this, once upon a time? Will you remember me, once I'm gone?*

Kuro gently cradles Mahiru's cheek and presses his lips on the side of Mahiru's mouth.

"I'm here, aren't I?" Kuro reminds him softly, "I'm right here with you."

Mahiru stares up at him, almost miserably. "But you won't be here forever," Mahiru whispers back, "Kuro, you won't be here and I'll be all alone-"

Kuro kisses him, then. Mahiru kisses back immediately, desperately. Kuro can only do so much to stop Mahiru's thoughts and loneliness from haunting him and if it means drinking up his melancholy and regrets like this and drowning him in pleasure, then so be it.

(What they have might not be love, perhaps it cannot be love with the way things are, with the way they are, but it's the closest either of them have ever come to experiencing it.)
(And it's enough, Kuro thinks. It has to be. For the both of them.)

He trails his lips over Mahiru's neck and caresses his chest, he lets Mahiru mark him and indulges him when he asks for more, please, Kuro, more.

(In the end, Kuro has never really liked refusing Mahiru.)

ii. a proposition for us two
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The steady rise and fall of Kuro's chest is soothing to watch.

Curled by his side, Mahiru watches him quietly, watches him inhale and exhale softly, peacefully.
Almost as if Kuro's not afflicted with an incurable disease. Almost as if he's not living on borrowed time.

Mahiru lets his fingertips graze Kuro's lips and proceeds to rest his ear against Kuro's chest, listening to the steady thrum of his heartbeat.

It's a comforting sound because Mahiru can no longer hear his own heartbeat. It's a comforting sound because it reassures Mahiru that Kuro is still alive and well and here.

Even if one day Kuro will leave him as well.)

"You know," Mahiru repeats into his chest, "If you eat my heart, you'll gain immortality. If you eat my heart, I might be able to die."
"Do you want me to eat your heart?"

Mahiru startles and looks up. He finds Kuro gazing at him with an unreadable expression on his face, any trace of sleepiness gone. As if he had never been asleep in the first place. With Kuro, it's probable. Mahiru knows he's never slept well in his entire life.

Mahiru slowly sits up and ruminates the question in his mind. It surprises him because no one has ever asked him before they took from him. They've always just taken what they wanted and Mahiru has always just let them. He's never really learned to say no.

(When they'd taken his mortality, Mahiru hadn't really struggled, couldn't find it in him to struggle. And now Kuro's here, asking permission to eat his heart-

It's strange. It's frightening. It makes Mahiru almost hopeful.)
Mahiru finds that he does—does want Kuro to eat his heart, does want Kuro to gain immortality and live, does want to be able to die.

(Just that, Mahiru isn't sure what he wants more—for Kuro to have the chance to live, or for him to have the chance to die.)

Kuro only waits for his answer quietly, patiently. Mahiru wonders what Kuro wants more: if he wants the chance to live longer or if he wants to give Mahiru the chance to die and chase after the peace that's been eluding him ever since he's been damned to eternity and beyond.

(At the back of Mahiru's mind, he briefly wonders if it's possible that Kuro wants to be able to live through eternity with him.)

"I don't know," Mahiru replies eventually, if only a bit frightened by the possibility, if only a bit hopeful by the possibility, and then adds, "I've never had anyone ask me that before."
"I'm asking you now, Mahiru," Kuro tells him, "Do you want me to eat your heart?"

Mahiru wonders if Kuro's question really means something else. *Something like do you want me to live through you or do you want to die by my hands or maybe do you want to find out if we can spend eternity together?*

It comforts Mahiru, somehow, the possibilities. Reaching out to him, Mahiru leads Kuro's palm to his chest. The warmth of Kuro's palm feels nice on his bare flesh and he allows himself to enjoy it.

"Can you?" Mahiru asks softly. "Can you rip this off my chest and see if it kills me, see if it makes you immortal?"

*Can you carry this weight with me?*

"If that's what you want," Kuro replies just as soft, "if you want me to, Mahiru, I'll do it for you."
(Mahiru doesn't think he's ever had anyone like Kuro before in his life-someone that doesn't fully understand him but puts him at ease all the same. Someone that never takes more than what Mahiru has to offer. Someone that gives and gives and Mahiru, Mahiru is only beginning to learn how to take.)

Kuro sits up and his eyes are gentle when they gaze into his. It baffles Mahiru sometimes how effortlessly and endlessly considerate Kuro is to him, when the only world Mahiru has known is one that is not, when the only world Mahiru has known is one draped in loneliness and cruelty, of betrayal and emptiness.

Kuro replaces his palm on Mahiru's bare chest with his lips. Mahiru can feel Kuro's lips skim against his skin and he wonders what Kuro is murmuring. Let me do this for you? I hope I get to live? I hope Mahiru gets the chance to die? I hope we get to live together for a long time?

Mahiru isn't sure which one he wants to hear the most.

iii. a future for us

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Mahiru's heart looks like any human heart, just that it's a bit smaller and solid and glows a faint orange hue.

Kuro notes that it doesn't beat at all, just sits behind Mahiru's ribs like a pretty ornament.

(At this point, Kuro thinks it's a rather accurate description. A heart that doesn't beat may as well be nothing more than a pretty ornament.)

"I haven't seen my heart like this in a while," Mahiru says casually, almost as if he was discussing the weather. He's seated on Kuro's lap again, chest sliced open. Kuro can see the way his lungs expand and contract with every breath Mahiru takes and thinks he should be more disturbed.

(But Kuro isn't disturbed at all, he's probably more fascinated than he is disturbed and that says a lot about him.)

"Does it hurt?" Kuro asks softly. Mahiru had bled a lot when Kuro cut him up.
"I'm used to it," Mahiru reassures him with a kind smile.

So it does hurt, Kuro thinks, and he ponders on the fact that Mahiru must have had been opened up like this so much in the past when people had stolen his organs, so much that Mahiru had barely batted an eye when Kuro had pressed the blade against his skin.

Mahiru doesn't move away when Kuro touches his very still heart and Kuro is mildly surprised to find that it's warm despite not pumping blood to the rest of Mahiru's body.

(Kuro's not sure how Mahiru still has blood in his veins but decides that perhaps it's futile to try to understand how Mahiru's body works.)

"Are you ready?" Kuro asks quietly and Mahiru chuckles, cocking his head to the side. He nods.
"Are you?" Mahiru returns playfully and it makes Kuro's lips twitch into a slight smile.

"I am," Kuro replies.

(Kuro's not quite sure how this will end, but he finds that it doesn't matter. Neither of them have anything to lose, anyway.)

He keeps his gaze locked on Mahiru as he slowly pulls out the other's heart. Mahiru gasps quietly as his grip tightens on Kuro's shoulders.

(At the back of Kuro's mind, he thinks of how intimate this entire process is, and how this is probably the most intimate that the two of them have ever been. Mahiru is perhaps at his most vulnerable and Kuro is there to witness him unravel.)

After a few more tugs, Kuro finally has Mahiru's heart in his hand. Mahiru slumps over him, head buried in the space where Kuro's neck and shoulder meet, breathing softly.
"Kuro," Mahiru whispers onto his skin, "Kuro."

"I'm here," Kuro whispers back, "I'm right here, Mahiru."

He gently caresses Mahiru's cheek as he stares thoughtfully at the still organ in his hand.

Bringing it up to his lips, Kuro presses a tender kiss to Mahiru's heart.

Kuro opens his mouth and takes a bite.
End Notes

*What do you think happened afterwards?*

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