Unable to tell Ladybug the true reason for her kwami’s illness, Master Fu wearily visits Chat Noir with these foreboding words…

“Chat Noir, you and Ladybug are in danger of losing your miraculous and I’m afraid to inform you this, but… it is your fault.” ☹️

In which an oblivious Adrien 😊 is given a nearly impossible task and has to fix a problem that he didn’t even know that he kind of started. The angst is high and It gets rough people!

Marinette is stressed out, Ladybug is attracting akumas, the kwami are sick 😔 and Lila is an evil 😈 (enter colorful metaphor here).

As Edmund Burke says, “The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.”

This story is an example of when the good guys did nothing 😊... initially anyway. 😊
It's BACK! What? A new chapter? Can you believe that? 😊 😊 Now there is less than 13 hours until Lila's downfall... 😞

Notes

Warning: Chameleon, Season 3 episode 1 spoilers and alternate ending.

This is basically a ‘what if this happened towards the end of Chameleon’ and if Adrien hadn’t decided to change seats to briefly sit beside Marinette story and how that would effect their bonds to each other and their miraculous.

Another warning, this starts out and has parts that are really angsty (including scenes of sexual harassment, maybe considered assault with references back to those events) so beware, I've been advised to put a trigger warning on this story just in case beyond the tags, but in my opinion, it's not graphic but scary and well, wrong.

As Edmund Burke says, “The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.” This story is an example of when the good guys did nothing... at first.

Fair warning, this is not my typical story of funny situations, while there is some fluff, there is more angst that I'm used to including and many people have already been annoyed at how oblivious Adrien 😔 can be here. To me, its investigating and scary how close Adrien comes to messing up everything by standing by and doing nothing initially in Chameleon and now how he's got to fix it... alone, with a little help from a couple of kwami and from some friends.

Of course, all characters belong to the wonderful writers and owners of Miraculous Ladybug, sorry for putting your characters through this one... but you started it.

Just kidding, its just a different spin on the way the Chameleon story could have gone, (hopefully you'll forgive me)

So if you're ready now... read on!

See the end of the work for more notes.
“Blech!”

“Eww, Plagg, why did you do that?” Adrien protested as he held his nose, Camembert smelled even worse when it came up half digested after all.

“Do you think that I wanted to lose my precious cheese kid?” Plagg protested, as he wiped his paw across his mouth as Adrien picked up Plagg’s trashcan and took it to the bathroom to rinse it out. Plagg floated lazily to Adrien’s desk, although he seemed to shake with excess energy.

“Are you sick or something?” Adrien asked when he got back.

Plagg sighed, “look at me kid.”

Adrien looked closely and was surprised that Plagg looked darker than usual, almost like his fur sucked in the light around him, and he was vibrating or something. “You look…different.” Adrien observed.

“Duhh, we’re sick Adrien and you’d better do something about it.” The kwami hovered over to him and poked the boy in the chest to make his point. His touch felt dark, cold and almost dead, as if Plagg’s powers were barely being contained...

“We?”

There was a knock at the door, “Adrien? Your Chinese teacher is here for your lesson.” Nathalie announced.

“Thank you, Nathalie.” Adrien replied. “hide Plagg, we can talk about this later.”

“I’m not hiding.” Plagg hissed as he proudly proclaimed. “He came here for me.”

“Plagg!” Adrien whispered irritably.

“Ah, Adrien. We have much to discuss.” Master Fu entered and closed the door behind him with a slight frown on his face.

“Master! Wha-what are you doing here?”

“I am here to tell you something Chat Noir. We, or rather you, have a problem.” Adrien nodded. “What do you need me to do?”

“Essentially you must fix that which is breaking.” Then Master Fu gathered himself and announced gravely, “Chat Noir, you and your Ladybug are in danger of losing your miraculous…”

“What! Does Hawkmoth know who we are?” Adrien interrupted with a shocked look on his face.

“No,” Master Fu reached into his bag and pulled out a small pink kwami from his bag, “it’s even worse.”

“Sugarcube!” Plagg exclaimed and he zipped over to cuddle with the sick looking kwami.

“I-I told you not to c-call me that Stinky Sock!” Tikki muttered as she shivered and relaxed into
Plagg’s offered cuddle. They both began to glow and Master Fu put them gently on a pillow on Adrien’s bed before walking over to Adrien’s couch so that they could talk.

“Is that Ladybug’s kwami?” Adrien asked, surprised that she wasn’t with Ladybug.

“Yes. I’m afraid that I will have to leave her here for an hour or two Chat Noir. Plagg will be able to help her to regain some balance. She will be able to return to Ladybug on her own, but must come back here for a couple of hours every night to combat the loss of balance that is still growing.”

Master Fu sat down on Adrien’s couch and Adrien sat next to him.

“Still?” Adrien looked confused.

Master Fu sighed, “spending time together is only a temporary remedy and it only slows down the progression of their illness. Tikki has requested that they give you a chance.” Then without raising his voice he asked, “Plagg, are you willing to endure the pain that is coming so that your chosen may have a chance to redeem himself?”

Plagg answered, “if only because that is what Tikki wants, you know that I would say yes. He is a very oblivious boy Master, but I care about him.”

“Huh?” Adrien asked, confused.

“They are ill because they are unbalanced Chat Noir,” Master Fu explained, “and if that balance is not fully restored, you and maybe even Ladybug will have to give up your miraculous to those worthier and more able to function in harmony together.”

Not catching the implication there, Adrien asked, “worthier? What have we done to not be worthy to be heroes anymore Master?”

Master Fu looked sad, “I must confess and I’m afraid to inform you this Chat Noir, but… this is likely your fault.”

Adrien looked astonished, “wha-what?!!”

Master Fu tried to explain. "It is probably due to your inaction that has done this. Tikki, Ladybug’s kwami, and thus your kwami, are ill, because Ladybug’s heart is troubled.”

Adrien looked surprised, “does that mean that she has a broken heart?”

Master Fu was thoughtful for a moment and responded. “in a way, yes. It was shaken because you chose not to speak the truth about someone in both of your civilian lives and the effects of that has hurt her. This person is both a bully and a liar, someone who has threatened Ladybug as a civilian and has seemingly carried out her threats.”

Adrien swallowed, overwhelmed that he had failed his Lady so, but he understood that he had a chance to redeem himself and must keep it together. Adrien could guess who the other culprit was, “Lila. I… I thought that accusing her would only make her worse and more dangerous, I guess Marinette was right.” He sighed, she’d been back at school for a couple weeks already, “I didn’t know that she was bullying anyone, much less Ladybug. Wa-why didn’t Ladybug fight back?”

“She tried, but she needed back up that never came.” Master Fu sighed as he pulled out Adrien’s lesson plan and placed it on his lap. “Unfortunately, Ladybug has lost faith in both Rena Rouge and Carapace as well because they also could have done something, but chose to ignore what they knew and chose to believe the lies that this Lila spouted instead.”
“How, how does Ladybug being threatened endanger our miraculous Master?”

Master Fu looked beyond Adrien with the sadness carried by all of his years. “The perfect pairing of a miraculous holder with the right person is a delicate thing. The perfect pairing of the Ladybug and the Black Cat miraculous is even harder, for they must be given to a pair that were meant for each other, soulmates if you were.”

“I knew it!” Adrien smirked.

Master Fu shook his head. “No, you must hear me out Chat Noir. It is this connection that has been weakened and thus the illness of your kwami and your bonds as a whole. All four of you are connected and those connections require balance, like Yin and Yang. It does not mean that you are meant to be a couple necessarily, perhaps only the best of friends, however,” the Master’s face looked pained as he cautiously admitted, “Ladybug has been hurt because she trusted your civilian self, and you were not there for her. You have been oblivious to her crush on you because of your infatuation with her heroic self, the side of her that she feels the least amount of connection to, especially of late.”

“So, I-I failed her?” He had to know.

Master Fu frowned, “those are strong words Chat Noir. Your Ladybug has lost faith in the civilian you, and thus unknowingly your heroic self too. Admittedly you did not know that she was being bullied, but still, your connection is faltering because you chose not to act. If nothing is done, your soulmate connection may be severed, and that means that your bond to your miraculous will be no more.”
Adrien looked like he was about to cry. “What… what can I do Master?”

“You must find Ladybug,” Master Fu announced, “apologize and help her balance her life by being there for her, not necessarily in that order. Her trust for your civilian self must be restored. Then you must grow closer, hopefully with a reveal as that will stop this from happening ever again. You may even need to expose this Lila’s lies. If you are not there for Ladybug and soon, well, there are only two things that can happen, but neither will allow you to remain Chat Noir.”

“What?” Adrien loudly gasped.

Plagg hissed, “Quiet! My Sugarcube needs quiet.” He ended his comment almost lovingly with a purr for the pink kwami whose color was turning slightly darker already and she looked like she was peacefully sleeping.

Master Fu nodded and whispered, “it was not Ladybug’s actions that began this atrophy, and being Ladybug, she must love, for from love comes creation. The repercussion of your inaction has shaken her to her core. Her love that she must give, is tentative, meaning if she loses her feelings for your civilian self completely and falls for another before her connection to Tikki is lost, she may be able to remain Ladybug.”

Adrien connected the dots, “and her new,” he gulped, “crush, will be the new Chat Noir?”

“Possibly. If nothing is done, her connection to her miraculous will fade into nothingness as will yours.”

“Wha- what if I fell in love with another?” Although he doubted that could ever happen but he had to ask.

“Your balance would still be broken. You chose to test your bonds first and unknowingly weakened your links. Currently you both love each other to some degree, just not the same sides of each other.”

Adrien grimaced, “does that mean that she’s a fan then?”

Master Fu pursed his lips, “you could say that,” then he thoughtfully added, “yes, yes I think I can safely say that she was.”

Adrien’s heart fell, he had held the heart of his Lady and he hadn’t even known about it until he was losing it and hadn’t even known it was happening. He felt terrible.

Master Fu saw the young man’s reaction, so he patted Adrien on the shoulder. “Although she always wished that you would notice her, I will admit that you’ve met behind the mask. The magic cannot be restored if you do not put in any effort, that is why I cannot tell you more than the most basic of vague details. Essentially, you were in love with one another, just the wrong sides of each other and
her love for your civilian side is fading due to your choice in siding with the girl that bullied her by doing nothing. Unfortunately, it was your lack of being there for Ladybug and your not balancing and helping her out, that caused this domino effect.”

“But Master, I don’t even know what I did!”

Master Fu leveled a subtle but disappointed look at the boy as he put his hands on the lesson plan. “Chat Noir, do you deny that you supported this Lila’s lies by not confronting them? Only hoping that she would eventually be caught and that no one would be hurt in the process?”

Adrien looked ashamed and looked down at the floor as he muttered, “no.”

“Own up to it Chat Noir. What did you say?”

Adrien took a deep breath and loudly announced, “NO,” but then he whispered, “I didn’t mean for this to happen Master.”

“Chat Noir, your Ladybug was hurt because injuries of the mind and soul are greater than your average physical ones, they can change a person permanently. Ladybug is questioning much in her life and pretending that she isn’t hurt. Now would have been the time for you two to begin to grow closer, and yet you have backtracked and unknowingly thrown everything out of balance.” Master Fu waved his hand as if he was tossing something away.

“You have seven days Chat Noir. I will not allow more, the kwami should not have to endure more pain than necessary as they try to hold onto and maintain your weakened bonds that are slipping away. To help Ladybug over this, you must find her and help her to repair or restore the most precious of what she has lost, or it is likely that you will both lose your miraculous and I will have to find a better suited and harmonic pair.” The old man looked depressed at the very idea.

Adrien looked hurt but determined, “Master, how will I do that? I don’t even know where to begin!”

“You will have to open your eyes Adrien. Plagg is allowed to help by reminding you of what you know, but he cannot make the conclusions for you or tell you her name. In the meantime, the unbalance between your civilian selves will only cause havoc for your powers if you both go into battle transformed because being together and transformed will strain your balance faster than if you stay away from her and remain untransformed.”

“Master, what are you saying?” Adrien did not like the sound of this.

Master Fu nodded as if he had made a decision, “as Ladybug is needed to cleanse the akuma, I’m afraid that you must stay away from any akuma fights and do your best not to be transformed when she is.”

“What!? How will I talk with her? How can I help her if I can’t even see her!”

Master Fu almost rolled his eyes as he let out a small but rare exhale of frustration, “Adrien, obviously you must discover her identity outside of the mask and she must forgive you naturally and come to love you once more outside of your heroic selves because that is where the damage happened. All of this is due to the weakening of your soulmate bond. I cannot tell you who she is and the balance will not be restored if you ask her to reveal herself or if you tell her who you are without sincerely apologizing. Also, you must not tell her the whole truth as to why your kwami are ill.”

“But that would fix everything!”
“No, it would throw everything further out of balance!” Master Fu almost snarled, then he took a relaxing breath. “I am sorry, this has not happened in centuries. I have failed you by not encouraging you to become closer by now, maybe if you had been and had known who each other were this would never have happened. I cannot fix this for you, but I can tell you that discovering your identity right now for her would be disastrous, because right now she holds her relationship, her friendship, with Chat Noir above her feelings for Adrien, tentative as both may be. Learning the truth now without forgiving and trusting Adrien again will tear apart her faith in Chat Noir as well and she will be unable to stay connected to her miraculous, breaking your connection to yours as well. We must not allow her to consider renouncing it any more than she has done so already.”

“She’s… she’s thought about not being Ladybug anymore?”

Master Fu nodded. “For nearly the past week, she’s had some close calls and has almost been akumatized several times. I have been trying to help her meditate, but she needs something more.” He looked at the young cat with a knowing nod. “She has not been able to get over what has happened and it has weakened her will, already she is not the same Ladybug that she was three weeks ago although she is trying to remain strong on her own.”

“Is that when this happened? Three weeks ago?”

Master Fu waved off the idea, “I cannot confirm that, because it would be sharing too much.” But then he winked slightly as if confirming something.

“I didn’t know it was so bad, I didn’t even know she was going through all of this, she hasn’t said anything during patrol.” Adrien thought about the last two weeks, she’d been more contemplative than usual, and he could have sworn that the light in her eyes had dimmed. Unfortunately, she wouldn’t tell him if anything was bothering her, personal stuff remained personal as always, she had only shrugged it off like he had been imagining things.

It was terrible knowing that he hadn’t been imagining things and she was afraid to tell him what was going on in her civilian life.

Master Fu admitted, “Ladybug as Ladybug hides her feelings and prefers to remain professional as a hero. You must not forget that she has the emotions of a teenage girl as a civilian under the mask to say the least. Her pride and her fear that Chat Noir would think less of her because she is human stopped her from asking you for help. Help that she thought that you would be unable to give because to her as a civilian, you are strangers.” Master Fu gave Adrien another subtle wink.

“Why?”

“She doesn’t need Chat Noir, she needs an everyday Chat Noir, she needs Adrien’s true self.”

Adrien looked downcast, that would mean he would have to be more like Chat Noir and less like his Father’s perfect son, but if his Lady required it, he would do it.

Master Fu thought about something, but stopped himself from saying it before he continued, “you must put in the effort to find her and regain her trust, be the support that she needs to repair this rift. I am not sharing this information with her, as she has too much on her plate right now and I will not add to her burden.” Master Fu waved the idea off.

“I can’t even call her on her communicator then, can I?” Adrien asked sadly.

“If you do, do it tonight about forty minutes after Tikki leaves. Keep it short and let her know that you want to be there for her, but cannot be because I’ve advised you to rest your kwami and remind
her that you do care. I suggest that you make it your last contact with her until you have done what you must. This will be difficult Chat Noir, but necessary.”

“I know.” Adrien nodded his head.

“If Ladybug asks about the illness of the kwami, tell her that it must be a cold or something and that I am treating your kwami too but I have advised you not to take him into battle or transform since one of them needs to not lose their strength. Although right now Tikki grows weak as Plagg’s powers are becoming overwhelming painful for him as he struggles to control them. It is a symptom of your imbalance. Plagg will do his best to help Tikki get through this, I’m sure. Ladybug’s knowing the cause of all of this will only speed up the atrophy between you and you will lose precious time to find her and be there for her other side, that is why you must only say that he is sick too, not why. For it can only be cured if Adrien can be there for the side of her that needs the balance between you restored.”

Adrien sighed, “so, what now? How can you expect her to fight alone?”

“Queen Bee will be there to help her during akuma fights. Chloe has been showing promise and she did not contribute to the acts that led to Ladybug’s broken heart, either for the better or for the worse. So their balance, their mutual respect and trust in battle are unaffected. Queen Bee did not defend Ladybug from this Lila, but then again, she wasn’t in the best position to do so. She will fight beside Ladybug if necessary during this time, and I have already delivered her miraculous to her for the time being.”

“What does Chloe know about all of this?” Adrien managed to ask.

“I suggest that you ask her. I suspect that she knows more than she lets on.”

Adrien looked defeated as he muttered, “seven days.”

“Yes, do not allow yourself to feel bad for not going into the battlefield, you have a more important mission to focus on.”

“Master?”

“You must open your eyes, find your Ladybug, love her as she deserves to be loved and to help her regain some of what she has lost, if possible. You must find a new balance between you. Finally, once your relationship as Adrien has been restored, you must help her to recognize you and your love for each other or risk losing her and part of yourselves forever.”
Plagg's Pep Talk

Chapter Summary

Plagg is upset. Adrien is overwhelmed and thinks he's having a nightmare.

Plagg tries to be thoughtful, but unfortunately, Plagg also has a pillow and he's not afraid to use it.

Master Fu insisted that they work on his Chinese before he left, it wasn’t like the end of the world would come between Adrien and his studies after all. Adrien had trouble focusing, but he did his best as they worked on it for about an hour unfortunately.

When finished, Adrien asked wearily, “will I have to tell Ladybug about this?”

Master Fu nodded, “yes, but not until you’ve regained her trust. Do not tell her until she loves both sides of you. I must go now.” Turning towards the sleeping and almost red now kwami named Tikki, Master Fu called out to Plagg in a gentle voice, “wake her when she is ready, then he may call Ladybug 40 minutes after she leaves.”

“What… what else can I do?”

“You may help Chat Noir remember and organize what he knows. Coax him to see past the miraculous powers that guard their identities as best you can, without exposing Ladybug yourself. Can you do that Plagg?”

“I’m been around for centuries, this should be child’s play.”

Master Fu nodded goodbye to the kwami as he got up before nodding towards Adrien and wishing him well. “Good luck Chat Noir, may you be able to find and help your Ladybug.”

Adrien bowed towards Master Fu and then let him out.

Adrien walked back into the room to see Plagg glaring at him, despite being wrapped around Tikki. Adrien noticed that Plagg’s outward appearance was almost normal as well.

“She’ll need some more time.” Plagg stated in a strange voice before ordering, “take a nap. I’ll wake you up when it’s time to talk.”

“Thanks Plagg.” Adrien said gratefully.

“Don’t thank me. Just... ugh... just fix this.” Plagg almost growled as he turned away from Adrien and cuddled with his other half.

Adrien laid down, he was exhausted but didn’t know if he could sleep. He had so much to do. All because he had thought that is was taking the higher road by doing nothing, when he only managed to push his Lady into the mud, and now? Now she doubted him, because he broke their balance.
Adrien rolled to his side and tried to hide the tears from Plagg as he finally let them fall. He’d been taught to regulate and control his emotions well by his father as a model, the face of the company and as an Agreste. However, right now he was just a young man, more like a boy, that has realized that it was he that had crushed his crush.

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“Wake up kid!” Plagg demanded.

“No…” Adrien whined.

“Your Lady is waiting…” Plagg called out in the most sickening sing song voice he could manage.

“Wha – what?” Adrien sat up quickly and glanced at the clock, it was almost midnight.

Adrien groaned, “ugh, Plagg I was having the most horrible nightmare!”

“Do tell.” Plagg deadpanned.

Adrien wiped his eyes, “Master Fu came over and said that I had hurt Ladybug! Hurt my Lady because I didn’t call out Lila when I knew she was a liar and now she’s all hurt and not trusting me, Adrien me, because somehow, somehow she knew that I could have stopped Lila which has messed up our balance.” Adrien rambled, “in the dream My Lady likes Adrien me Plagg, so obviously it was a dream I mean come on!”

“Are you done yet?”

“No Plagg! It gets worse, if I don’t do something, like find Ladybug, help her out of this mess I caused and support her somehow and regain her trust or love or something, we could both lose our miracu.. Ugh! PLAGG!”

Adrien glared at his kwami because he did not appreciate being silenced by a pillow being swung into his face.

“Now are you done yet?”

“No, I’m not Plagg! It was a nightm… PLAGG! Stop hitting me with the pillow!”

Plagg tossed the pillow at Adrien angrily. “Well, I guess I might as well stop because it’s not knocking any sense into you!”

“What? Oh no.” Adrien’s eyes grew wide, afraid of what his kwami was about to tell him.

“Oh, yes.” Plagg said irritably. “It wasn’t a nightmare kid, it was real and now you’ve got five minutes before you’re supposed to call Ladybug.”

“WHAT!” Adrien yelped.

“Yeah, I wanted you to get some sleep and give you some time to think about what you might say to the girl that’s supposedly ‘the love of your life’ as you call her, too bad you don’t treat her that way.”

Adrien’s face clouded up, “I didn’t know that leaving the situation with Lila alone could hurt someone!”

“Duh! I know. I just thought you knew better and now it’s come back to bite you in the butt!” Plagg pretended to look at a watch on his arm and then said, “three minutes.”
Adrien’s mind raced, “Plagg, I can’t do this! I can’t lose her!” Then he looked at Plagg with a pained expression. “I don’t want to lose you either.”

Plagg sighed and said softly, “Adrien, kid. You wouldn’t be Chat Noir if you weren’t capable of great things. I’ll help you through this, but right now you’ve got to focus, for all our sakes. You can pretend for a few minutes that you will succeed and by next week you will not only know who your Lady is, but you’ll have helped her through whatever has happened over all of this.”

“Do you really think that Plagg?” Adrien sniffed as he wiped his face with one hand as he tried to compose himself.

Plagg looked uncommonly thoughtful, “yeah, I think you can do it kid, if you put in the work. You’ve got to grow past being an oblivious boy into the Knight that your Lady,” Plagg coughed, “deserves.”

“Thanks, Plagg, I’ll do my best. Now, what do I tell My Lady?”

“Tell her what Master Fu told you to say, then say goodbye.”

Adrien swallowed, “ok.”

“You can do this Kid.”

Adrien nodded his thanks then called out, “Plagg, claws out!”
A Talk With His Lady

Chapter Summary

Adrien, no, Chat Noir, must say goodbye to his Lady before he begins his quest to find her.

Adrien jumped out of his window as Chat Noir and hopped a few buildings away to make what he hoped wouldn’t be his final call to his Lady.

Normally he’d be ecstatic to call her, but now he was weighed down by the task at hand. He had to say goodbye, all while making things sound like they weren’t as dire as they really were, but most of all, he had to not worry his Lady.

*I’ll have to lie to her. The thought plagued him. I don’t want to lie to her.*

He gulped, *but I have to, at least until I’ve fixed this.*

His thoughts weren’t reassuring, but thankfully, he was Adrien Agreste, and pretending to smile when he didn’t feel like it was his specialty.

Pulling out his baton and turning on the cellphone feature, he looked at the two contacts listed. Queen Bee was transformed or wearing her miraculous apparently.

*Master Fu works quickly,* he thought, which wasn’t all that reassuring.

Swallowing, Adrien touched the icon that would call his Lady. It rang twice and Ladybug picked it up. “Hey Kitty, it’s a little late for cat-calls isn’t it?” She smiled at him from his baton’s screen, as gorgeous as usual.

Adrien couldn’t help the small smile that was now on his face despite his dour mood as he allowed himself to admire her for a moment.

Then he remembered why he was calling. Hoping that he was channeling enough of his Adrien side to hide his personal agony over their situation from his Lady, he tried to smoothly reply, “I’d call you as late or whenever you wish of me Milady.”

She shook her head slightly and he could see the hint of a blush beneath her mask. Adrien was shocked to see that Master Fu was right, she never would have done that before, she had changed. She also would never have believed him, she usually read him so well. Was it because it was so late? Or maybe she was distracted?

*Things couldn’t have changed so quickly, could they?* He wondered.

Maybe he was lucky enough that she wouldn’t notice that he was falling to pieces inside.

Or not.

“Are you okay Chat? My kwami said that you needed to call,” she asked with concern written all over her lovely face. “What’s up?”
“I’ll be fine Milady.” He answered weakly as he looked to the side of the screen worriedly. “I guess I’m a little worried, that’s all.”

“Oh? Is there something wrong? You missed a chance to pun there.”

*Aww, Bugaboo, you noticed.*

“Can I help?” She asked.

He shook his head and gazed into the glorious depths of her eyes on the screen. “I’m afraid that I’m on my own with this one Bug.” He held his free hand over his chest for a moment, “although your concern warms this poor cat’s heart.”

She looked thoughtful then nodded like she believed him, “well, what did you want to talk to me about then? Does it have something to do with Tikki getting sick?”

Adrien shyly replied as he looked away from the screen for a moment, finding it hard to lie to her, he fought the urge to rub the back of his neck. “I’m afraid that it does. It’s not just her, Plagg, my kwami, he’s sick too.”

“But Tikki looks better now.” Ladybug looked worried.

“I’m sure she looks better now, after treatment, but Plagg, it doesn’t work quite like that. Since they’re each other’s other half, well, he’s sick too. But in order for them to get better, they’ll both need treatment and one of them will have to rest for a while. Master Fu decided that I shouldn’t transform and go into battle with you my Lady, it will give Plagg a chance to rest since this… this illness isn’t going so well for him.”

*For any of us really, but I can’t tell you about our unbalance, can I?* Adrien thought.

“Oh, I’m sorry to hear that Chat.” She frowned prettily.

“Thank you, My Lady, but Plagg will be feline fine eventually though. I’m afraid that I will need to refrain from transforming for a while, Master Fu said that transforming at the same time could be clawful for them.”

*She’s ignoring my puns, that’s not good.*

“Do you know how long this will last?” She asked hesitantly.

Adrien couldn’t lie to his Lady. “It should take another week, they may get worse before they get better though Bugaboo.” He grinned as he used his favorite nickname for her.

She blushed again and looked to the side of the screen shyly because it definitely wasn’t her favorite nickname, but she reacted slower than usual, “don’t call me Bugaboo,” she told him softly.

*She is definitely putting up a strong front herself.* Adrien decided.

Her reactions both warmed his heart and broke it. He needed to fix this.

He took a steadying breath and told her as he broke his heart in the process, “I’m afraid My Lady that means that I will be unable to contact you again until they’re better.”

She gave him a puzzled look, “you won’t even be able to call me on your baton after this?”

He nodded, “I’m afraid that Master Fu thinks that we shouldn’t be transformed at the same time,
especially during an attack.” He tried to sound confident as he told her, “at least Queen Bee is willing to fill in for me.”

Ladybug looked sad, “yeah, I know. If I can’t have you, I guess she can fill in, for a little while.” She quickly added before she took a breath and looked at him sadly, “you’re coming back though, right?”

“What a clawful thing to say! Of course, I will return to you Bugaboo! No one can keep me away from your radiant presence My Lady!”

Except for my own foolishness. Smile Adrien. Smile for her.

Looking reassured, she looked at him and admitted with a heart-rending pout, “I’m going to miss you too Kitty.”

“I already miss you My Lady.” He placed his free hand on his heart once again, as if he was swearing a solemn oath. “I will miss you till the end of time.”

She finally grinned and blushed just so at his sincerity, he was sure that she was thinking that he was joking again, but he knew the truth.

“It will be the longest week and most paw-ful one ever Milady, not being able to bask in the glow of your beauty.”

“Silly Kitty.” She giggled.

“Only for you.” He answered honestly.

“I’ll miss you too.” She took a breath and added, “see you in a week Minou?”

“As soon as our kwami are feline better, I’ll be by your side once again My Lady.”

She nodded and waved goodbye.

He blew her a kiss, she blushed and rolled her eyes slightly, pausing for just a moment. She touched her lips just so, as if she were contemplating returning his gesture before she decided to end the call and hung up.

Adrien swallowed as he put away his baton and jogged home. He swore to the wind, “I’ll come back to you my Lady, I swear.”

…

Chat Noir finally returned to his bedroom and de-transformed into Adrien, it was time for him to save his Lady and their kwami.

It was time to save them all.
Plagg Surprises Adrien

Chapter Summary

Plagg 'helps' Adrien sort through some of the information he knows already.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

“I’ll get you some Camembert Plagg, then we need to start planning.” Adrien told his kwami.

“Forget the Camembert kid, we need to focus.”

“You’re… not hungry?” Adrien was shocked, Plagg was always hungry.

“Remember what happened the last time I ate?”

“You got sick.”

“Yeah.” Plagg shrugged, “in the morning you should get me something bland like cheddar. If this keeps up you’ll have to get me like cheeze danishes or,” the kwami shivered, “cookies.”

“Cookies?”

“Yeah, what of it? Look, I’ll be more sensitive about what I eat over the next week and it’ll become more like Tikki’s diet.” Plagg swallowed, “this isn’t the first time this has happened kid. Whatever holder started it, their kwami has trouble eating their regular foods okay?”

“Okay, I’m sorry Plagg.”

“Whatever,” Plagg shrugged, “now, are you up to getting started?”

“Yeah, where should we start?”

Plagg rolled his eyes, “think Adrien. When did this happen?”

Adrien thought for a moment, “Master Fu implied that this started three weeks ago, soon after Lila returned to school.”

Plagg nodded, “what else did the old man say?”

Adrien bunched up his eyebrows, “it’s what he didn’t say. He said that Chloe wasn’t in the best position to defend Ladybug, or her civilian side. She’s been ignoring Lila for the most part, which is odd, everyone else gravitates towards her.”

“Oh?”

“Well, except for Marinette, she also avoids Lila. She’s pretty sure that Lila is a liar, but she doesn’t have much evidence and I told her to take the high road and not confront her huh?”

Plagg grinned thinking that this may be easier than he thought. “Go on.” Plagg led as he waved his
“Ladybug must have overheard that conversation huh?”

Plagg groaned. “You’re killing me kid, and I’m immortal!”

Undeterred Adrien groused, “Plagg, let’s focus! Our miraculous is on the line!”

“That’s what I’m trying to do kid!”

“Then help me!” Adrien pleaded.

“Ugh! Fine. What else did the old man say?”

“Alright,” Adrien started to pace. “Well, Master Fu also implied that Ladybug thinks that we’re strangers as civilians.”

“Which means?”

Adrien looked at Plagg with a confused expression as he held stock still but then his eyes grew wide as he actually understood, “that could mean that we’re not!”

“Bravo.” Plagg pretended to clap.

“I know Ladybug, under the mask!” Adrien whispered but then loudly repeated himself. “I KNOW Ladybug UNDER the MASK!”

Plagg dipped in the air and picked up a pillow from Adrien’s bed and smacked it in his face. “stay focused!”

Adrien blinked, “right. Thanks, Plagg.”

“Anytime. What else?”

Adrien thought for a moment, “Master Fu said that Rena Rouge and Carapace had lost Ladybug’s confidence.”

“Yep.”

“But I don’t know who they are either Plagg, so that doesn’t help either.”

“That’s a clue to remember later I guess.” Plagg shrugged as he rolled his eyes. “So, review.”

“I know Ladybug as a civilian.” Adrien stated.

“Aaaand?”

Adrien blinked as he caught onto something else, “and so does Chloe!”

“Now why do you think that?” Plagg smiled slightly because he knew he’d have to lead Adrien a bit with this deductive reasoning thing.

Adrien nodded as he explained, “Master Fu said that she didn’t defend Ladybug’s civilian self and I know Chloe wouldn’t defend anyone unless there was something in it for her, or at least she used to be like that. I think she’d stand up and say something if someone was really in trouble and couldn’t do it themselves, unless there was nothing she could do about it, or maybe if she really didn’t like
“Well, maybe?” Adrien hesitated.

“So, which one of those three things apply here?”

“It could be any of those or all three Plagg.”

Plagg groaned. “Alright, think about the players here. Where would you, the liar, the Bee and the Bug run into each other?”

Adrien thought for a moment, “Well, Chloe and I run into each other at the big society parties and stuff my father loves to send me to, but Lila doesn’t get invited to those. The three of us are only around each other at school?” Adrien looked at Plagg for confirmation, “Ladybug goes to my school?”

“Duh.” Plagg rolled his eyes and then took a deep breath. “Alright, it’s getting late, you need some sleep. We’ll talk more in the morning.”

Adrien yawned and complained. “I’m not that tired Plagg, we can keep going.”

Plagg scowled, “you need sleep Adrien. I need you to be able to focus on your environment tomorrow and you won’t be doing that if you keep falling asleep.”

“Can’t you just let me know when something is up?” Adrien asked wearily.

“Ugh, no. You have to use your own eyes kid!” Plagg thought for a moment. “You know, that’s not a bad idea entirely. I could stay in your pocket and if I noticed anything important, I can give you a signal or something.”

“Really?” Adrien brightened just a bit.

“I can only warn you to pay attention, it’s up to you to decide what you need to pay attention to kid. Now get some sleep.” Plagg floated over to Adrien’s other pillow and laid down, then he ordered after hearing Adrien giggling that Ladybug went to his school, “go to sleep Adrien!”

"Okay...."

Chapter End Notes

For those who celebrate the holidays, Happy Holidays!
Detective Agreste is on the case… oh, boy.

Chapter Summary

Does this chapter even need more of an explanation other than the title?

Adrien goes to school, looking for clues to solve the mystery of who Ladybug is, what is changing in her life and why or how she’s been hurt from his not standing up to Lila. (since he's still a little vague about that, but he's gotta try anyway right?)

On the way to school, Adrien raised the privacy divider in the limo so that he could talk to Plagg on the way.

“Are you ready for this Kid?” Plagg asked.

“As ready as I’ll ever be.” Adrien replied under his breath, “you will signal me if you notice anything right?”

“Yeah, yeah, I can claw you if you’re being stupid.” Plagg bluntly answered.

“You don’t have to be so dramatic. A pat would be enough.” Adrien whispered.

Plagg huffed, “You could lose us kid, one of us has to take this seriously.”

“I am taking this seriously Plagg!” Adrien whispered as they arrived at school.

Plagg rolled his eyes at him before he went into Adrien’s pocket, “now who’s the drama queen. Look, the first scratch will be to pay attention and I’ll really claw you if I think that you’re looking in the wrong direction or need to pay close attention.” Plagg said from his pocket as Adrien got out of the car and then walked into school.

Adrien nodded as he walked up the stairs into the school, “thanks Plagg, I think.”

“Thank me after all of this is over and you won’t be able to model shirtless for a month.” Plagg growled, causing Adrien to chuckle.

I’m not that bad, am I? He wondered as he headed towards class.

“And if you’re wondering, yes. Yes, you are that bad.” Plagg informed him in a whisper. “You’re the king of obliviousness.”

It was then that Nino spotted Adrien and called him over, “Morning Dude!”

“Good to see you Nino!” Adrien replied, glad to see his best bro.

Adrien and Nino had a nice little chat as they walked to class.

…

Lila was already at the desk that she shared with Adrien, surrounded by a few of their classmates who were listening to her newest tales of the things she has done or the celebrities that she has met.
Adrien of course knew well enough to ignore her.

Adrien walked around the small crowd that consisted of Rose, Juleka, Max, Kim and Alya to get to his seat. He put down his bag and set up his things for class and looked around, wondering if it was possible if Ladybug was in his classroom, but looking around he realized that everyone had been akumatized, including Ms. Bustier, so he came to the conclusion that she must be in another class, but that didn’t mean that there weren’t clues to be found, Lila and Chloe were in his class after all.

Adrien sighed, this was going to be harder than he thought.

Lila scooted closer to Adrien, as she tended to do as she tried to bring him in on the conversation, “hey Adrien. Looking good today.” She fluttered her eyes at him and touched his bicep and giggled.

Adrien leaned away from her uncomfortably and tried to give her a friendly grin. She’d been doing this every morning since she came back and Adrien still hasn’t been able to completely hide his discomfort.

“Morning Lila, thanks. You look nice today too.” Adrien politely replied.

“Thanks Adrien. We should REALLY study together some time, I could really use your help.” She fluttered her eyes at him again, leaning into his personal space.

“Uh, I’d have to check my schedule, but okay?” Adrien answered uncomfortably as Lila chuckled and then turned to her group of admirers, finally letting his arm go and Adrien was finally able to breathe.

Plagg scratched Adrien and with a wince, Adrien looked around the room. Chloe had just entered and had apparently seen Lila, rolled her eyes and was now stalking to her seat. Marinette was handing a paper to Ms. Bustier and Nathaniel was sitting down and pulling out his sketchpad on the other end of the room. Sabrina had joined Lila’s group, leaving Chloe’s side and Adrien was exceedingly thankful that Lila was not hanging on him anymore.

Plagg clawed Adrien. He almost jumped, but hid his reaction as he tried to pay attention. Lila’s group was now laughing, Marinette had a determined look on her face and Ms. Bustier looked sad about whatever was on the paper.

Adrien could barely hear her tell Marinette, “well, if you’re sure then, I’ll have it ready after lunch.”

“Thank you Ms. Bustier.” Marinette politely replied and then started to walk to her desk at the back of the room with a determined look on her face.

“Good morning Marinette!” Adrien called out to her, she turned to look in his direction briefly and then nodded at him with a small smile on her face and was about to reply. However, Lila chose that moment to lean on Adrien and laugh about something that she’d just said, so of course he missed the fact that Marinette didn’t reply. Adrien gave a nervous chuckle to be polite for Lila then turned back to see Marinette who was now heading towards her seat.

Adrien called out to Marinette as she passed him, “hey, are you okay Marinette?”

Adrien knew that Marinette hadn’t been happy about Lila’s return or about Lila’s new found popularity, but she had taken the high road and it seemed like she now liked her seat at the back of the class now. She had the whole desk to herself and seemed to be busy sketching or looking out the window whenever he looked at her in class these days because she always had a small smile on her face, especially the last few days of late.
So, Adrien decided that she must fine, although she hadn’t been hanging out with their group, meaning Alya, Nino and himself, as much lately. *She must be busy or something.* He thought in passing.

“Morning Adrien.” Marinette finally and quietly replied without even looking at him as she vaguely answered quietly, “I’m okay I guess,” as she went to her seat.

“Poor Marinette, she’s so spacey.” Lila loudly mourned. “I hear it’s because she’s up so late doing makeup work because she’s about to be held back a grade because her grades are so low.”

“Marinette would let us know if she needed help with her schoolwork.” Adrien replied easily, not liking this new rumor of Lila’s. “Her scores are almost as good as mine.” Their test grades were always posted at the front of the class after all, and while he always got 100’s, Marinette was usually a solid 95. Max was the only one that passed her or matched Adrien’s scores usually.

Marinette sat down and looked at the pair, only to whisper. “Thanks Adrien, I guess.”

Unfortunately, he couldn’t hear her over the noise of the bell ringing for class to start.
Adrien had to go home for lunch but came back to class to sit down at his desk early, only to have to face an annoyed Chloe.

A few other classmates trickled in.

As Chloe waited for Adrien to sit down, she watched Marinette collect a paper from Ms. Bustier, then she went to her own desk in the back of the class without speaking to anyone.

Plagg scratched Adrien.

Chloe scoffed for some reason as she turned back towards Adrien and asked in a hushed whisper, “Adrikins, when are you going to wizen up?”

Lila and her entourage entered the classroom.

Plagg clawed Adrien again as if agreeing with Chloe and Adrien wondered what Chloe knew that he didn’t. “Uh, what are you talking about Chloe?” Adrien asked.

Lila sat down, far too close to Adrien once again. He tried to ignore her, again.

“Adrichu, if I have to tell you, then you don’t deserve to know.” Chloe just shook her head at him in disapproval as she glanced at Lila, and then tossed her hair in annoyance and marched to her seat as if he had said something that had seriously annoyed her, which was something that rarely happened to Adrien.

Adrien watched her in confusion as she inspected her nails, and then he turned towards Ms. Bustier as she called the class to order.

…

“Alright class, we need to hold the student representative election in two days since it’s a new school year.” Ms. Bustier announced. “Marinette, would you please describe the responsibilities of class representative?”

Plagg scratched Adrien to tell him to pay attention.

Marinette sighed and stood up, “well, obviously the student representative acts as an intermediary and representative with the principal for their fellow students. I liked trying to be there for my fellow students as well when I could and tried to remember everyone’s birthdays.”

“Yeah, we really liked the cakes you brought!” Kim shouted out. “When are we having another birthday around here? I want another one!”

Max quickly supplied, “Adrien’s birthday is the week after next.”
“Can’t wait for some cake!” Kim and several others cheered.

“Students, we should let Marinette finish please.” Ms. Bustier supplied, calming everyone down and then motioning for Marinette to continue.

“Y-yeah.” Marinette looked at them uneasily, “but that’s really about it.” Then she sat down.

Plagg clawed Adrien, he was really getting tired of that. There really wasn’t much going on. Chloe was looking at her phone, Sabrina was waving at Lila, who was leaning too close to Adrien again and Adrein really didn’t see anything important happening.

“All right then, who wants to run this year?” Ms. Bustier asked the class with an approving nod towards Marinette.

There was silence in the room.

“Umm, aren’t you going to run again Marinette?” Alya looked behind her and finally asked.

Marinette looked away distractedly as she shook her head. “Not this time.”

“What do you mean? You did an awesome job Marinette.” Adrien turned around and gushed.

“Thanks,” Marinette still looked distracted though and merely said quietly, “but I won’t be here on the day of the elections.”

There was a low murmur in the room as Ms. Bustier clapped to get them all to pay attention. “Now class, Marinette has done a fine job and I’m sure that she deserves the time to herself this year. We will still need another representative though.”

“Why don’t we just wait until Marinette comes back to hold the elections?” Rose asked innocently.

“Yeah, who else would bring us cake for our birthdays?” Kim asked.

“Stop thinking with your stomach Kim!” Chloe admonished. “Besides, Marinette just did that because she’s nice, she didn’t have to do that you know, it’s not like it’s an official responsibility of the class representative.” She waved the concept off as she checked her nails.

Kim shrugged it off. “Just saying that it was cool, that’s all.”

Ms. Bustier shook her head at Rose’s suggestion, “I’m sorry class but we can’t move the date of the election. Chloe, you ran last year, would you be willing to run again?”

Chloe scoffed, “Not this time, I’m far too busy saving the city as Queen Bee and looking fabulous while I do it.” As if it pained her, she continued, “besides, Marinette set the bar too high, even for me. I think you should wait till Dupain-Cheng is available for the election.”

“Thanks Chloe.” Marinette muttered.

“Don’t mention it, PLEASE.” Chloe shot back before she sat forward in her seat, “so anyway, I’m unavailable and neither is the bakery girl. Anyone else think they could do half as good of a job as one of us?”

Everyone seemed to think about it but Sabrina quickly spoke up, “what about Lila! She’d be excellent at it and I could be her class deputy!”

“Oh, I don’t know,” Lila spoke up, “I don’t think I could find the time with all the charity work that I
“You’d be great at it Lila!” Rose spoke up eagerly at this new idea, “you’re so popular!”

“Well, that’s true.” Lila responded happily from the praise.

“It takes more than popularity to be a good representative.” Chloe scoffed.

“There is a 79% probability that that statement is true.” Max confirmed.

“Dude, you’re defending Chloe?” Nino asked. “That’s a first.”

As he typed on his notepad Max offered, “according to my data, the best representative out of our class has already declined and it is highly unlikely that the next four capable students would agree to do the job either.”

“So, who’s number six?” Kim asked.

“I’m afraid the rest of us are equally capable, within a 10% probability.” Max informed them as he straightened his glasses, “but none of us come near the top five, the desire to serve and time constraints withstanding.”

“Well, if I run, I’m sure that if I had any problems, I could depend on all of you to help me out. Isn’t that right Marinette?” Lila looked back at the soon to be former representative.

Marinette sighed and answered blandly, “I’m sure whoever is around and available will be more than happy to help you out Lila.” She answered evenly as she looked out the window.

“Oh Marinette, what I meant is that I know that I can count on you to help out.” Lila laughed in response. “you could still bring cakes for everyone’s birthday after all.”

Marinette answered with a sigh, “actually Lila, I’ve already told Ms. Bustier that I don’t want to run because I’ll be unavailable, I’ll be busy elsewhere and I just don’t have the time. I’m sure that you can get someone else to help you out or to make cake for everyone’s birthday.”

“Dude, no need to get harsh.” Nino commented.

“Yeah, Lila just wanted a bit of support.” Alya added. “Besides, your parents make plenty of cakes.”

Marinette rolled her eyes ever so slightly, “look, I made all those birthday cakes myself last year, not that it matters.”

“No need to get huffy Marinette.” Lila supplied, “I’m sure you wouldn’t mind making cake for all your friends.”

Marinette glanced at Lila, “no, I don’t mind making a cake for my friends when I can.”

“Great! I can’t wait to eat Adrien’s cake!” Kim interrupted.

Chloe groaned as she rubbed her forehead. “You’re being ridiculous, utterly ridiculous!”

“You tell them Chloe!” Sabrina called out. “Marinette should be more helpful.”

Chloe choked, “that’s not what I meant Sabrina,” then she muttered, “but thanks for supporting me, I guess.”
Ms. Bustier clapped. “Now class. We need volunteers, not arguments. Bringing dessert for everyone’s birthday is not an obligation here and we cannot expect that Marinette continues that kind tradition if she doesn’t have the time to do so and may I remind you that her parents run a business not a charity.” She looked pointedly at Marinette, then Kim and Lila. “Now, do you want to run Lila?”

“Yes, I'll be willing to do my civic duty.” Lila leaned into Adrien’s personal space again, as if she ever left, and fluttered her eyes at him, “would you like to be my student deputy? I really don’t want to impose on Sabrina and we’d make such a perfect pair!”

Adrien scooted to the edge of the bench of their desk, “uh, I really don’t have the time Lila, thanks for the offer though. You should really let Sabrina do it.”

“Yeah! I can do it!” Sabrina called out happily, “thanks for worrying about me Lila.” She scowled at Chloe, who didn’t seem to notice her best friend’s glare.

“Do we have anyone else?” Ms. Bustier called out. “It’s really best if we have a genuine election and that there is more than one candidate.”

Chloe rolled her eyes and finally suggested after a solid ten seconds passed, “we might as well have Alix or Kim run, both of them could use it on their resumes someday after all.”

“Hey! That’s not a bad idea. I’ll pummel you in the polls!” Alix boasted as she turned to challenge Kim.

“I’ll leave you in the dust!” Kim challenged back. “Whoever loses has to be the other one’s student deputy!”

“You’re on!” Alix answered.

Plagg clawed a bored and confused Adrien, what did the election have to do with Ladybug besides Lila running? He wondered.

Ms. Bustier clapped, “is that everyone?” No one answered. “Then we’ll have an election in two days with Lila, Alix and Kim running for student representative.” Then she glanced up at Marinette, “thank you for all your hard work Marinette.”

Marinette nodded at the teacher and then gazed out the window.

Adrien couldn’t help but wonder what was so interesting from her point of view that caused Marinette to smile like that.
Oh, Bee-have

Chapter Summary

Someone snaps and our golden hero is late to her nail appointment...

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

After class for the day, Adrien went to his locker to get some things before meeting Nino for a bit before heading off to his fencing class. As he was coming out to the courtyard though, Adrien was astounded to find Marinette crying as she was running away from an akuma.

Before he could react, being shocked that Marinette of all people attracted one, Queen Bee appeared as Marinette tripped and fell and was almost at the mercy of the akuma.

“Venom!” Queen Bee called out her special attack and actually was able to sting the akuma. It fell to the ground, paralyzed.

“Good thing I was here.” Queen Bee commented as she reached out and helped Marinette to her feet. “I guess I’ll just have to watch over this thing until Ladybug shows up to cleanse it.”

Marinette wiped her eyes, with a sniff and managed to say, “t-thank you Chlo…I mean Queen Bee, I don’t know what I would have done without you.”

“I am marvelous aren’t I?” Chloe preened as the students in the courtyard with just the regular coursework load, meaning no extracurricular classes like Fencing left as they were uncomfortable with an akuma still in their midst.

“Yeah.” Marinette looked at the ground, unsure of what to say, still a bit in distress.

“Hey,” Queen Bee drew closer to her and put her hand on Marinette’s shoulder, “hang in there, things will get better, won’t they?” She cocked her head and then seemed to remember herself as she removed her hand and cleared her throat, “I mean, well, look, you’ll feel better if you go and get yourself cleaned up Dupain-Cheng.” Chloe’s miraculous beeped once.

Marinette nodded and just stood there, Chloe scoffed, “do I need to escort you to the bathroom myself? Get going and clean yourself up, you’re embarrassing yourself… really.” Chloe rolled her eyes like she didn’t care, as she waved Marinette off, but even Adrien saw the small smile that Chloe was trying to hide.

“Thanks again Queen Bee.” Marinette gave her a small smile before she rushed off to the bathroom.

Queen Bee sighed dismissively as she glanced at the stunned akuma laying on the ground as Adrien walked up to his friend and said, “hey, I’m proud of you, you make a great hero.”

Chloe shined under the praise momentarily, but then she glanced at Adrien and tried to look more professional, “thanks Adrien. That means a lot coming from you.” Then she looked at her fingers as if checking her non-visible nails, “I just wish that I didn’t have to cover for that alley cat. I’m late for a nail appointment. You’d think that he’d come to a pretty girl’s rescue, but Noooo, some knight in
shining armor he is, he has to leave it up to the Queen to fix things.”

Adrien tried not to look offended, “hey, I’m sure he had a reason not to show up.”

Queen Bee’s miraculous beeped twice as he continued, “and did I hear that clearly?” Adrien smirked, “did you actually admit that Marinette is beautiful?”

“Your words not mine.” Chloe flicked her hair as she muttered, “where is that bug?”

“Also, it’s not like akuma attacks are predictable.” Adrien pointed out.

Chloe gave him an unusual glare that she normally reserved for people she cared about but was trying not to put in their place, at least not immediately. It meant something to him that she was trying to be nice.

“Adrien, even I have to admit that I saw that coming a mile away, please tell me you’re not that blind.” She deadpanned.

“Oh?” He answered, surprised at her tone as her miraculous beeped three times.

“Ugh! Where is that Lady? I’m not supposed to de-transform in public.” Chloe muttered.

Adrien looked around and saw Nino coming over so he asked him, “hey, do you know what happened?”

That was when Ladybug appeared, swinging in from the roof, looking a little worn out as she caught the stunned akuma, purified it and released it.

“Finally.” Queen Bee muttered.

“Cool, thanks for your help Ladydude!” Nino told Ladybug immediately, “oh and um, you too Chloe.”

“Queen Bee.” Chloe and Ladybug corrected, they glanced at each other and shared a small grin.

Then Ladybug realized she should answer Nino and she grew distracted and tired again for some reason as she replied. “Yeah, umm, no problem.” Then she looked around a bit uneasily but decided to say, “do any of you know why there was an akuma here?”

“Obviously I’ve got an idea of what’s going on.” Chloe scoffed as she looked around the group as her miraculous beeped four times. “Unfortunately, I’ve got to go. I’ll check up on Marinette later I suppose since no one else will do it,” then she gave Ladybug a meaningful glance, “are you good Ladybug?”

Ladybug nodded and gave Chloe an approving grin, “I’ve got it. Thanks again Queen Bee.”

Queen Bee smiled at her with a nod as she said nicer than she usually would, “don’t forget to look me up later Ladybug, I want to have a talk with you.” Then she ran off to de-transform and probably to try to make it to her nail appointment.

“So, again, what happened?” Adrien asked Nino for clarification.

“Aww, it was nothing Dude. Marinette was just over reacting when Lila asked her to bring dessert for the class for my Bro’s birthday next week.” Nino stated.

Ladybug didn’t look impressed, “uh huh, so… that was it?”
Adrien looked confused as well, “didn’t Ms. Bustier say that wasn’t necessary? I’m okay if she doesn’t after all, I don’t expect Marinette to do that and it’s not like I’m supposed to eat treats often anyway.”

“Psst, yeah. But everyone else expects it Dude. Besides, it’s not like Marinette will have much to do besides once she’s not the student rep anymore. She’d totally have time for it, but the Dudette refuses to help out the new rep.”

Alya walked up apparently having overheard and probably looking for an article for the Ladyblog, “yeah, I don’t know what it is, but Marinette hasn’t been very nice lately, she totally refused to hang out with us and Lila later.”

Ladybug looked unimpressed.

“Wait, we’re hanging out with Lila later?” Adrien asked in disbelief, knowing he wouldn’t have agreed to that. He couldn’t help the look on his face, hoping that he’d have a photoshoot pop up out of thin air since Lila liked him far more than he was comfortable with, that was something that even he knew about, he just didn’t know what to do about it.

“E-yeah Dude, she’s totally going to tell us all about how she met George Lucas!” Nino gushed. “You can’t bail on us either,” he warned Adrien, “I totally texted Nathalie to schedule some tutoring time with you after your fencing class!”

“Nino, you shouldn’t lie to Nathalie.” Adrien chastised, “but thanks for thinking about me.” He added, wondering how he could get out of this one.

“No problem Dude.”

Ladybug cleared her throat. “Look, for whatever reason this akuma showed up, maybe you should try to see what’s bothering your friend Marinette.” Ladybug advised gently, “maybe it’s not as cut and dry as you think.”

“It’s probably Marinette just being Marinette.” Alya waved it off, “She’s just jealous of Lila.”

“Why would Marinette be jealous of Lila?” Ladybug frowned slightly, “is that what this Lila said?”

“Well, between you and me,” Alya leaned over and pretended to whisper but her voice was totally audible to both of the boys, “she kind of has a thing for a certain guy,” she nodded towards Adrien, not that he noticed, “and I don’t think that she can stand the competition. Marinette gets very jealous and Lila is just the coolest person ever, I don’t know how she could hope to compete with her.”

Ladybug frowned and her shoulders slumped a little. “That’s… kind of sad to hear.”

“Oh, don’t worry about it,” Alya loudly replied before whispering low enough that the boys wouldn’t hear, at least if Adrien hadn’t been Chat Noir for so long anyway, so he managed to hear her, “I’m sure the best girl will win their hot stuff in the end.”

Ladybug looked down at the ground, blinked once, took a breath and then announced as she turned to leave, “I ought to go.”

Alya perked up, “hey now, wait! How would you like to do an interview for the Ladyblog? After all, your best friends with Lila and Lila’s my gurl!”

“NO THANK YOU.” Ladybug said emphatically, “no interviews today, and honestly, I only have one best friend right now, and he’s not here.”
Alya looked a little confused as Ladybug took a deep breath and flushed a little, before she finally said determinedly, “actually Alya, I really think that you need to check your facts. Someone doesn’t just get almost akumatized if they’re just jealous of someone, usually there is more to it and besides, that usually isn’t an emotion that Hawkmoth seeks out. He prefers vengeance, despair, anger and broken hearts.” She looked at Alya with a blank face, “You should really talk to your friend and see how many of those top four apply here.”

Adrien was about to agree, thinking that it would be a good idea to hear Marientte’s side of the story, but he was surprised at the look on Alya’s face.

Alya rolled her eyes, “I’m not going to go beg Marinette to accept Lila. She’s the one who has drawn the line in the sand and she’s the one that has to make amends to Lila and me.”

Adrien looked shocked, “Alya?” He whispered as he wondered if he missed something.

“My girl has a point.” Nino said, “Marinette doesn’t trust Lila for some reason, she hasn’t even given the girl a chance and Lila is the coolest. She’s going to help me get an internship with Lucasfilm in a few years!”

Ladybug suddenly looked sad, “I’m sorry to hear that you all feel that way about Marinette. It’s always sad to see friends fight.”

“We’re not fighting. Marinette is.” Alya insisted. Adrien was again surprised at her reply but really didn’t know what to say.

“Uh, huh. Look, I’ve REALLY got to go now.” Ladybug turned to walk away, well, practically march out of the school really, with a stoic look on her face.

Adrien couldn’t help himself as he followed her…

Chapter End Notes

I actually had to split this chapter into 2, bee-lieve it or not. I should post the next part in a few days hopefully.
I practically had to rewrite this chapter because having Adrien come to the rescue instead of Queen Bee rushed the story line originally and really didn't fit.

Also, I haven't forgotten about Plagg, he is there.
Here's some clues for a so-so spoiler that shouldn't come as a surprise.
Plagg is dealing with 4 major things right now remember...
1. He's sick.
2. He's a cat.
3. He just ate lunch.
4. And he's been trying to help Adrien, who is well, Adrien.
So basically he's _ _ _ _ _ _ and _ _ _ _ _ right now.
Adrien talks with Ladybug and finds that she's nearly been akumatized today too. Plagg whips out a new trick and Ladybug misses her Kitty.

“Hey Ladybug, can I, can I walk you out?” Adrien asked as he caught up with her as Nino and Alya discussed something about Queen Bee behind them, but Adrien ignored their strange comments all about, “why her?”

Ladybug slowed down and gave him a sad look before she nodded and headed towards the front of the school and Adrien walked by her side. “I was wondering, is there something wrong? You don’t seem like yourself.”

She glanced at him, and then looked down and shook her head. “I’ll admit, I’m not as good as I used to be. I miss Chat Noir I guess.”

“Oh, is he uh, missing?” Adrien knew the answer, but he was wondering what she’d say.

“No,” she sighed, “he’s around, but, uh, he’s always good about seeing things in a positive light and I could really use that right now. I guess you could say that I’ve been having civilian issues, but ah…” She looked up at the sky and sighed, “I’ve already said too much.”

“If you need someone to talk to, I’m available, I’m told I listen pretty well.” Adrien offered.

Ladybug chuckled darkly as she shook her head, “thanks, but no thanks, I’ve heard that you gave some pretty unhelpful advice actually. I hate to break it to you, but I know Marinette and this wait it out policy of yours that hasn’t been helping her. That Lila, err! She… she’s been tricking more people than ever!” Ladybug lost her cool for just a moment as she stomped her foot.

Adrien looked up just in time to see it, another akuma, headed straight for Ladybug, he tackled her out of the way and they rolled. Ladybug quickly sprang to her feet, pulled out her yo-yo and purified the evil bug. She groaned.

Then Ladybug turned towards Adrien, as if realizing that he was still there and shyly said, humiliated by the fact that a civilian had to save her, “thanks for that, I really ought to try to stay calmer. Three times in one day,” she mocked herself as she rolled her eyes, “you’d think that I was shooting for a record.”

“You’ve almost been akumatized three times today?!” Adrien asked in disbelief, it was worse than he thought!

“Yeah,” she calmly replied. “That one that went after Marinette well, it went after me too and I, uh, barely managed to get away, but by the time I was able to transform, well, anyway, I… I had to come back for it?” She didn’t sound certain about her explanation, but he trusted her.

Adrien sighed, “I’m beginning to think that this whole Lila thing is getting out of control. Maybe it isn’t the best thing to let her get away with all her lies.”
Oh?” Ladybug looked at him curiously, surprised.

“Yeah, I guess you can say that I’m trying to look at things differently, I just don’t know what to do about it.” He shrugged and then groaned slightly, “I’m not very good about responding to things when it’s necessary as it’s happening, especially when it’s important.”

“Well, that’s good that you’re thinking about it, I guess.” She replied tentatively as she rubbed her elbow uncertainly.

“Yeah,” He paused a moment, “uh Ladybug, uh, I’m still wondering though and I understand if you can’t answer me, but I really wanted to get your take on this. Uh, why are Lila’s lies so bad if they don’t hurt anyone?”

He felt Plagg stir from his lunchtime cheddar cheese coma in his jacket, great, he’d been asleep this whole time! Adrien finally realizes. I just want to hear what Ladybug thinks.

Ladybug stopped and gave Adrien a blank look as they stood on the front steps of the school as if he’d just asked her why the sky is blue. She blinked.

She closed her eyes for a moment and then sighed, “I think that it really depends on the lies and the liar. While I understand that white lies rarely hurt as they can protect in a way sometimes, most lies aren’t like that. I have to lie quite often to keep my identity safe for instance, to keep the people I love and care about safe from Hawkmoth. Usually they don’t cause anyone besides myself trouble, well at least not compared to my identity getting out would.” She smirked for a moment at that, “but most lies aren’t like that.”

“Those makes sense though.” He commented.

She continued, “yeah, most other lies however, ones not meant to protect someone, well, they can hurt people, whether it be emotionally or in life itself. Lies can build one person up as they take others down or stir up hope only to disappoint.” She looked out in the distance as if from experience as Plagg scratched Adrien, “bonds between friends are questioned and broken over a misunderstanding. Enough lies can break hearts. Eventually, the consequences can be huge. Where there is a serial liar, there is someone that they are trying to tear down, someone whose place they want to take and they don’t care who gets hurt in the long run, as long as they look better in the end.”

Plagg clawed Adrien and twisted his claws in Adrien’s chest in agreement. Adrien was really glad that Ladybug wasn’t looking at him to see the quick grimace of pain that caused.

“It sounds like you know something about that.” Adrien finally glanced at her sadly, wishing he could hug or comfort his Lady like Chat Noir could have, but right now he was Adrien, he really felt bad that he couldn’t reveal himself, at least not yet.

“Maybe. I did try to take the high road, only for the bridges that I built to get demolished beneath my feet, practically overnight.” Ladybug sniffed and rubbed her eyes, “I don’t know why I’m telling you all of this, I must really miss my Kitty.” She looked at Adrien sadly out of the corner of her eye, “you know, you used to remind me of him, he’s such a sweetheart.”

“Oh.” Adrien didn’t know how he should react since he wasn’t Chat right now and grit his teeth in preparation, knowing that Plagg just might react to this strange remark.

And react, he did. Plagg dug in his claws into Adrien and scraped Adrien’s chest, although Adrien felt a comforting pat from Plagg, as if he was trying to apologize right after. Adrien felt like he might deserve more though.
Ladybug took a breath, looked away again, thankfully noticing nothing about Adrien trying to conceal the pain as she exhaled and told him, “anyhow, thanks for your kind offer Adrien, but I don’t think I should depend on the opinion of a civilian about any of this.”

“You don’t trust me.” He echoed the thought from so long ago, but he already knew that from Master Fu, somehow, she didn’t like Adrien anymore, but he had no idea of who she was and he couldn’t ask! He felt lost.

If only I could ask you what’s bothering you and you would be willing to tell me, but we have these stupid secret identities! He mentally mourned.

“You have a lot of hopes that everything will work out Adrien, and it’s a very sweet way of looking at things, but as I’m sure if you ask Chat Noir,” she smiled as she said his other name and scanned the nearby rooftops as if looking for him, “something that seems small at first, like a small lie, if used in a certain way, can be very destructive from a certain point of view.” Plagg scratched Adrien.

Adrien really wished they had more time to talk, but the bell was going to ring soon and Adrien did have to get back to his fencing class.

“I really must go.” She announced sadly as if coming to a decision as she nodded her head, “it was nice talking to you Mr. Agreste.”

Plagg scratched him.

“Adrien.” He corrected.

She shook her head, “no, I shouldn’t get too close to civilians, I need to be less familiar with you since it’s not safe. Have a good day Mr. Agreste. Bug out.” She said politely with a wave before she swung away with her yo-yo.

Plagg clawed him.

“Alright, well, good luck Ladybug,” Adrien tried to call out to her as he waved goodbye as she swung off.

Plagg zapped him. “Plagg!” Adrien hissed under his breath as he couldn’t help but cringe and jump a little at the charge of destructive energy. Adrien didn’t even know that he could do that. “What was that for?”

“You can handle a little destructive energy being my chosen and all, obviously it doesn’t bother you.” Plagg groused.

“But that stung Plagg!” Adrien rubbed his chest where Plagg had zapped him.

“Good! I mean come on Adrien, how can you be so dense?” Plagg asked him worriedly.

Adrien was sadly wondering why he wasn’t getting it either himself as he took the time to notice that Ladybug had swung around the school, probably looking for the window that she had escaped out of earlier.

Shaking himself out of his stupor, Adrien turned around and ran to the locker room to get ready for his fencing class, maybe a good bout with Kagami could help him take his mind off of things just for an hour. Adrien really needed the break so he could focus on things better later.
Thank You, Kagami

Chapter Summary

After Fencing, Adrien and Kagami talk, only to be met by Alya, Nino and Lila who are intent on getting Adrien to 'hang out' with them.

Chapter Notes

Yeah, fun chapter! I'm looking forward to this and the the next two! Never saw myself as liking to write for Kagami, because I don't really care for cannon Kagami, she's eh, okay, to further the story line at least. Here, she's a great character and I find it funny how sometimes characters write themselves in a way, but I like her, I hope you do too.

Adrien had a good workout at fencing since he had a lot of tension to work out. He beat Kagami five times in a row, much to her pleasure.

“I like to see you so focused Adrien.” She congratulated him after practice as they left the locker rooms after changing, “is there something bothering you though? Fencing only takes your mind off of your troubles while you fence after all and it was obvious that you were trying to forget something upsetting.”

“Is it that obvious?” He asked.

Kagami nodded, “yes. If I had to guess, you’re having trouble with your friend.” Plagg clawed Adrien without the warning of a scratch, “Maybe your girlfriend?” Kagami suggested.

Adrien choked, “I don’t have a girlfriend!”

Kagami smirked at him, “I know you have eyes on a girl and I can see that it’s bothering you that she’s having problems lately.”

“What? How can you tell… I mean, who are you talking about?” Adrien was clearly confused.

Does she know about Ladybug? He wondered.

Kagami gave him a sad look, “you have no idea what I’m talking about, do you?” She shook her head at him.

“No, really I don’t. What are you trying to say Kagami?”

She didn’t have a chance to say, because that’s when they ran into Alya, Nino and Lila.

Lila instantly grabbed Adrien and kissed him on both cheeks in the formal greeting of the French, which really wasn’t necessary right now since it wasn’t a formal party or anything. Then she ran her arm around Adrien’s, held his hand and leaned on his shoulder as she purred, “it’s SOooo good of you to join us Adrien! I would have felt like a third wheel to these two adorable lovebirds if you
hadn’t made time for me.” She then fluttered her eyes at him and grinned.

Kagami blinked and commented, “okay, now that’s a surprise.” Plagg scratched Adrien.

“Oh, are you joining us Kagami?” Lila grinned meaningfully, “I’ve met the greatest swordsman from Italy, he’s the national champion and I can tell you so much about him, even his famous winning diet!”

“Sure, that sounds cool, why don’t you come with us Kagami?” Alya offered as Nino nodded in agreement.

Kagami gave Lila a blank stare, glanced at everyone, including an overwhelmed Adrien and then blinked once before turning towards Lila. “I’m sorry Lila, I’ve met Signora Delavei and she doesn’t have a particular diet.”

“Oh, I’m sorry, I was talking about last year’s national champion.” Lila quickly apologized.


Plagg clawed Adrien a little gentler, so as not to draw Lila’s attention when Adrien tensed just a bit.

Adrien threw on his model smile and chuckled uneasily. “I’ll be fine, really.”

“Hmm, somehow I doubt that.” Kagami commented. “You really should reconsider changing your target Adrien, your first choice was far more accommodating.” Plagg clawed Adrien again. Kagami glanced at her watch, “I’m afraid that I have other responsibilities and cannot join you. I wouldn’t want to spoil your dates.”

Adrien choked as Alya and Lila grinned. Nino only rolled his eyes.

“Thank you Kagami!” Lila gushed as Adrien spoke up.

“Wait, we’re not going on a date! We’re just hanging out!” He protested.

Kagami looked at the four of them and frowned, “you could have fooled me Adrien, two girls, two boys, hanging off of each other? Sounds like a date to me.”

Lila giggled, “well, it may look that way,” she patted an uncomfortable Adrien’s arm, “but Adrien and I aren’t an item,” then she looked at Adrien and fluttered her eyes at him again, “well, at least not officially, yet.”

“Hmm,” Kagami eyed them, seeing Adrien’s obvious distress and then she came to a decision. “actually Adrien, I just remembered that I need that foil back that I lent to you, TONIGHT.” She emphasized with almost a growl. “It’s my mother’s and I insist that you come with me so we can stop at your house and get it. NOW.” She said sternly.

Then she turned to the others as she changed her tone and told them nicely, “I’m sorry to break up your fun guys, but I’m on the verge of being grounded if I don’t bring it home tonight. Then my mother will call Adrien’s father and we’ll both be in trouble. I hope you can understand.”

Nino grinned, “Sure Kagami, no problem, thanks for looking out for my Bro!”

Alya, frowned slightly, “yeah, we’ll miss him, but I wouldn’t want you two to get in trouble.”

Lila pouted, “aww, but we were going to have so much fun!”
Adrien gulped, wondering what in the world Kagami was talking about, as he tried not to think about what Lila had planned, but since it would get him away from Lila, Adrien quickly agreed as he gently pried Lila off of his arm. “Yeah, sorry guys. We’ve really got to go.”

Kagami started walking, “have fun you three!” Then she ordered, “come along Adrien.”

Once they were out of earshot of the others and were standing at the curb waiting for Kagami’s family limo, Adrien sighed.

“Thank you so much for the rescue Kagami.” He told her in all honestly.

“I shouldn’t have to do that.” She answered. “If something is bothering you Adrien, or if anyone is, it’s your right to let them know that and I have no intention of doing that again. I don’t like lying, but I will for a friend, when necessary. We’re having this talk so it won’t happen again.”

“A gentleman is kind Kagami.” Adrien sighed, “I don’t know how I could have gotten out of it without your help otherwise.”

She turned towards him, “don’t you give me that. A gentleman doesn’t have to be a push over. That girl bothers you, invades your space and lies like crazy. I don’t know how you started dating her Adrien,” Adrien looked shocked, “but you need to let her know that you’re not interested. Your inaction is your acceptance of a relationship that she is forcing on you whether you know it or not. That’s why I won’t cover for you again.”

“What?” He looked at her with a stricken expression. “I am not in a relationship with Lila Rossi!”

“You need to make that clearer then.” Kagami sighed, “I know you Adrien, because I like you and I can see that you aren’t happy. Any girl that likes you and knows you as well as I do would be able to tell that you’re allowing Lila to make herself your girlfriend.” Plagg scratched Adrien, repeatedly.

“But…”

“Don’t interrupt. I saved you this time, but that girl intends to make you hers and honestly I think you can do better with your other two choices.” Plagg clawed Adrien.

“My other two choices?”

Kagami squinted at him, “me and the other girl you like, obviously. I know I’m just a friend right now, but I’m letting you know that I’m still up to changing that if you change your mind and the other girl? Adrien, I’ve seen you look at her.” Plagg clawed Adrien again, “she’s more than just a friend. I honestly don’t know why you’ve given up on her or lowered yourself to the likes of Lila. I hate to think I’m third place after her just because she’s your pushy second choice! I may like you Adrien, as more than a friend and I’ll accept whatever you choose, but your actions confuse me. That girl, Lila, doesn’t make you happy.”

“I know she doesn’t, I want more than that.” Adrien sighed, “still, thank you Kagami.” Confused, Adrien still smiled at her though as he admittedly added, “but where is this coming from? You don’t know who my crush is and how do you know that Lila is a liar?”

Kagami glared at him. “I’m not blind Adrien. I’ve seen you look at her or pause or even flirt with when you interact with her,” Plagg scratched again, “and Lila isn’t the best liar. Your friends are listening to her blindly and they’ll only get hurt, I don’t know how you can stand it. She didn’t even know that Signora Delavei has won the Italian national championship for twelve years running and
“The winner before that is now dead.”

“Why didn’t you point that out?” He asked tentatively.

“You seemed to go along with it, I know you know as well as I do about Signora Delavei and your
friends didn’t seem phased about the fact that Lila thought that she was a guy even when I tried to
correct her. So, when she tried to say he was the previous winner from the year before, even though
it was the same woman, I dropped it, for you. This time.”

Adrien looked down, ashamed, “I’m sorry Kagami. If something like that happens with her again,
please speak up, I’ll back you up if I can. I forgot how long Signora Delavei’s been the reigning
Italian champion. I just didn’t know what to say.”

Kagami smiled at him and patted his arm briefly, “just speak up next time Lila is making you
uncomfortable and let your friends know that you’re not interested in her as a girlfriend for me and
for yourself. Figure out what you’re going to say next time, because it will happen again. A simple
‘I’m sorry, but I’m really not interested in you like that,’ will do. You deserve better than her Adrien,
don’t forget that.”

Her ride pulled up and Adrien opened the door for her, “shall I at least give you a ride home?”
Kagami offered, “or do you want to walk home so you can pick up something special at the local
patisserie?” She glanced in the direction of Marinette’s family business.

Plagg clawed Adrien, twice in a row, in a painful twisting motion.

Adrien thought about it for a moment as he grimaced slightly, “actually, I think it would be nice to
stop by, Marinette was almost akumatized today and I should check up on her, she is my good friend
after all.”

Adrien could barely make out a low groan coming from his pocket.

Adrien then gave Kagami a genuine smile as Kagami rolled her eyes, “thanks so much for your help
and for the advice Kagami.”

Adrien didn’t see Kagami frown as she got in. “Say ‘Hi’ to your ‘friend’ Marinette for me.” Kagami
mentioned with a sigh as she got in and Adrien closed the door behind her as she rolled down the
window.

“I will.” Adrien answered as they waved goodbye and Kagami’s car drove off.

“Finally!” Plagg flew out of Adrien’s shirt pocket, he had a bit of that sucking in the shadows look to
him again, like he was oozing shadows and darkness.

“Plagg! Someone will see you!”

“No one’s around right now.” Plagg waved it off. “Three things. First, get me a cheese Danish,
actually, make that a few of them, I deserve it after what you’re putting me through. Second, you
should listen to your friend Kagami. Third, I want to talk with you about this akumatization of your
‘good friend’ Marinette later.” Plagg did his whole air quotes thing as he said ‘good friend.’

Adrien nodded as he headed towards Marinette’s. “Sure thing Plagg, but you know, it didn’t help
that you were out of it all afternoon.”

“Hey, I’m doing my best here!” Plagg complained, “Now, about those Danishes…”
When You Have an Itch…

Chapter Summary

Adrien tries to visit Marinette at the bakery. 
Turned away by her parents, he risks changing into Chat Noir to visit his Princess.

Chapter Notes

Where the author is kind of silly and settles in to give the readers a dose of fluff & a new nickname for Chat...

Adrien went into the bakery and bought a box of pastries, which was a little odd, usually Marinette’s parents gave a small bag of treats to any of her friends that stopped by. He may have been only one of a few of her friends that still tried to pay that he knew of, but this time they didn’t argue and let him pay. Sabine and Tom both looked and acted strangely, at least more so than usual. There were far less grins and winks in each other’s direction anyway, Tom and Sabine seemed sad even, but Adrien couldn’t put his finger on why besides Marinette’s almost akumatization earlier.

When he asked about Marinette, he was told that she had gone to bed early and that she wasn’t feeling well. Adrien mentioned that she had almost been akumatized today and he was worried about her, Sabine only said, “we know dear, we’re worried about her too but I think that it’s best if we give her some space right now.”

He accepted her explanation and left without an argument.

That earned him another clawing from Plagg once they had left. “Kid, are you blind?”

“Ow Plagg! That’s really starting to hurt.”

“Well maybe if it hurts more, you’ll pay attention better!”

Adrien ignored his grumpy kwami, a little lost in thought, then he looked up at Marinette’s room from the street and saw that her light was on. “Plagg, you’ve clawed me a few times around Marinette…”

“Yeah.”

“Does Marinette know anything about what’s going on with Ladybug?”

Plagg grinned widely, until Adrien added, “I mean they’re friends, right?”

Plagg groaned as he frowned and threw up his paws, “fine. Yes, I’ll give you that, MAYBE Marinette knows what’s going on with Ladybug.”

“Well, it doesn’t seem like she wants to talk to Adrien. I mean obviously her parents didn’t want her to see me.” Adrien muttered as he walked behind one of his own advertisements.
Plagg looked at Adrien in disbelief.

“But you know what? Maybe she’ll talk to Chat Noir!” Adrien grinned.

“No! Wait kid! Not with all this stuff!” Plagg whined.

Plagg was dragged into Adrien’s ring protesting as Adrien cried out, “claws out!”

His backpack and the box of pastries was tucked away by the magic of his suit thankfully and just in case, Adrien checked his baton to see if Ladybug was transformed. Thankfully, she wasn’t, so he had some time.

“Better try to make this quick,” he muttered to himself as he hopped onto a nearby roof and a few hops later he was on Marinette’s balcony.

“Purr-incess!” Chat Noir called out, hoping that he would be able to talk to his classmate.

He heard a small crash in her room, *she probably fell out of her chair again*, he thought since he’d visited her a few times before since they’d started a sort of friendship on this side of the mask, and she’d fallen like that at least three times by now. Knowing how klutzy she could be, he didn’t think much of it. Then he heard her run up her ladder and the next thing he knew, her skylight was opening and suddenly he had an armful of teenage girl.

“Chat! Oh, it’s so good to see you!” Marinette declared as she hugged him like she hadn’t seen him in over a month, although he had visited her last week. She usually didn’t hug him though and he thought that was odd, but it wasn’t like he was complaining, she was warm and smelled … well, he couldn’t describe it, but whatever it was, it was sweet, so like Marinette… so he gladly hugged her back and allowed himself to enjoy her scent… just a little bit.

He chuckled as she held him close, “it’s good to see you too Princess.” He pulled her back so he could take a look at her and he was shocked, “Marinette! Have you been crying?”

“No.” She pouted as she tried to lie, but when he raised an eyebrow at her answer, she sighed and admitted, “I mean yes, I didn’t want to worry you, you’re one of my few friends left!”

“Left? I thought that you had lots of friends at school.” He released her and instantly regretted it, because she left his arms to lean against the railing on her balcony to explain.

“Yeah, great friends that invite me to hang out with Lila,” Marinette complained, “just so I can watch her throw herself at Adrien, even though it makes him so uncomfortable.” Marinette rubbed her eyes as they threatened to tear up again.

Adrien wasn’t aware that Lila’s shenanigans bothered Marinette, he wondered if they bothered her like they bothered Kagami. Kagami seemed to think that he had a crush on someone that wasn’t Ladybug? Maybe? Adrien couldn’t help but wonder if she meant his Princess. *Hmm, I’ll have to come back to that.* Adrien thought.

“You make it sound so purr-sonal Purr-incess. Why does Lila’s behavior with Adrien bother you so?”

Marinette gave him a brief look of disbelief, “Chat, you may not know this but while Adrien is a great guy, he’s not too bright when it comes to relationships.”

Chat Noir swallowed, he couldn’t disagree.
Marinette looked out over the city sadly as she confessed, “I know that Adrien and I, well, are or were at best, umm, just friends, but I- I still care about him Chat, I can’t help it. I want him to be happy. His not saying anything about Lila’s behavior, even though it’s obvious that her hanging on him clearly makes him uncomfortable means that there is a part of him that likes it and he’s subconsciously agrees with the possibility of having a relationship with her.” Adrien tried not to gag, “so, I-I just don’t want to see that.”

*Kagami said something like that didn’t she? Wait, Marinette and Plagg agree with her? Wow, it’s nice to know that people care, but what is this about us just being friends, like we were just friends?*

Somehow, what she said echoed within him, and not in a good way. *Why does that hurt?*

“Princess, has uh, has something happened between you and Adrien, you sound like you’re not sure if you’re friends anymore.” Adrien tried his best not to stutter or to let her know how much that thought hurt, he thought highly of Marinette, she was amazing after all, his favorite girl after Ladybug and his really good friend.

*Have I done anything to upset you Mari?*

Marinette didn’t look at him and she shook her head gently, “no, not really, it’s uh, complicated.” Adrien wasn’t reassured.

“School has just been tough since Lila came back.” Marinette quietly admitted, “all of my so-called friends believe every single one of her lies and push me to the side as a result. School has been a real minefield lately for me.” She sighed, “it’s like Lila was hired by Hawkmoth himself to cause so many akumas.”

Adrien couldn’t disagree, there had been a severe uptick in akumas at school lately, thankfully the two that has been there today hadn’t gotten his friend Marinette or Ladybug, he couldn’t imagine how either of those fights would have gone. *That’s one nice thing about not having to fight right now, at least if Marinette or Ladybug is akumatized, he thought, Chat Noir wouldn’t have to face either of them.*

Adrien sighed, he knew that was a selfish thought though. He knew he’d do what he needed to if that ever happened.

“Something bothering you Kitty?” Marinette asked after he’d been quite for a minute.

Chat Noir shrugged and couldn’t look at her as he managed to both be honest and lie at the same time, “yeah, I don’t like the thought of you being akumatized. I heard about today. I’m sorry I wasn’t there.” he couldn’t help but rub his chest, just above his left pec, next to where Plagg had scratched, clawed and zapped him all day, he couldn’t help but wince when his claw touched the sore spot. *Maybe I shouldn’t scratch it.* He thought as he noticed Marinette’s reaction.

*Uh, oh. He somehow knew that look.*

“What’s wrong?” Marinette looked at him suspiciously, having noticed that he had winced at the touch, “are you hurt?”

He grinned widely and tried to say, “I’m fine, really.”

He held up his hands like it was nothing.

She looked at him sternly. “Chat Noir. Do not lie to me. Are you hurt?”
He rolled his eyes and pouted, “maybe,” he whispered.

She stood straight, crossed her arms and told him, “well, let me see it.” She ordered.

“What?” He looked at her with wide eyes, not accustomed to Mari’s strong persona, usually she reserved that for… Chloe, or bullies, although not lately, huh.

“If you’re hurt, I want to help.” Marinette pulled him from his thoughts.

“Well, Princess,” he said nervously as he stood there uneasily, “I uh, it’s nothing claw-ful, it’s just a bunch of scratches.” He waved it off. “It’s paws-itively nothing.”

“That look on your face a moment ago said that it wasn’t.” She replied, then she turned and took a few steps to open her skylight to go back into her room. Chat Noir followed her.

“Marinette, where are you going?” He looked at her quizzically.

“We’re going into my room, the lighting out here isn’t good enough to take a look at whatever that is.” She waved her hand at him before stepping back into her room and then turning around to look at him. “Come on down.”

“I’m fine, really.” He tried to make it sound true, but honestly Plagg had really done a number on him and he knew that if his father found out about it, Adrien would be in trouble. Chat Noir decided he didn’t like where this was going, he was here to ask Marinette questions, not to be treated for a few scratches. “Look, I’ll just get out of your hair.”

Chat Noir turned around to leave and Marinette caught his tail. He winced, only Ladybug and Marinette did that and it was very annoying. “Purr-iness.” He whined.

“You’re not leaving until I get a look at those so-called scratches.” She warned him, “now get your Cute Kitten Butt down here.” He was surprised at how well she gave orders, her tone was familiar somehow and for some reason, he wanted to listen to her.

“Princess! Language!” He snorted as she rolled her eyes at him. “Ugh,” he groaned, “if you insist.”

“I do.” She sternly told him as she let go of his tail, he held it and patted it because somehow that helped it feel better when one of the girls did that, so that left him willingly following her down the hatch and into her room as one thought raced through his mind.

Wait, Cute Kitten Butt? Where did that nickname come from?
Chapter Summary

Marinette is totally suspicious of Chat Noir, suspecting that he has an injury at the very least. She takes him into her room to take a look at it and hopefully to help him out.

Adrien however, is a little confused...

Chapter Notes

Got a little carried away with this one, enjoy some more Marichat Fluff!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

After getting Chat Noir to sit down on her chaise Marinette ordered, “now strip!”

“Purr-incess!” Chat Noir tried to sound scandalized as he briefly held a hand at his chest in pretend shock, “at least buy me dinner first!”

So forward Marinette! He mentally commented, I didn’t know you had it in you, it’s… kind of… uh, WOW. He slowly blinked at her in surprise as he gulped, realizing she was acting like another girl he knew and found, well, WOW.

Nope, not going to think about Marinette like that. Nope! Especially since he knew that WOW in his mind equaled HOT.

I’m not losing a great friend over some random hormones thank you!

“Ha Ha.” She finally scoffed.

Please take me out of my misery and change the topic. Adrien mentally begged.

“I didn’t mean it literally, you silly cat, I’m just teasing.” Then she hesitantly added, “Just uh,… zip your suit down about 40 centimeters or so, just enough so that I can see that you’re not really hurt.” She bit the side of her lip and looked away from him for a moment.

Adrien exhaled a little bit as he realized that she wasn’t trying to come on to him, Marinette isn’t like Lila or one of my crazy fans. He hated how sometimes they eyed him like he was something to eat. She doesn’t see me like that, nope, Marinette is a good friend.

“It’s probably nothing Marinette.” Adrien tried to be serious as he sat back trying to not look as uncomfortable about this as he felt, which made no sense at all since he was a model for crying out loud. He’d lost count of how many people had seen him in his underwear or helped him get dressed or undressed between runway walks at one of his father’s shows. This, this was just different for some reason. More personal somehow, since it was, well, her. Right?

“Um, how much has Ladybug told you about what gives us our powers?” He tried to delay any
medical treatment by distracting her.

She turned and looked him over, but not in a creepy way, she was trying to see what was wrong, or if there was something wrong. Then she had a dangerous look in her eye that he did recognize, as if she were deciding something with a nod as she answered, “we’ve talked about it. It’s from the miraculous that you have.” She waved at his hand with the ring vaguely, “now come on, we don’t have all night.”

He raised his eyebrow at her as if asking her if she knew more, “fine.” She admitted as she folded her arms for a moment and looked away, “I know about your kwami, is that who or what you’re talking about?” She looked back at him reluctantly.

“E-yeah,” Adrien was hesitant, surprised that Ladybug had even told her that much. “Um, well, my kwami, Plagg, he’s been trying to help me with something and he thought that it would be a good idea for him to scratch me to get my attention.”

“Your kwami thought it would be a good idea to hurt you?! Marinette looked shocked. “Why? What would be that important?”

Chat Noir shrugged, “uh, I’m going to go with it’s a super secret superhero reason and it’s uh, classified?”

Marinette looked at him in disbelief with a raised eyebrow with one fist on her hip as she waited for a better answer. He recognized the pose, but it wasn’t one he’d ever seen from Marinette. She wasn’t buying it and she expected him to fess up.

“That’s all that I can say, really!” He waved it off with his hands, “Plagg wouldn’t want to hurt me, well, not really, he can just get carried away sometimes.” Adrien tried to give Marinette a shy Kitty look, but she really wasn’t buying it.

“Oh, huh.”

“That’s all, really.” He waved his hand like it was nothing, because really, it was.

Marinette waited a minute before he asked sheepishly, “can I go now?”

She shook her head, “nope. You’re going to show me those scratches.” Then she ordered, “NOW KITTY!”

“Geez, calm down!” He reached for his bell and willed the zipper that it was attached to, to actually work. He brought it down about 35 centimeters and opened his suit just enough for her to see his collarbone and barely the top of his chest.

Marinette swallowed and blushed a little as she glanced at his collarbone and Adrien was glad to see that he wasn’t the only one uncomfortable about this.

“See, nothing there. Now if you’ll excuse me…” Adrien tried to pull his zipper up again but Marinette was fast and grabbed his hand.

“No Chat, you didn’t show me where it was hurting you earlier. Now either you pull that zipper down more, or I will.”

_Wow, she’s really… um, WOW, when she’s threatening like that. Just, WOW! Why?_ Adrien couldn’t help that his Chat Noir side tended to kick in when he was distressed and this
moment was no different. He leaned back and put his hands on the chaise beside him as he suavely said, “If you wanted a peek all you had to do was ask Purr-incess.” Then he shot her a wink.

Okay, now shy away, you don’t have to do this Mari.

Marinette blushed a little bit more, not as much as she would when she talked to his civilian self, Adrien thought, but enough to make him smirk at her just a bit.

Her blush, was just, WOW. Come on Adrien, stop! She’s your friend!

“Fine.” She stated before calmly demanding, “may I have a look please Chat?”

He chuckled, somehow put at ease by her voice and he couldn’t help but want to give her a nod yes, which he did, and before he knew it, she had her hand on his bell and zipped his suit open almost to his belly button.

“So eager Mi- I mean, Princess!” Why did I almost call her Milday? She’s not Ladybug! Not Marinette! He mentally chastised himself as he focused on regulating his breath.

Why am I so nervous?

Marinette didn’t hesitant and pulled open his suit to expose the upper left side of his chest.

WOW. Just WOW.

“Oh, Chat!” Marinette whispered sadly as she looked at the egg sized area of scratches and claw marks, some parts of which had barely scabbed up already, as well as a small explosion of a black mark to the side of that area which looked like it had little tendrils that reached out from its center, like cracks. That blemish was about 15 centimeters wide.

Marinette reached out to touch the zapped area, but pulled back before she made contact in disbelief. “What?... What caused this? Is it a tattoo or something?”

Adrien chuckled, “my father would kill me if I got a tattoo, especially one there Purr-incess. It’s too… well, obvious?”

He ignored her stunned look.

Then Chat Noir shook his head, “No, that must be from when my kwami used a little of his destructive power to get my attention earlier after I saw Ladybug in action today. Apparently, I’m a little immune to his powers of destruction.” He tried to shrug it off but she still looked disturbed by it for some reason.

I don’t know why this bothers you so much Princess, so long as I can find, uh, her, and fix this, I-I’ll be f-fine. I can handle a few scars for M-My L-Lady. Adrien couldn’t believe he was stuttering in his own mind as he watched Marinette’s concerned face. Why does something here, f-feel familiar?

Marinette swallowed as she looked away to pull out her first aid kit and to open it. Her voice was small as she asked, “you… you saw Ladybug today?”

Chat Noir sighed sadly, “I saw her, but she didn’t see me, secret identities and all.” He shrugged, “she was beautiful today though, I wish I could have just said ‘Hi’ to her.” He noticed that Marinette looked sad for a moment as she took out a disinfectant wipe to clean the scratched area.

“I’m s-surprise that she would have liked to see you too today Kitty.” Marinette looked up at him fondly
and they exchanged grins, “now this may hurt.”

Chat Noir nodded and she went in to wipe the scratches clean. Adrien didn’t even wince, he was used to getting poked by dressers pins as he was getting fitted regularly and after Plagg’s treatment today, it was nothing. Actually, her touch was kind of soothing, as well as being here… Adrien was shocked as he felt his heart skip a beat.

**Why does her doing that make me feel… like that?**

“You’re taking this well.” She observed as she cleaned the area.

“You have a gentle touch.” He couldn’t help but flirt as he took her other hand and kissed the back of it.

“Silly Kitty.” She muttered as she blushed a light rosy hue, the nickname that Ladybug first gave him warmed his heart. He wondered if Ladybug talked to Marinette about him and told her about it.

“Does Ladybug talk to you, umm, about me?” He asked tentatively.

“Hmm?” Marinette had drifted off in her own world for a moment there and blinked at the question. “Not really, we don’t talk often, uh, although I’ll admit that my parent’s bakery is the main source of cookies for her kwami.” Marinette blushed slightly and gave him a grin. Then Marinette distractedly added, “she… she doesn’t talk much about the boys that she likes.”

Adrien watched sweet Marinette tend to his wound as he processed that. “You said boys. I thought that she only had her heart set on one lucky guy.”

Marinette put the used wipe in the trash as she bit her lip as if she’d said too much and started to gesture with her hands as she tried to explain, “well, every girl has like their main crush and then there’s like their second crush? Although that sounds bad, because the second guy is always pretty awesome too but uh, the first guy was there first and made it difficult to see the second guy no matter how I, I mean how she, uh feels about you, ah, him, I umm, I’m not explaining this very well.” She shyly chuckled. “I’m really not the best one to talk to about relationships.”

He grinned at her, almost knowingly, and shot her a wink and a finger gun, “ah, but you just made it sound like there’s a competitor for her heart, or at least for your own.” He nodded at her and then he held his chin thoughtfully, “but which one did you mean?”

She looked into her kit and looked dismayed as she got up, “I uh, I must have left the antibiotic ointment in the bathroom, I’ll be right back Chat.”

Marinette then made a hasty retreat.

…”

Adrien sat there uncomfortably, wanting to zip up his suit but he didn’t want to mess up Marinette’s ministrations by irritating the strange wounds that she had just cleaned up.

His mind wondered, he already knew that Marinette and Ladybug were close, Ladybug had sent Chat Noir to watch over Marinette during the Evilistrator incident after all. But for Marinette to know about Ladybug’s kwami and what she ate? That was surprising.

*I wonder if she knows who Ladybug is? Plagg said that she may know what’s going on with her, but it’s not like I can ask about her like that directly.*
There were a few things that bothered Adrien about that day though. Ladybug had never told him what ‘secret mission’ she had been on and it was strange that his Lady had asked if he thought Marinette was cute, not that he was able to respond to that.

Adrien had to admit, Marinette is the most beautiful girl of all his classmates and was sure that some would argue that she was probably the prettiest in the whole school and for some reason he found that intimidating. He knew he had a tendency to pull out his Chat Noir side sometimes around her so he could interact with her better, but somehow he usually just wound up teasing her and that had never really helped. Sometimes she handled it well, with a bare minimum of stuttering, other times… she’d just EEP and run away.

He felt like his Adrien side was at least a good friend with her now, not that there ever could be more because of Ladybug and the guy that Marinette had told Chat Noir that she liked so long ago. Adrien couldn’t help that he got the feeling that her feelings for that guy was still haunting her, no matter what she said to the contrary.

I wonder if I know who it is that Marinette likes, she could probably date anyone in the school if she ever asked him out, maybe he doesn’t even go to our school...

He shook his head, no, I need to focus. I need to ask her about HER. He thought about his Lady and how the deadline hung over his head until he lost both her and his miraculous approached. His heart ached, his HEAD ached, but as he saw Marinette return, his heart traitorously flipped again. Why does it do that? This is Marinette! We’re friends!

His head throbbed as the headache hit him for some reason again as Marinette said, “hey Kitty, sorry I was gone for so long. I-I decided that it was time for me to give you something special…”

Whether he liked it or not, Marinette had his full and undivided attention.

Chapter End Notes

A nod to the show and creators of Animaniacs for the Chapter title, I just couldn’t help myself using a funny quote.
HELLO Nurse! Part 2

Chapter Summary

Annd we're back in Marinette's room where an injured Chat Noir is waiting for her to come and finish taking care of his injury as he hopes that he can control his wandering thoughts about his friend... will he succeed?

Marinette sat down beside Chat Noir and showed him a small lip balm like tub with some sort of light pink lotion inside in the palm of her hand.

“What is it?” He asked.

Marinette looked to the side as she said, “this was a gift, uh, from Ladybug’s kwami. It’s like a special healing ointment?” Marinette embarrassingly rubbed the side of her neck with her free hand. “She made it so that it works best when I apply it.”

Adrien blinked, knowing that could mean many things, but obviously the craziest idea came to his mind, that means that Marinette probably has met Ladybug’s kwami! Ladybug must have de-transformed around Marinette!

Chat Noir was speechless as he processed that and it was hard to think as his head just throbbed, he wasn’t prone to getting headaches, but maybe it has something to do with Plagg? He wondered. He is sick after all.

“May I put some on you, I-I mean on your wounds? It, uh, it has to be rubbed in.” Marinette clarified.

Adrien blinked and nodded.

He couldn’t help but let his mind wander, his pretty classmate wanted to rub something on his chest! WOW! How lucky can I get? I don’t have much luck to spare, but this is just, WOW! Since when am I so lucky?

Adrien swallowed, feeling slightly guilty about his thoughts as he helpfully pulled back the left side of his suit, so she could get at the scratched area better. Marinette took a little dab of the ointment and gently rubbed it in the scratches, it felt warm, soothing and began to glow lightly. Adrien then gazed at Marinette and blinked at her slowly as he watched her.

His traitorous heart flipped as he admired his classmate, oh Marinette, you’re just so, you make me feel so… well, wow! He took a deep breath as he reminded himself, No!…she’s my good friend! She’s not Ladybug! He chastised himself.

Stop it Agreste! Focus!

Then he had to ruin the moment as he stated, “you know Ladybug’s kwami.”

(author’s note: Adrien is growing, he stated the more than obvious truth! Look up! The sky is falling!)
Marinette paused before picking out another dab of the lotion out of the little tub to rub in the zapped area. “Yes, is, uh, is that a problem?”

“That means that you were around when Ladybug was de-transformed.” He pointed out.

Marinette pursed her lips, adorable, he thought as his heart thumped at the thought. *Wait, what? No! Focus!*

Marinette wavered before she continued tending to his injury as she finally answered him, “uh, maybe? I mean, should I even answer that?”

He raised an eyebrow at her, she has a point. Ugh, secret identities! I can’t outright ask Marinette either because she’s friends with Ladybug and Ladybug can’t know that I’m trying to find her. Adrien started to pout.

“Anyway, her kwami comes by for cookies sometimes though,” Marinette rambled, “I-I catch her in the kitchen in the middle of the night.” Marinette chuckled as if laughing at an inside joke, but then she saw the pout on his face. “Umm, did you want a snack while you’re here? I can get us some croissants and some hot chocolate?”

“That’s very kind of you.” He smiled, “I shouldn’t stay for long though.” Marinette watched him as he pulled out his baton with his free hand, biting his lip nervously for a moment as he checked to make sure that Ladybug wasn’t transformed.

*Thank goodness, I don’t want to make things difficult for her or her kwami. He though distractedly.*

“Oh? Uh…” Marinette seemed to think for a moment as she rubbed in another dab of the lotion before she shared, “uh, yeah, Ladybug told me about Tikki’s illness and that you have to take a break because your kwami is her kwami’s other half right? So, resting your kwami from battle will somehow help Tikki?”

Adrien nodded with a surprised look on his face, “yeah, she… she told you that?”

Marinette waved her hands, “she was really vague about it. Uh… Ladybug was very worried about Tikki turning pink, she’s usually the color of her suit and well, since I see Tikki when she’s on one of her cookie runs, well, I’ve noticed that she’s been having trouble flying sometimes.” Marinette admitted, “I kind of couldn’t help but know that something was wrong. I’ve… I’ve been worried.”

“Oh, alright then.”

Marinette looked at his chest and looked surprised all of a sudden.

Adrien looked down and was shocked as well, he had his picture-perfect chest back. “Wow! That is some miraculous stuff!” He shot her a grin as he touched the area with the pad of one of his clawed fingers, “I can’t even tell that something happened!”

Marinette glanced at his chest too and blushed, “yeah, you’re perfect again, uh, I mean you’re all healed up, yup!” Then she held her hands to her face all embarrassed.

“Aw, thank you Purr-incess, I’m glad you noticed.” He shot her a wink that she didn’t see. Then he grabbed her wrists and pulled her hands away from her face gently. “Hey, no hiding now,” he kindly said, “it’s okay, I get stared at all the time, I am the cat’s meow after all.” He smirked at her as he posed for her, as if he was at his day job and she gave him a funny look, then rolled her eyes and took the nearest pillow and pushed him away from her with it.
They both quietly laughed, “hey! I’m an injured cat! Cat cruelty right here!” He quietly called out so as to not attract the attention of her parents.

“Oh, you’re fine!” Marinette insisted then groaned, hearing the opening as she said it.

“I sure am feline fine now!” He chuckled as his heart leaped at the fact that he could tease her, but he was getting hungry… “So, about those croissants?”

Marinette chuckled as she shook her head, “you sure think with your stomach, don’t you?”

“Hey, teenage cat boy here.” He patted his exposed chest and then waved around her room and then looked in her direction, “I’ve got it all right now otherwise, my health, a warm place to hang out… a pretty girl.” His eyes drifted lazily to gaze at Marinette before his mind kicked in and he reminded himself of what he’d just said, *she’s not Ladybug! Stop it Adrien! She’s your good friend for crying out loud! You’re going to ruin it! Just… STOP!*

Marinette on the other hand just blushed brightly and giggled prettily before she covered her mouth in embarrassment, *she has the sweetest little mouth... stop it Chat! NO!*

“Down Kitty.” Marinette finally said in a strangely familiar tone, causing Adrien’s headache to seemingly throb again.

“You stay here, I’ll be right back.” Marinette got up, shot Chat Noir a wink and then turned to strut out of the room, almost like a certain heroine.

*So... WOW.*

Adrien almost died right there.
You'll Catch A Cold That Way

Chapter Summary

Snacktime and another guest appears...

Bonus! Princess Bride Reference!

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Five minutes later, Marinette was walking up her ladder into her room with a precariously balanced tray with a stack of croissants, some cookies, two cups of hot chocolate and … a little pink kwami laying on her side on a fabric napkin on the tray.

“Tikki?” Chat Noir asked with a voice of concern when he saw the kwami, “why is she here?”

“She’s napping, I think.” Marinette frowned, looking worried. “I don’t understand, she looked so much better umm… last night.”

Adrien’s headache throbbed again and he felt confused.

“Marinette?” Tikki weakly asked.

“I’m here Tikki, is there anything that I can do for you?” Marinette asked her and then looked at Chat Noir to quickly explain, “I-I found her in the kitchen a-again.”

Tikki sat up on the tray as Marinette set it down on her desk and picked up a cookie and then handed it to the sick kwami.

Tikki sweetly spoke, “Let me just eat a cookie and then maybe Chat Noir can do something for me?” The cute little kwami looked at him with her dimmed eyes, then she took a few bites of her cookie.

“Sure, whatever you need.” He opened his hands meaningfully, Marinette shot him a small smile at him and Adrien almost sighed.

Wow… *stop it Agreste! Stop it! She’s your friend! She’s your friend!* He mentally chanted, not realizing the pain the thought caused to both his heart and his head.

Tikki nodded and took her last two bites of the cookie before she swallowed and asked him, “can I please sit in your hair?”

Marinette chuckled as Chat Noir looked confused, Plagg would do that sometimes but he’d never asked before, he’d just do it, so he shrugged before he told her, “sure. Do you need a lift?”

Tikki nodded as she weakly answered, “it would be appreciated, I just used up too much energy today, Chat Noir.”

Adrien nodded and was about to pick her up when Marinette quickly picked her up gently and petted Ladybug’s kwami on the head. “I’ve got you Tikki.”
Wow, she, she really knows what she’s doing, doesn’t she?

“Thanks Marinette.” Tikki sighed as Marinette cuddled her and then looked at Chat who shrugged again and then sat up straight as Marinette giggled a little and then she set the little kwami on his head. Tikki pawed at his hair and made a little nest before she laid down between his cat ears.

“Sometimes I forget how cute she is.” Marinette commented as she stared at the top of his head, then glanced at his face and then briefly looked down, blushing ever so slightly as she drew closer and grabbed his bell, finally zipping up his suit. “I think you should zip up, you’ll catch a cold that way.”

Adrien blushed a bit as he randomly thought, wow, sometimes I forget how cute you are too. No, wait… ugh, not again! Marinette is my friend! My amazing friend!

Adrien cleared his throat and ignored his aching head and the strange thumps of his heart as he picked up a croissant from the tray that Marinette had set down nearby.

He swallowed and answered her gruffly, “thanks.”

She smiled at him and he pursed his lips and looked away, she’s not Ladybug! Not Ladybug!

“So, uh, why don’t you tell me about your day?” He tried to ask conversationally.

Marinette gave him a look that didn’t belong on her face somehow, Adrien felt more confused, and his headache came back with a vengeance. “If you saw Ladybug today, you probably saw what happened Chat.” She exhaled, “I’m trying to take the time to meditate to stay calm for school, but sometimes I just get so, so MAD!”

Marinette clenched her fists as if to make a point.

“Hey.” Chat reached out and put a hand on her shoulder, “maybe if you talk about it, it would help. Tell me what happened from your perspective Marinette.”

Marinette took a deep breath and Adrien wasn’t quite as worried about an akuma showing up as the pretty girl in front of him told him what happened.

…

Adrien had just finished his croissants (four is probably enough, right?) and he finished his hot chocolate as Marinette told him about how they brought up the class representative election and how everyone expected her to bring cakes for everyone, even though no one had even bothered to say please, they just expected her to do it. Especially after Lila had hinted that Marinette was being unhelpful by not doing it.

There was more, apparently the whole class had been treating Marinette differently than they had in the past since Lila returned, not being cruel per se, but not being kind or thoughtful of her feelings either. According to Marinette, they’d been practically alienating her. Adrien had not noticed much of that himself, but he’d been busy with a fashion show that he was in recently.

He also hadn’t realized how Lila’s lies were upsetting and hurting Marinette.

Marinette was worried about losing her friends, but more importantly, she was worried that they were being tricked. She told him how she was hurt that no one listened to her or seemed to care about her feelings either, like she wasn’t allowed to have any.

Marinette still cared for her friends, it just hurt to be around them right now.
“Chat, I’ve been feeling so abandoned lately.” She sadly told him.

*Come to think of it, Marinette has been on her own a lot lately.* He pondered how school had been progressing as she told her tale, telling him how surprised she was of how Chloe had come to her rescue as she recounted the day.

*Is this what Ladybug has been going through?* Adrien asked himself, his brain practically throbbed against his skull at the thought. *If Lila can make Marinette feel this way, how has she made others feel? Including Ladybug?*

Adrien sighed, *I haven’t been having much luck in finding her, but maybe I should start helping Marinette by helping to disprove Lila’s lies, that would probably help Ladybug too, right? The question is, how?*

…

“Chat?” Marinette asked as Chat Noir blinked and looked at her, coming out of his thoughts. “Were you even listening Kitty?”

She looked… hurt.

“I’m sorry Princess, I heard you, you’re surprised that Chloe is being so helpful through all of this, although I have to say, I’m not sur-purr-ized, she has gotten better.” She nodded like she accepted his explanation, “besides, I’ve got to admit, I-I have a lot on my mind right now.” He pointed up at Tikki.

Marinette smiled at him. “Well, she is pretty important.” Then she thought for a moment before adding, “thank you for listening to me. It was nice to be able to talk about some of that.”

Before he could reply, Tikki yawned, “not to be rude but we should be going. If you don’t mind, I could use a ride, the less flying that I have to do like this the better. It’s easier to recharge when you’re de-transformed Chat Noir and Plagg can help me better all by himself.”

Adrien had to stop himself from nodding, “you just want me to take you home? What about Ladybug?” He asked the little kwami.

“Y-yeah,” the little kwami yawned again. “Marinette will tell her where I am if she asks.” Tikki muttered. “I’ll be able to make it back to Ladybug on my own.”

Marinette bit her lip and looked away, “so you do know her.” Chat Noir grinned at Marinette with that precious tidbit.

“Maybe? Um, is that a question that I have to answer?” Marinette looked at him suspiciously.

Chat Noir shook his head just a little bit. “Nope. Even I got that and I’m told I’m terrible about picking up hints.” He stood and Marinette did the same.

He toed his boot on the floor for a moment before he asked, “would it be okay if I come back? In case I need your tender loving care in the future Purr-incess?” He shot her a wink and his signature smirk, just because he felt like it for some reason.

Marinette giggled and blushed a little, “sure. Just… please take care of Tikki, she’s a really good friend.”

He smirked, “of course. Can I have a hug for the road Princess?” Adrien teasingly opened his arms,
expecting to get at least a slight tap on the nose for some reason or a shove from Marinette because Tikki was still on his head, but instead Marinette almost knocked him over again as she rushed to hug him, he barely was able to keep Tikki balanced on his head as he found his footing again.

“Marinette, are you sure you’ll be alright?” He asked her after a few minutes as he leaned his cheek against her temple, thoroughly enjoying the unexpected hug. “I mean, uh, is there anything that I can do for you?”

Marinette swallowed as she gave him one more gentle squeeze, “no, uh, I-I think that I have it covered, you probably should go, Tikki is waiting.”

Chat Noir let go of her hesitantly and then backed up, reaching up to his hair and gently pulling out Tikki. He cradled her in his gloved hands before looking back up at Marinette as he softly said, “as you wish, Princess.”

Marinette covered her mouth as she blushed a dark rosy hue, as if he was Adrien right now and he truly wondered if she had figured him out for a brief moment before she giggled as she sputtered, “H-Have you s-seen the movie ‘The Princess Bride’ Kitty?”

“Well, no?”

Marinette chuckled as she bent over and kissed him gently on the cheek, surprising Adrien who swallowed at the endearment. She’d kissed him once on the cheek once before as Adrien, to thank him once, but this, this seemed more personal.

*Oh, Marinette. Just…WOW.*

_Stop it Adrien! Focus!_

“You should, since you’re our very own man in black.” He cocked his head at her, not understanding the reference, “Just… please take care of Tikki, Ladybug is worried about her.” Marinette patted his hands that cradled Tikki gently as if saying goodbye for now.

“I will, good night Marinette.” He gave her a gentle smile, which she quickly returned with a blush before he headed out of her room through the skylight.

She whispered to him as he closed the window behind him, “Good night Kitty.”

Chapter End Notes

Ok, I'm totally a 'the Princess Bride' fan and if you've read my other stories, somehow this is possibly my 4th or 5th reference to it.

For those who aren't familiar with it, the phrase "As You wish" is something that Princess Buttercup's true love says to her a lot and it takes her some time to get it but it basically means "I love you." Hence why Marinette reacted the way she did. I honestly was tempted to use the phrase as a chapter title, but since Adrien/Chat Noir is fighting his feelings for Marinette, he doesn't mean it that way... yet.

The Man in Black is the villain turned hero from the movie, and spoiler...
(he's Buttercup's true love).
Obviously, I don't own Princess Bride, just like to reference it, because awwww! Love the tale!
Chapter Summary

Adrien brings Tikki home for some cuddle time with Plagg. The kwami try to get Adrien to figure out some stuff...

Would it be ironic to wish the kwami an exaggerated and LOUD "Good luck!"?

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Adrien began de-transforming as he flung himself and Tikki through his window. He landed as gently as he could and Plagg flew out of his ring as he landed and then Plagg zoomed out of the air and flopped beside Tikki in his hand.

Adrien’s bag fell to the floor, the seams dissolving as the bag disintegrated and the box of pastries, save for one cheese Danish, that his suit had absorbed when he had transformed also fell to the ground and wasted away as if it had been touched by his cataclysm charged hand.

“Plagg! What happened!”

“Not that you asked, but obviously I can’t carry extra things right now,” Plagg explained, “you’re lucky I was able to save your homework and my Danish!” He sat up and made a grabby type of movement with his little paws as Tikki curled around him. “Now hand it over! You’re going to have to go back tomorrow to get me some more kid, got it?”

Adrien frowned, “Yeah, fine. Sorry about that.” He picked up the Danish and handed it to Plagg, who wolfed it down in one astonishingly large bite.

Plagg shrugged, “you didn’t know. I tried to warn you kid, I’m having trouble keeping things together the longer that I’m apart from Tikki, especially if she’s been using her powers so much.” He rested a paw on his counterpart.

“Plagg, leave him alone, he didn’t know.” Tikki muttered with a sigh.

“I’m sorry Tiks.” Plagg surprised Adrien as he lovingly apologized.

Tikki had felt cold earlier, but now that Plagg was next to her, Adrien’s hand began to warm up quickly, so he walked them over and placed them on a pillow on his bed.

“Sugarcube.” The black kwami quietly purred as he looked like he was bleeding darkness again as he laid down and snuggled up with her. Tikki leaned into Plagg like he was her own personal heater.

Adrien was astounded at how his kwami gently patted Ladybug’s kwami as she snuggled up to him as she wearily asked, “now, what is this about you hurting your chosen?”

“I’m not hurt. I’m fine!” Adrien insisted, “Plagg was just trying to help me!”

“Yeah, Sugarcube, it was nothing!” Plagg purred as he nuzzled his other half. “He’s fine, really!”
“Uh, huh.” The little kwami managed to open her eyes weakly and give Plagg a look that had him drop his head and then nuzzle her as if to ask for forgiveness. “I had to make that healing ointment remember? That’s what drained me.” She merely stated, “so please, try not to waste the rest of it.”

“I’m sorry Surgercube, I’ll try to not scratch him up as much in the future.” Tikki gave him a small grin and a nod, accepting the apology. “It’s just, they need our help.” Plagg purred as he nuzzled her. “We don’t want to lose them.”

Tikki sighed and closed her eyes, enjoying Plagg’s ministrations, “I know, I don’t want to lose them either, Ladybug struggles with change sometimes and what she’s going through hasn’t been easy.” Then she looked at Adrien and suggested, “why don’t you work on your homework for an hour or two and then get some dinner, then maybe we can all talk about this?”

Adrien smiled weakly, exhausted already somehow as he gently patted each of them on the head, “yeah, I’d like that.”

…

Adrien rushed downstairs after working on his homework for an hour when he realized that he was late for dinner, only to find the meal that their chef had prepared for him and a note from Nathalie. His father was busy tonight, again, and he had required her assistance.

Adrien sighed as he took the tray with his meal up to his room to eat. He set it down on his desk and surfed the ladyblog as he ate.

…

“No news is good news.” Adrien sighed as he logged out, preparing to take his empty tray down to the kitchen.

Plagg cleared his throat as he sat up, “Tikki is feeling better now,” he informed Adrien as he shockingly looked down at his other half laying next to him affectionately who had returned to nearly her normal color. “But it would be nice if she could eat again before she leaves, do you think you could get her a cookie from somewhere kid?”

“Um, Marinette gave me some cookies yesterday I think…” Adrien went and looked in his desk where he had hidden the last two. He swallowed at the memory, Marinette had looked so sad and tired and for once, she hadn’t smiled or stuttered around him. Her behavior made a little more sense now, but still, he wondered if she had told Chat Noir everything.

Adrien knew that he had to focus though, so he put it out of his mind. “Is Tikki even awake?” He asked Plagg.

“I’m awake Adrien.” Tikki sat up, but she leaned on Plagg, who preened at the attention, making himself a little bigger to be a better pillow for her. Tikki rolled her eyes at his antics, not that Plagg noticed.

“So, what do you plan to do?” Tikki started as she blinked her pretty blue eyes at Adrien.

“Well, Master Fu said that I need to Find Ladybug, Apologize, help her balance her life or something like that and be there for her.” Adrien thought for a moment. “I also need to help her trust my civilian self and maybe help expose Lila somehow? Somehow her lies have been hurting Ladybug, like they’ve been hurting Marinette.” He bit his lip, “and then I need to convince her to reveal ourselves to each other.”
Tikki sighed, “I don’t think I’m breaking any rules here but she’s been tempted to do that herself. She misses you, Chat Noir you.”

“Really?!” Adrien’s face lit up like he was seeing candy for the first time.

“Yeah, but if she does that now, without her forgiving and accepting the civilian you kid, things could really get messed up.” Plagg added, “and it’s bye-bye miraculous.”

“I’m afraid he’s right. So, what do you know already?” Tikki asked Adrien.

So, Adrien told her…

…

About an hour later Tikki was nodding. “Well, that’s all well and good, but you haven’t mentioned your feelings about all of this.”

“Aww Tiks, do we really need to talk about that?” Plagg whined. “Trust me, you don’t want to get this kid started…”

“Plagg, I’m not THAT bad.”

Plagg looked at him directly and deadpanned, “yes, yes you are. Blech!”

“Plagg,” Tikki gently chastised her other half as she patted Plagg’s back and he melted beside her, causing Adrien to chuckle before Tikki looked back at him. “Looking back on your day, how did certain things make you feel?”

Adrien thought about it, “well, it didn’t feel right not to be there for Ladybug or Marinette when the akumas came after them.”

“Really?” Tikki’s face brightened.

“Don’t get your hopes up.” Plagg muttered as Tikki stroked his back.

“Yeah, they both must be having really rotten days.” Adrien commented.

“And…. He’s back.” Plagg shook his head ever so lightly.

“Stop it.” Tikki gave Plagg a small but meaningful little push before she started rubbing his back again. Plagg didn’t seem to mind at all.

“Adrien, what I mean is look back at your day, start from the beginning. Think about how certain topics or what the actions of others made you feel.”

Adrien nodded and thought back. “Well, I guess the first thing would be how Lila gets too close to me, I… I don’t really like it. It makes me feel uncomfortable.” Adrien sat there and twiddled his thumbs as a distraction.

“You should tell her.” Tikki instructed.

“I don’t know if I can, I mean, she hasn’t done anything wrong per se…”

“The girl invades your space and didn’t that Kagami chick tell you that it’s okay to tell the girl to lay off?” Plagg interrupted. “That anyone who liked you would notice.”
Adrien blinked as if something just clicked, “wait, Master Fu said that civilian Ladybug likes my civilian side right? Like she has a crush on me?”

“Duhh.” Plagg deadpanned as Tikki lightly swatted him, Plagg then just turned and grinned at her, happy to get any attention from her.

Tikki sighed, “yes, it’s been kind of obvious, but honestly it bothers her to see how uncomfortable you are with Lila flirting with you. It makes her uncomfortable.”

“Lila’s… she’s flirting with me?” Adrien made a face like he’d tasted something awful. “I thought she was just trying to be nice, I mean, a lot of girls act that way around me.”

“Not all girls.” Tikki merely stated. “I bet some just act like anyone would around you, because their hearts are already set on someone else. Then there’s Lila, who’s exceptionally forward. Chloe isn’t much better…”

“But Chloe is just a friend, she’s like a sister to me.” Adrien explained.

Tikki nodded, “yes, but does she really have to try to kiss you every morning?”

“Oh, well, that’s just Chloe. I’m sure she’d stop if I asked her to, it’s not like I have a girlfriend or anything and well, while I could do without the daily kiss, I like the hugs that she gives me.” Adrien shyly added, “I don’t get them very often otherwise.”

“I know a girl that’d love to hug you and kiss you…” Plagg muttered.

“Hush.” Tikki ordered and Plagg rolled his eyes, his purr starting up as she patted his back even more. “Now Adrien, I’m trying to get you to focus here, how do other girls act around you?”

“Well, usually it’s kind of like Lila or Chloe even, Sabrina is okay, Rose and Juleka don’t fawn over me but are nice. Alix and Alya roll their eyes at me a lot for some reason. Marinette, well, she’s Marinette.” Adrien totally ignored the slight blush he had when he mentioned her, “I think she’s intimidated by me or something, but we’re good friends now, I think.”

“Just to play devil’s advocate.” Plagg groaned, “I can’t believe I’m asking this, but how do you feel about Kagami vrs. Marinette or Ladybug.”

“Well, no one can compare to Ladybug.” Adrien brightly and quickly answered.

“Ugh, he’s yours Tikki.” Plagg settled down to purr and enjoy his pats again.

Tikki giggled, “alright then, humor us. We know you went out with Kagami. Why was that?”

“Well,” Adrien rubbed the back of his neck, “she’s decisive, strong and brave. I guess… kind of like Ladybug? Although I know she can’t be her, I mean she was akumatized right?”

Tikki nodded and then cocked her head. “So, what about Marinette? How do you feel when you’re around her?”

Adrien gulped as his eyes wandered around the room as he rubbed the back of his neck nervously as he remembered how his heart went nuts around her earlier, the traitor that it was, “I-I like her, I-I guess.”

But… but I can’t betray my Lady! He thought as he put on a really wide grin on as he quickly announced as he shook his head and added, “I mean, she’s a really good friend!”
Tikki frowned a little and glanced down at Plagg, “guys really aren’t very good about talking about their feelings, are they?”

“You said it Sugarcube,” Plagg gave her a lazy wink, “we’re kind of purr-fect that way.”

“Alright.” Tikki took a deep breath. “How about we talk about something else you noticed today Adrien?”

Adrien rubbed his neck, “well, I guess when they were talking about the elections, it bothered me that Marinette didn’t seem to want to run again. She’s done a great job for so long, but after seeing how selfish our classmates are, well, I can’t blame her for not wanting to run again.”

“Alright,” Tikki nodded, “and how did it make you feel when she was almost akumatized over that?”

“How did I feel?” Adrien thought hard, “I was shocked, I mean, how could Marinette get that upset? Well, that’s how I felt this morning before I talked to her as Chat. How could I be so blind?”

Tikki and Plagg glanced at each other.

“Go on.” Plagg suggested.

Adrien started to pace, “well, I was so busy with that fashion show recently that I didn’t see that one of my good friends was being treated so poorly and that Lila was the instigator. I feel awful for Marinette and Ladybug,” Adrien he came to a stop and sighed, “I feel like I failed them.”

“Well, why don’t you try to look at everything another way? Is there someone or something that keeps popping up?” Tikki suggested.

Adrien thought, “well yeah. Lila. I think I’m going to have to talk with her tomorrow and let her know that I’m not interested. Kagami said that anyone that liked me didn’t like me putting up with it, as if I liked her behavior. I mean, I know I’m awesome,” he shrugged,” not as much as Chat Noir, but that may be part of why Ladybug is getting over me.”

Tikki deadpanned, “your humility knows no bounds, really.”

“Thanks!” Adrien blissfully accepted his ‘compliment’ as he blushed a little.

Plagg chuckled. “See what I have to deal with?”

Chapter End Notes

There's a little nod to the season 3 episode Were-dad in this chapter. If you've seen it, you probably caught it, if not, well, it's not really a spoiler here, which is why I didn't announce a warning or anything. You'll catch it when you see it yourself.
Double Serving of Angst for Agreste

Chapter Summary

Oh boy, this is a long one, just couldn't cut it in half... 2800+ words on your way here...
This also AKA Adrien vrs. Lila round 1
OR
Things get worse.

Chapter Notes

New tags were added due to the nature of this chapter, just to cover our bases.

Fair warning, this is one of the chapters where this fiction earns its rating and it approaches the rating of a Mature story here in my opinion, but nothing especially graphic etc, which is why there is no aged up tag and I know I'm usually a bit sensitive so, maybe its not so bad to everyone.

Anyhow, this chapter starts out sweet with the first 430 words or so, then gets progressively worse with some major angst and ends with giving the author an upset stomach.

Oh, if there are any Lila fans out there, it may be time to stop reading this story, she shows her true colors here and even Adrien can tell that this girl is 'no bueno.'

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Ugh.” Tikki sighed and rolled her eyes exhausted mentally as she had tried her best to get through to Adrien. She did not envy Plagg at all. “Look, I'm exhausted. If you're up to talking more and you still haven’t figured out Ladybug’s identity by tomorrow night, then we can talk more about it, but I've had enough of this nonsense.” She patted Plagg’s head gently and gave him a gentle hug as he tossed her a look that said… ‘please don’t leave me…with him.’

Tikki giggled as she patted Plagg’s cheek, “It’s probably time for desperate measures. Remember what I suggested?”

Plagg rolled his eyes, “ugh, please no, can we at least skip the kissing parts?”

“Kissing?” Adrien repeated as he tilted his head like a cat, completely confused.

Ignoring Adrien, Tikki told Plagg, “I’m sure that you can handle it. Although if you don’t, we will take care of it tomorrow. I should really get back to Ladybug, I’ve stayed longer than I expected to already.”

“Should we give you a ride back to Marinette’s?” Adrien happily suggested, “she might like us stopping by again.”
Tikki shook her head, “I can handle it tonight, but thank you for the offer. Ladybug and I have an early day tomorrow, so hopefully she’s already in bed.”

“But it’s only 10:15pm.” Adrien stated knowing that they’d patrolled even later sometimes, “why would she have to wake up early tomorrow? It’s a school day, right?”

Tikki nodded, “that it is. Please try to remember that tomorrow.”

“Is it important?”

“Kid, we’ve said enough already.” Plagg responded before he looked at Tikki, “see you tomorrow Sugarcube.”

“Back at you Stinky Sock.” Adrien could have sworn that Tikki winked at Plagg before adding, “bye!” To Adrien before she phased through the window and left.

“Well, should we talk about it more or do you need to take a break?” Adrien asked his kwami.

“Well, pigtails…”

“Marinette.” Adrien corrected.

“She mentioned that movie, the Princess Bride.” Plagg almost looked a little shy as he admitted, “Tikki made me promise to watch it.” She thought that the first fifteen minutes or so would be hilarious… for me, and she told me why. Not that I’m going to tell you that. Plagg thought.

“So, are you up for a movie kid?” Plagg suggested.

Adrien frowned, “not tonight Plagg. I just don’t feel like it, I think that I should go to bed, I’m so tired that I’m having trouble thinking straight. Maybe all of this will make more sense in the morning.” Adrien yawned and rubbed his eye as if to make a point.

Plagg felt bad for the kid, “yeah, I guess you’re right. But we’re watching it tomorrow night, okay?”

“Yeah sure, whatever Plagg.” Adrien muttered as he went off to get ready for bed.

“Sleep well kid, you’re going to need it.”

Plagg hated being right sometimes…

…

Adrien woke up early. His nightmares didn’t let him sleep well at all. They were all along the same theme, he’d failed his lady, he’d lost his miraculous and he’d lost Plagg. For some reason he remembered Marinette appearing in the dream too, like she wanted to help him somehow, he didn’t know how to feel about that besides worrying that somehow it would be betraying his Lady, but while the worry was there mentally, it felt good to have Marinette there.

Adrien hated being so confused.

It didn’t help that Adrien had woken up in a panic, only to look over at Plagg’s pillow to gasp in relief at the sight of his unusually stinky friend. It was then that Adrien noticed that Plagg’s usual stench was almost gone, not quite like he’d had a bath but like he’d been aired out or something.

He didn’t tell Plagg, but that fact bothered him.
Adrien got ready for the day since he woke up twenty minutes early. After having some fruit for breakfast, he got permission to walk to school for once. He had to get Plagg his cheese Danish after all.

…

Tom and Sabine’s Patisserie was busy that morning when Adrien slipped in to get in line for a few cheese Danishes and a few cookies for when Tikki came over that night.

Tom had his back to Adrien when he asked, “How may I help you today?”

“May I have three cheese Danishes, a croissant and four chocolate chip cookies please? All in separate bags please.”

Tom hummed as he focused on filling the order, “uh, huh. Will that be all?”

“Sure, I have a friend that likes them that’s all, uh, is Marinette available? Maybe we could walk to school together?” Adrien suggested.

With his hands busy, Tom only mentioned, “oh Marinette’s already left for the day.” Then he looked up at Adrien and choked before he pounded his chest and sputtered, “I-I mean, s-she, s-she uh, she’s…” Then he looked down at the three little bags he had prepared for Adrien as if disappointed in himself as he sighed and walked around the counter and patted Adrien’s shoulder as he seriously said, “Adrien, son, I shouldn’t have said anything. Please don’t mention this to the rest of your class.”

“I don’t understand sir.” One of Adrien’s eyebrows climbed into his bangs to show his confusion.

Tom nodded, “I suppose that’s understandable, but you probably will figure it out eventually, all that I can say is that nothing has been decided yet and to ask you to please keep this to yourself. It’s important to Marinette that it doesn’t get out. She ah, has some things to look into today and tomorrow too. She’ll… she’ll probably be back in school Friday.”

Not understanding at all, Adrien nodded. “Sure, if it’s important to Marinette, I won’t say anything, although I really don’t know what you’re talking about.”

“It’s probably best that you don’t.” Tom shrugged.

“How much do I owe you?”

Tom added up Adrien’s purchase on the register and Adrien paid, waving goodbye to a sheepish looking Tom after he collected his purchase and stuffed all but the croissant into his bag, which he ate on the way to school.

Adrien was looking forward to getting to school early, thinking that maybe he could talk to Marinette again, but then he thought about Tom’s words. That’s right, she won’t be back until Friday, I wonder what she’s doing? Her parents are in town, so it’s not like she went on vacation. Huh.

Adrien was particularly happy that he’d made it to the lockers that morning without one of Chloe’s surprise attacks, maybe there’s something to being very early after all.

But then he felt a little bad, because he did miss his morning hug with his childhood friend.

…
Adrien opened his locker once he got to the locker room and put away some books and pulled out what he needed for class. When he closed his locker, Lila was standing next to him, no longer hidden by the door on his locker. They were alone and she smiled at him and said in a disturbing tone, “Hey Adrien.”

Adrien gulped, feeling like he was a fish in a fishbowl as the cat went fishing when she sauntered up and placed her hand on his chest, making him back up into his locker as she drew even closer. “Hey Lila, w-what are you doing here so early?” He managed to politely say.

She fluttered her eyes at him, “Well, I could use some of your sweet kindness and support Adrien.” She leaned her head on Adrien’s shoulder, keeping her hand on his chest, drawing random and sickening patterns on his black under shirt as she quickly wrapped her other arm around his waist, slowly dragging her hand up his back until she had hooked herself around him. Adrien tried to lean away, but found that he had nowhere to go, plus, she was all over him. Even Chloe had never gotten so close, it… it wasn’t right.

Adrien swallowed uncomfortably.

“She only shook her head back, “I know you like this, you’re a guy, so you must.”

“No, I don’t.” Adrien managed to choke out, as he closed his eyes and tried to turn away gently, but she held him tightly.

“I decided to come early this morning after dropping off my kitten at the veterinarian’s.” Lila quickly purred over any protest he was trying to get out as she announced randomly, focusing on her unwelcome touches, “he’s been suffering from feline distemper for weeks now and my parents are worried that our dog will get it too.”

Adrien managed to look at her incredulously, since he couldn’t believe that she was doing this, or that he… he was allowing it? Was he?

“No. Lila.” He shook his head at her as he managed to free one of his frozen hands that he had automatically been bracing himself against the locker behind him with to try to push her away at the shoulder ever so kindly.

Lila had other plans though as she snaked that hand that was on his chest and grabbed his hand and placed it on her waist, then worked it down to her hip. She was trying to make him go further, but he pulled back his hand like he had been burned.

Lila gave him a small unsettling smile as she watched Adrien squirm, his hand frozen against the locker again and she ignored the whole thing as she went on with her new story, as her hand was placed on his chest once more. “Anyway, so they had to send our dog to my Uncle’s house.” Lila snuggled up to Adrien a bit more before continuing touching his chest indecently as she whispered into his ear, “I was really hoping to have your shoulder to lean on.”

Adrien tried to think of what he needed to say as his cheeks burned with embarrassment, Lila leaned closer as if to kiss him, but he managed to turn his head and close his eyes, wishing he was anywhere else as he tried to imagine himself running across the rooftops as Chat Noir, free and able to leave.
Adrien Agreste however had been taught as a gentleman, and he really didn’t know what to do when he was so… so uncomfortable and faced with a girl that was definitely not a lady as she brushed her lips against his neck instead.

It was then that Rose opened the locker room door and saw Adrien and Lila snuggled together in what looked like an embrace, “oh, excuse me!” She squeaked, “I’ll give you two some privacy!”

Then Rose quickly left as Adrien choked before barely being able to call out, “W-WAIT! No, we’re not…” Adrien looked down at Lila’s wide grin and her hands began to wander again as he swallowed his gentleman training and decided, NO.

“NO, Lila.” Adrien loudly spoke up as he channeled his heroic self and took Lila’s wrists and gently led her hands away from his body, dropping them as soon as he could. He didn’t want to touch her and he definitely didn’t want her to touch him. He stepped to the side and he barely felt like he was no longer cornered by her as he stepped away from the lockers to face her.

She merely grinned at him with an odd smirk, as if he hadn’t said a thing. Then she reached up and wrapped her arms around his neck and pouted falsely as she clucked, “oh, Adrien, Adrien. My Adrien.”

Adrien of course tried to be civil, “Lila, NO, I’m NOT yours.” He grabbed her wrists again against his will so that she couldn’t sidle up to close in on him again. But unwarranted guilt and his training hit him hard and he spouted these words, “please L-Lila, I-I don’t mind being your friend or helping you with homework, but this… this kind of behavior makes me feel uncomfortable. Please, I need my space and I need you to not lie, to me or to others, especially about us. Like we’re together? Because, well, we’re not.”

She smirked at Adrien, “I only tell people what they want to hear Adrien, MY Adrien,” He frowned at her nickname for him, “THEY want us together. So, who am I to object?” She then tried to kiss him again and he pulled away, keeping their arms between them.

Adrien took a deep breath and then told her in no uncertain terms with determination in his voice as his normal color returned from the embarrassment of this… whatever this was. “Lila, I’m NOT sorry. I need you to understand that I am NOT interested in you in that way.” He swallowed again before strongly adding as he finally dropped her wrists as she quit trying to physically pressure him, “and I’m afraid that I’m not about to change my mind about THAT either.”

Lila scowled, her face morphing from something remotely sweet into an oncoming storm, “I bet you’d hold Marinette like that if she hugged you.” She almost growled.

“Marinette would never have to throw herself at me.” He answered thoughtlessly with determination.

“So, you admit it, you love her.” Lila commented snidely.

“I-I’m N-not S-saying t-that.” Oh, why can’t I say it outright? He briefly wondered.

Adrien couldn’t help his blush that blossomed either, outright admitting in that single second that he wouldn’t be against hugging Marinette, if she wanted to hug him or hold him. She, she was his good friend after all, right? I’m so confused!

In the one blink that it took for Adrien to school his expression, finally realizing that he shouldn’t have let his feelings show, his mind reeled with two truths.

Oh my gosh, I- I can’t believe it! I like Marinette!
And Lila is going to make me pay for it!

“And you think I’m the liar. You love that trash, any fool can see it.” Lila sneered.

Adrien quickly told her defensively, louder than before, “leave Marinette out of this!”

The damage had been done though and the storm that is known as Lila shook his very foundation as she whipped out her finger and poked him painfully in the chest with far more authority than a young woman should have as she told him as she forced him to take a step back. “I’ll give you two options Agreste. Either you’re with me or you’re against me, but be warned, if you don’t choose me, you’ll lose your precious good image and your friends, including Marinette.”

Adrien’s eyes widened in shock.

Lila’s smirk was unsettling, “either you’re my boyfriend and you return my advances, or you’re the boy that toyed with my heart, used me and pushed me away like trash. Your reputation here at school will be ruined, I’ll take away your friends and soon you’ll be the one that’s attracting all the akumas. You’ll be ALL alone and your father WILL take you out of school in disgrace.”

Adrien stepped back with a gasp, he had no idea Lila could be so, so evil.

If she’s like this with me, what did she do or say to Marinette?

“Oh, and your little girlfriend? She’ll REALLY learn what it’s like to be my enemy.” He eyes flared meaningfully.

Adrien’s eyes widened as the phrase that came automatically to his lips escaped, “but, but she’s just my really good friend!”

“Yeah, uh huh. Keep telling yourself that, you love her, I’ve seen you look at her and you better start looking like that at me! Because once I’m done with her, no one will want to be in the same room with her, unless you choose me, of course.” Lila smirked at him as she tossed her hair over her shoulder and then spun on her heel and took a few steps towards the door.

Adrien felt ill.

“Oh, and Adrien…” She turned to let her eyes rove over him as she made a strange and unfamiliar face as she ate up what she saw as Adrien felt like she was trying to undress him with her eyes. So, he folded his arms across his chest to try to protect himself from her hungry stare, “you have until lunchtime to make your decision.”

Then she had the audacity to blow him a kiss before she turned around and left.

Adrien exhaled the breath that he had been holding as he quickly sat down on a nearby bench and tried to control the urge to vomit.

Chapter End Notes

Lila mentioned feline distemper which is a dangerous illness apparently, usually fatal for kittens so I’m assuming they wouldn’t ‘last for weeks’ and a dog cannot catch it – Lila’s lies disproved by the internet!
Also, Adrien will be okay, I promise!

This chapter was kind of how to re-spin Lila's threats against Marinette towards Adrien, but what would Lila want from Adrien? Him. Obviously in the show they're very respectful of personal space usually, but Lila is willing to cross it with Adrien even though she hardly knows him and then her attack is literally kissing in Chameleon. And this Lila is controlling and evil and worse than the one in the show (I hope the one in the show doesn't get this bad). I'd almost think she's ready to take over for Hawkmoth myself. Anyhow, the jump to this part of the story kind of wrote itself from there.
Chapter Summary

After Lila cornered and threatened Adrien in the locker room, Plagg tries to talk with Adrien as Adrien has to come to terms with what happened and he has some decisions to make...

Plagg flew out of Adrien’s pocket and looked at his chosen with worried eyes after Lila left. “Adrien, are you okay?” He asked him gently.

Adrien bit his lip and shook his head, “no, no, I’m not Plagg.” He then looked at the ceiling as he made an effort to compose himself. “Maybe I deserved it, for being so hopeful and naïve that her lies couldn’t hurt anyone. So much for the high road! I should have expected that things would get worse before they’d get better! Me and my rotten luck!”

Oh kid, you’re one of the best and yet most innocent Chat Noir’s I’ve had in a long time. No one deserved to be treated like that. Plagg thought. You had no idea she was that bad.

“Adrien, that WAS NOT YOUR FAULT.” Plagg almost angrily replied. “You did not lead her on, hoping for the best is not a crime and she was the one chasing you! You should tell someone what happened.” Plagg advised a bit more calmly, “and the sooner the better.”

“Why? You know about it.” Adrien whispered as he closed his watery eyes, he was determined not to cry. “She’s a nightmare Plagg, she’s set this up so perfectly. It’s like she said, it’s almost like her word against mine.”

“Adrien.” Plagg whispered, not knowing what to say besides, “it wasn’t your fault!”

Adrien gulped as he admitted, “she-she could ruin me, couldn’t she? Why didn’t I clear things up earlier? Why didn’t I listen to Kagami? Come on Plagg! Why didn’t I see this coming?” He slammed a fist on the bench that he was sitting on and winced at the pain that it caused.

Plagg was uncommonly quiet before he spoke. “You know what I meant kid, you need to tell someone that can help you with this, with her. Preferably an adult.”

Adrien shook his head. “I can’t tell my father, he’d probably find a way to blame me or he might even make me…” Adrien inhaled a deep breath and then exhaled it slowly to calm his nerves, “or he’d make me date her and let her… do that.” Adrien looked down at his hands, clasping them together so that they wouldn’t shake as he closed his eyes.

“Kid, even your father isn’t that evil.” Plagg said hopefully as he watched Adrien, at least, I doubt he is. Although I’m pretty sure if he found out about this, his wrath would be legendary and I don’t know who would suffer the consequences, but I’m pretty sure it wouldn’t be my kitten. Besides, I wouldn’t allow it. Plagg thought with determination.

“Oh, I’m pretty sure he would, anything that could hurt his company image would have to be dealt with in the most efficient manner possible. Sacrificing my choice of who I could date would be the easiest thing, whether I liked it or not.” Adrien sighed, “Lila isn’t someone that can be bought, she
“just wants… what does she want Plagg? It can’t be just, uh… me.”

Plagg looked at his chosen sadly, “I don’t really know what a girl would want Adrien. You should ask someone that might know, someone that can HELP you kid.”

Adrien swallowed as his mind raced, “I wonder… I wonder was that, was that kind of what happened to Ladybug? To-to Marinette?” He didn’t want to imagine it.

Oh please, not her. Adrien thought worriedly. But that would explain so much.

Plagg looked away and seemed to be engrossed in the floor tile, unable to say what had happened to his favorite girl and Adrien had his answer. Adrien had suspected that Plagg knew more than he let on, but his behavior just confirmed it.

“She did, didn’t she? Lila stole Marinette’s joy! Ugh, and then she thinks she’ll get away with this?” Adrien blinked before he whispered to himself, “she already has though, hasn’t she?”

Adrien gulped, “Marinette has lost everyone now, hasn’t she?”

Adrien tried to compare what just happened to what Lila would say to Marinette.

While Adrien had been weirded out by the encounter, he had been looked at like that before, he was a model after all and he’d learned to ignore the leering eyes that surrounded him in his professional life, but this was the first time someone had touched him while being so forward and he hated the sickening feeling that it caused. He hated that Lila expected him to surrender to … to THAT again, but if she had faced Marinette, he could imagine that the threats would remain the same.

If nothing else, Lila held her reputation and how people viewed her as more important than everything, so long as she was on the one in the spotlight. Marinette must have confronted Lila and refused to ‘join’ her in her lies, and now she was paying the consequence.

Adrien, despite being a hero, was less worried about himself right now than he was of Marinette and his Lady. Then there was also his father, he would be disappointed in him and Adrien was afraid that it would be his fault that he was in this situation in the first place if his father ever found out.

Adrien swallowed as he turned to look at his kwami, “what should I do Plagg? I don’t want Marinette to get hurt even more, or to disappoint father, but it doesn’t seem like I can have both or either of those options.”

Plagg looked thoughtful for once and blinked at him before he cocked his head as he emphasized, “what do you think MARINETTE would want you to do though?”

Adrien frowned ruefully, “she’d want me to do something about it. Ladybug would want me to do something about it too, or she’d string up Lila and all her lies for the world to see if she could.” Adrien sighed, “but she’s a hero. She may want to do that, but she wouldn’t use her heroic side that way against a civilian. Not for a personal civilian problem. I’m sure she wouldn’t because she wouldn’t want to risk her secret identity by doing that at the very least, no matter how tempting it may be. I wish Marinette had never listened to me when I talked to her about not exposing Lila’s lies, I had no idea that all of this would happen.” Adrien groaned.

“Alright,” Plagg dipped in the air. “First of all, Marinette tried to point some out if you recall, Jagged's kitten remember? But no one listened, that’s not her fault or your own. Secondly, you’ve basically got two choices here kid, follow your own advice and do what Lila wants you to do, take
that stupid high road which obviously is the wrong choice here, because hoping that something will happen and change without action of some kind is like hoping that you’ll win the lottery without buying a ticket, or you can do something else, like, oh, I don’t know, tell someone and take a stand?” Adrien gave his kwami an annoyed look, “but seriously kid, what do you think you should do?”

Adrien exhaled a deep breath before answering weakly, “I need to tell someone.”

“And?”

“And I need to come up with a plan, but first of all, I need to stay away from Lila.” Adrien resolved as Plagg nodded in agreement before zipping into Adrien’s pocket as the locker room door opened and some kids came in.

…

Adrien walked into the classroom and when he looked at his desk that he shared with Lila, he paled as she looked at him hungrily.

Adrien quickly looked away and looked around the room, there was still over ten minutes until class started, Marinette was gone of course, and those that were there already were crowded around Lila like she was their Queen. Her subjects included Alya, Nino, Juleka, Rose and even Kim and Alix today, despite the fact that the last two were competing against Lila for Marinette’s old job.

It made Adrien even more nauseous.

It hurt to see Nino supporting her and as such, Adrien avoided his supposed best friend, not believing the slim chance that he’d believe him. Nino and Alya had pushed away Marinette of all people after all, who’s to say they wouldn’t do that to him?

Who could he turn to? It seemed like everyone flocked to that nightmare of a girl’s side.

Everyone did.

Adrien swallowed and decided that while he still needed to find Ladybug, he hadn’t gotten far on that, but since all of this began with Lila, that she had done something like this to Marinette and probably Ladybug, this, she, needed to be dealt with. Adrien realized that this was more than he could handle on his own though and he needed reinforcements.

He needed a friend.

Then he remembered his childhood friend.

Everyone had flocked to Lila after all, everyone except for Chloe.

*Good old Chloe, Queen Bee herself. She’ll help.* Adrien’s thoughts and decision to approach her reassured him.

Adrien found her typing on her phone as usual at her desk. He managed a half smile as he went over and took Sabrina’s empty seat, as he quietly asked Chloe, “Chloe, ah, do…do you think that Sabrina would mind if I switched seats with her today?”

Chloe looked up from her phone and eyed him suspiciously and Adrien knew that look. The look of her putting something together. He just hoped that she wouldn’t be too disappointed...
Let the Plotting Begin

Chapter Summary

Adrien tells Chloe what happened.

She is angry, but contains her anger so she can talk Adrien into doing something, since she is also frustrated that he doesn't want to report it.

Chapter Notes

Honestly this part of the story wasn't supposed to be so long, but I thought it was important to not glaze over anything that is such a heavy topic in real life.

Considering it's hard to come forward and tell anyone and harder to report it, I wanted that struggle to be acknowledged. It's very important to come forward and get help, adult help. Deal with things legally and get counseling.

Chloe and Adrien will have a very fictitious way of dealing with it. Be realistic, don't do what they do. (Spoiler maybe?) Anyhow, don't base real life decisions or behavior on fanfiction!

Considering Adrien's and Chloe's characters and their situations, what happens going forward is what I think would probably happen in this story.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Chloe gave her childhood friend an appraising look, reading that something was bothering Adrien as she then typed a few last things on her phone and then set it down in front of her. She gave him her full attention, which was a rare treat when she was already engaged with something else. Adrien of course knew that, and just that action alone made him feel a little better, knowing that he was that important to her as she nodded and agreed that he should sit next to her.

“Of course, Adrikins, I’d love it if you joined me today.” She commented as she self-assuredly tossed her hair as she granted him the honor, “besides, Sabrina’s home sick today anyway, so she wouldn’t mind at all.”

“Oh good, not that she’s sick, but that, uh… that I can talk to you.” Adrien hesitated and then sighed as he leaned back and then looked at Chloe unsure of where to start.

“Of course! I’m a wonderful listener after all.” Chloe smirked, but then she grew serious, “come on, out with it. I can see that something is bothering you Adrikins? Do I have to fire somebody?”

“Chloe, you can’t solve things like your mother, you’re better than that.”

Chloe pursed her lips for a moment and nodded before muttering, “Thank you, I-I guess.”

Adrien noticed that she was now watching him expectantly so he leaned forward quickly as he
whispered, “um, can I tell you something Chloe? Privately? I need you to keep this between us, you can’t tell anyone else, can you do that? For me?”

She looked at him quizzically and then nodded as she seriously whispered back, “I’m here for you Adrien. You can tell me anything that you need to. Whatever it is, I’m here for you.”

Adrien was surprised at her unusual but supportive tone, but he’d take it. “I-I don’t know what to do about all of this yet, but I need to tell someone.” Adrien told her.

“I’ll help if I can.” Chloe nodded and whispered back, having already realized that this was a very private conversation, “so, is this about Lila trying to claim you?”

“Wha-what? How did you know? Did, did Rose say something?” Adrien quickly stole a glance at Rose and the others, Rose was too enthralled by Lila’s current story to notice his look of fear.

Chloe however, noticed, and she looked alarmed for one moment, but then calmed herself in the blink of an eye.

“I have no idea what you’re talking about Adrikins.” Chloe waved her hand at the very idea that she would know any details considering how much they hadn’t been speaking to each other lately, “all I know is that Lila was bound to try something more vocal and obvious. Forgive me Adrikins, but you’re a gentleman first and far too innocent and sweet to catch all of her little flirtations or actions aimed at claiming you. What did she do now? Did she try to kiss you or something?”

Adrien looked away.

“She did, didn’t she?”

Adrien swallowed and answered, “yeah.”

Chloe narrowed her eyes and lowered her voice, “did she threaten you? Like, did she just tell you that you had to be her girlfriend or else?”

Adrien looked to the side, and paled slightly as he nodded, “yeah something like that, but worse. So much worse. Lila, she-she cornered me in the locker room and she put her hand on my chest against my wishes,” Chloe gave a small gasp, but Adrien held out his palm, asking her to let him finish, “she-she wouldn’t stop touching me Chloe. At first, I-I didn’t know what to do, I tried to tell her no and I eventually did, several times, but I froze up for the first minute or so and I still don’t know what to do about it. She wouldn’t stop,” he gulped, “feeling me up and telling me how I wanted it, but I didn’t! Then she… she threatened me that I- I had to be hers o-or else!”

Chloe, whose volcanic expression was quickly schooled and erased as she shook her head and took a moment to think before she interrupted and asked him directly, “did anyone see you together?”

Adrien swallowed, “yeah, Rose almost came to my rescue, but she… she thought that what Lila was doing was… was…” He gulped and spat out the word, “welcome.”

“She thought you were making out?” Chloe offered stonily and in disbelief. “Like you wanted it?”

“Yeah, I think that’s what Rose thought because once she saw Lila, uh, pressed against me like that, against my wishes mind you,” Adrien swallowed again audibly, “Rose excused herself, but Chloe, I… I don’t want that! I didn’t want that, I even told her so, but she… she didn’t stop. She kept calling me hers and it felt so disgusting! I… I… Ugh, this is so embarrassing.” Adrien gripped his knees and looked down at the floor, embarrassed.
“Adrien, listen to me, it’s not your fault!” Chloe quietly hissed.

“I know, it just felt so wrong, I mean, I don’t want that kind of relationship with Lila and when I told her so, she threatened me Chloe! When I told her that I didn’t want to be hers, she said she’d ruin my reputation, take away my friends and make me lonely all over again. She threatened Marinette, I’m sure of it now, and she even said that she’d make things worse for her if I didn’t ‘chose’ Lila. She said she’d do even more to hurt her. I mean, Chloe, Lila, she… she’s evil.”

Chloe frowned slightly as she put her hand on top of Adrien’s, “I can’t disagree. She’s a special kind of evil, but you realize that she won’t go down without a fight? You should tell Nathalie about this, and I’ll contact Sabrina’s father, discreetly of course.”

“Do, do we have to report it?” Adrien felt awful but embarrassed at the idea. “Does father have to know?”

“Adrien, we’ll do our best, but I’m sorry to say this but it sounds like right now it’s her word against yours and we need the adults on our side. Whoever speaks up first is who they’ll likely believe. They need to be aware of what happened. If we don’t report it, she could do that to others and she’ll never leave you alone. She could also carry out her threats with no one being the wiser. I know that your Father’s opinion and company is important to you, but I think YOU are more important to Uncle Gabriel.”

Adrien pouted, not feeling quite as certain about that.

But something in him rose to the surface as he whispered, “I don’t want to deal with this quietly Chloe, I want to deal with it, I just don’t know how.”

“Look, as far as your father is concerned, there would be a media fallout if we don’t act quickly, no matter what.” Chloe explained.

Adrien swallowed, “yeah, I know. I figured that out myself, but there’s more. She-she gave me until lunchtime to decide whether to date her and to let her… do that a-again… to me, or to… to suffer the consequences.”

Chloe seethed and a fire burned within her eyes. Her voice was still quiet (they had been whispering this whole time after all) as she flipped over her phone and tapped out of an app, but somehow her quiet voice sounded like an order as she told him, “Adrien, we need to report this and we need to come up with a plan.”

“A plan?”

“We need to make a plan to dethrone that Liar and expose her for what she is, an evil and manipulative beast! Simply reporting her isn’t enough!”

“Chloe, let’s think this through.” Adrien weakly argued.

“No Adrien, we’ve thought enough. Time is not on our side! Look, we have a few minutes before class, let’s go see Ms. Bustier in her office and let her know about this.” Chloe suggested.

“I don’t want to tell her.” Adrien muttered, “I want to tell as few people as possible, you can’t tell anyone Chloe!”

“Adrien, we have to. If we wait, Lila will get the jump on you and she’ll make herself out as the victim here!” Chloe exclaimed almost under her breath. “This will take some finesse, but I think that we can manage it. Lila needs to be publicly outed. At least text Nathalie about this, let her know that
we’ll handle it and we’ll tell some other ‘responsible adults’, you’ll let her know what you need and that I’m helping you. Then you and I can brainstorm up something.”

“But…” Adrien tried to make an excuse to not face the situation.

“NO Adrikins, I’m putting my foot down. This has to be dealt with, you know I’m right… don’t you?” She asked him directly but kindly as well. She put her hand on his shoulder for emphasis.

Adrien almost leaned away from her touch, but he saw her coming and he trusted Chloe, he had to realize that he had no reason to shrink from her for some reason as he nodded and pulled out his phone and stared at it. “Yeah, I… I guess so.” Adrien swallowed his pride and began composing a text to Nathalie.

Chloe grinned mischievously as she started typing on her phone, “Meanwhile I’m going to send this recording I made of our little conversation to my Daddy and Sabrina’s father.” Chloe calmly stated. “Daddy is responsible for all Parisians, including you, and Sabrina’s father is a Lieutenant on the police force and since he’s Sabrina’s Daddy, he’ll help us too!”

Before Adrien finished his text to Nathalie, Adrien gasped, “wait, you recorded that!”

Chloe rolled her eyes, “most of it of course. Since you didn’t know you were being recorded it’s kind of its own proof in a way.”

Adrien put down his phone, looked down at his feet and swallowed.

“Look, you said everything that you needed to practically and with their help we can control the media’s reports for the most part. If they’re warned that something major is going down in a few days, they’ll patiently wait for the truth to come out about our little liar over there.” Chloe nodded towards Lila. “We need the adults help here on this to get it done, I’ll explain it to my Daddy and I’m sure he’ll help us out.”

Adrien nodded, knowing that Chloe was right. “It—it won’t be easy but… I-I guess you’re right.” He answered reluctantly.

“As always.” She typed a short message and copied the file to her Daddy and Sabrina’s dad.

“Now, how shall we humiliate the she demon?” Chloe smiled deviously.

Chapter End Notes

Ah yes, another chapter that ran away with me and had to be cut in two, so sorry.

Anyhow, I'm so happy that Chloe is there for Adrien!

So, that means that the next chapter is written and requires just a final go through and a touch of editing. It's always turns out better when I take a day between the mostly done version and the final touch ups, editing and moving on to posting. I should have it out over the weekend. That means a Bonus posting for this fict on the way for the week because I couldn't put it down (sorry to the readers of my other active story, 'A Working Vacation', I had some writers block and I've only had so much time to write this week and the angst here was calling me, I'll work on my other story after posting this chapter, I'm ready to write some fluffier stuff now, promise!)
The Plotting Continues

Chapter Summary

Chloe is working with Adrien to be less wishy washy, he tries to calm her down and they come up with a plan.
Chloe convinces Nathalie to help them without reporting to Adrien's father 'diplomatically.'

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

“Now, how shall we humiliate the she demon?” Chloe had eagerly asked.

“Chloe, are you sure that’s necessary?” Adrien asked warily, almost automatically, “I’m not sure if that won’t make her worse…”

“How can she possibly get worse Adrikins?” Chloe looked at him skeptically.

He was quiet for a moment before responding, “you know, you have a point. Not doing anything just made everything worse didn’t it? Well, we need to do something then, maybe something here at school?” Adrien finally suggested cautiously.

“Nope, not big enough. Think BIGGER.” Chloe smirked. “Come on, you can do it Adrikins! Think about all those big claims that she’s made and how she’s been trying to put down yourself and certain other people.” Chloe looked back at Marinette’s empty chair briefly. “What would make the Liar Queen squirm the most?”

Still Adrien was resolute, “look, I don’t want to hurt anyone Chloe, I… I just want everyone to be safe and whatever happens, I don’t want it to blow up in our faces.”

“Okay, well then it’ll be revenge from me on your behalf and just deserts from you.” Chloe said flippantly, “but no one gets away with hurting my friend.”

“Isn’t all of that the same thing?” He asked wryly.

“Ugh! Come on Adrikins, what would be the most important thing to little miss lies-a-lot? What does she want most of all?”

“Well, when she threatened me, she wanted me to be…” he swallowed thoughtfully, “hers. She called me ‘My Adrien’ like she thought that I belonged to her.”

Chloe scoffed angrily, barely keeping her tone down, “of course, with you at her side she’d be the talk of Paris in her mind. She only sees what the media puts out about you, since you’re the darling rich model boy of Paris, son of the great Gabriel Agreste.” She said mockingly, “that liar cares nothing about the real dorky side of you! Living the high life of a celebrity teen would be her dream come true and I bet she sees you as her ticket to the ranks of us real celebrities! Like being with you would raise her pitiful status! That girl is nothing but a worthless, possessive, abusive, worse than a stalker fangirl and she needs to be stopped!” His old friend growled.
“Calm down Chloe! I agree, totally! I, well, we need to stop her. But like you said, we need to do it with what was it? Finesse?” Adrien thought carefully, “hmm… look, her biggest worry is probably finally not being able to defend all of her lies as they come undone, in front of everyone.”

“Can we work with that though?” Chloe leaned on her hand with the elbow on the desk in front of them with a smirk on her lips suggestively. “Think about it.”

Adrien looked thoughtful again and then his eyes lit up. “Hey, isn’t your father hosting the Mayor’s Ball Friday?”

Chloe grinned, “why Adrien, I didn’t think you had it in you!” She purred, “you’re like a brother to me, but not only is that brilliant, but taking her down in front of EVERYONE who is ANYONE, is SO HOT!”

Adrien chuckled and blushed a little, “that wasn’t my plan, but I think it’s the best idea, but it only gives us a couple days. The problem is that Lila might try to do something when I tell her no again after lunch.”

Chloe pressed her lips in contemplation, “Hmm, I hate to say this but we may have to act distant with each other at school for the rest of the week if she throws a hissy fit. It won’t be easy for you when everyone takes her side though.”

“You act like that is what WILL happen.” Adrien replied sadly.

“I’m good at reading crowds Adrikins and after what she probably did to Marinette and now you? They have a mob mentality when it comes to defending their royal little Liar after all. I don’t see how you’ll be able to avoid some sort of backlash at this point beforehand.” She looked at him sadly. “Honestly, the Ball would be the best place for this to go down, but it may very well bring out the ugly in everyone here until then, and I won’t be able to support you outwardly. Will you be able to handle that and maybe when they come begging for you to forgive them? I don’t know if I could.” She waved her hand like she was tossing everyone to the side.

Adrien thought about it and relented, “yeah, you’re right. No one would come to the Ball if my reputation at school is ruined and I’m involved with the invitations. I’d rather do this the smart way, not the easy way.”

“So, what’s the smart way?” Chloe asked him carefully.

“We’re doing good so far I think, but I… I should talk to someone here at school somehow.”

Chloe smiled at him genuinely, “I’m glad you figured that one out. Who though?”

“I’ll figure that out,” he told her resolutely, “I need your help arranging things for the Ball.”

“Then your other job will be keeping your chin up, knowing that I’ll BEE internally cheering for you Adrikins. The adults and I will handle the rest.” Chloe patted him on the shoulder, “I have faith in you to BEE able to handle the fallout and I’ll BEE there for you just in case.” She shot him a wink.

Adrien grinned at her puns.

She groaned as she realized what she had done, “ugh, you’re making me do that again! Psft, anything to see you smile I suppose. I’ll send out the invitations, can you get your father, I mean Nathalie, to help with the clothes for our classmates? Text her my number so I can coordinate with her. We simply must invite them to Daddy’s Ball, but we CANNOT let them come in terrible outfits, I won’t stand for it. Well, maybe they should come in older designs, they kind of deserve it, not that
they’ll know it.”

Adrien chuckled, “I’m texting Nathalie now, I’m letting her in on this but I’ll ask her to not tell my father, I want to do this ourselves.” He paused, “I don’t know how I can convince her to be patient and wait to tell him at the very least.”

Chloe grinned wickedly, “before you send that text, just give me her number, I’ll get her to cooperate and give us the couple days that we need.” She proudly stated.

“How?”

“I’m a Bourgeois and my mother’s daughter! Plus, I have an ace in the hole that I’ve been waiting to use.”

“How?”

“Just give me her number.” Chloe instructed.

Adrien shrugged and pulled up Nathalie’s contact on his phone. “Here you go.”

Chloe nodded, “give me a minute to convince her, then you can send her your email about all of this.”

Chloe typed away, depending on her awesome texting skills as she kept her screen away from Adrien because she didn’t need or want him to know what her ace was.

This is what Chloe texted Nathalie.

CB: Ms. Sanceour. This is Chloe Bourgeois, I have a proposition for you. Help Adrien and I with our plans to deal with Lila R., she is a threat to Adrien’s image to say the least. We need you to keep everything a secret from his father for the next few days and help us acquire some decent clothes for some classmates for the Mayor’s Ball. You can tell Uncle Gabriel what happened after we’ve demolished her. Adrien wants to handle this himself, but it will not be easy.

CB: My father the mayor and the police are helping us set this up and deal with any media backlash. This was and is not just a minor threat, but a personal one.

CB: Also, If you help us with this, I will refrain from telling Adrien how you forgot to buy a gift from his father last year and stole the gift from the girl that he likes, that blue scarf that he loves, and how you made him think that it came from his father.

CB: Besides that, we appreciate your help and Adrien needs it. Adrien may have a hard time at school over the next few days, but he is willing to do this to deal with the problem. Lila R. must go down for her evil deeds. He’ll explain shortly.

She sent the message and then smiled at Adrien. “Well, that’s that.”

“Should I send my message now?”

Chloe’s phone vibrated, she looked down and read Nathalie’s response.

NS: Very well. Please tell Adrien that I am here for him.

Chloe had a satisfied smirk on her face as she said, “go right ahead Adrikins, she’s in.”
Adrien couldn’t believe it, but he finally sent his more detailed message to Nathalie.

Then he glanced at his friend and hugged her briefly from the side, “thanks for being there for me Chloe, I’m feeling better now.” Thankfully everyone else in the room was looking elsewhere, meaning in Lila’s direction as she told another tall tale.

“Anything for you Adrikins.” Chloe answered as she typed out instructions to her Daddy as Ms. Bustier clapped her hands to bring the class to order. “Lila won’t know what hit her.”

Chapter End Notes

Don't worry, Marinette is still in this story. It's Wednesday, she'll be back Friday and Adrien will be seeing her after school most likely, but stuff will be happening before then...
Chloe's Checklist

Chapter Summary

Chloe's notes for class are more of a checklist of things she plans on doing to help her friend.
Also, Adrien decides on which adult he'll go to...

Chapter Notes

Sorry about the weird formatting, I tried really. It's hard to get summary type paragraphs, a list, comments or actions from things on the list and deal with texting conversations. I think it's understandable, even though I'm not the best about texting (I text like a grandma.)

So thanks for bearing with me, and I'll try to get out another 2 chapters within the next week instead of my usual two.

Now on with the story!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Adrien and Chloe were grinning through the start of class, using their phones and passing messages to each other for most of it. Already used to this behavior from Chloe, the teacher over looked it as Adrien kept notes on the one side and insisted that Chloe attempt to do the same.

Unfortunately for Mrs. Bustier, Chloe’s notes, with contributions from Adrien, went something like this…

Inform the adults – check

Get them on our side – check

Have Daddy expand the guest list – check

Oo! Include Lila’s parents! - check

Put a stranglehold on the media including hackers for the internet to control the news – check

Oo! Have a rewrite of the article that Adrien has been secretly dating Marinette be re-run! Fight fire with fire.

When Chloe had written that one, Adrien wrote her a text.
Adrikins: No Chloe! I don’t want to make things worse for Marinette and I don’t want to involve her!

The Queen: Yes A! If you have a secret girlfriend, it strengthens your position! Dupain Cheng won’t mind, I’m sure of it!

Adrikins: Nope, I’m not going to do that to her...

Adrikins: I don’t want to use her.

Adrikins: I-I just realized that I like her Chloe.

The Queen: Well finally. You’ve been all ‘she’s just a friend’ for ages. Are there any big plans to tell her?

Adrikins: What! No! I-I mean I-I like her, but I-I…

Chloe patted his hand reassuringly.

The Queen: So, you still don’t know for sure? Ugh, boys. Well, you can’t drag your feet on that. It pains me to say this but we really need to bring in Dupain-Cheng on this too. Didn’t the Liar threaten her too? On top of if you didn’t do what she demanded?

Adrikins: I’ll try to cat-ch her after basketball practice.

The Queen: Good. Get her to join us or at least ask her to be your date to Daddy’s Ball.

Adrikins: What! I can’t do that! I don’t even know if I love her!

The Queen: You don’t have to be in love to go on a date. Duh. That’s what dating is for! To get to know each other!

The Queen: Besides you need allies, the enemy of my enemy is my friend remember? Look, I’ll even contact your friend Kagami on this, I’m sure SHE at least wouldn’t mind helping. She likes conflict.

Adrikins: Yeah. She can tell you about the lie Lila told us the other day too.

The Queen: Excellent. I’ll see what I can do with that. Now get ready to woo Dupain-Cheng.

Adrikins: Woo Marinette? Chloe, she… she doesn’t see me like that!

Chloe pointedly looks at him in disbelief and then rolls her eyes.

The Queen: Still, get her permission to at least run the story and to come to the Ball ‘as your friend’ or whatever.

Adrikins: I’ll try to talk to her, but no promises okay Clo?

The Queen: That’s all that I ask.
Design invitations – check

Have Daddy’s secretary hand deliver the invite to the Liar’s parents -

Get printed invitations delivered before the end of school to distribute –

Invite the idiots to the Ball –

Talk to Kagami -

Adrien invites Marinette as his plus 1 –

Adrikins: Chloe!

The Queen: She deserves to be there, let her see you’re not a spineless wimp.

Adrikins: :-(

- Chloe rolls her eyes

The Queen: Just calling it like I see it. Gotta stand up for what’s worth standing up for and all, am I right?

- It took a moment for Adrien to reply…

Adrinkins: Yeah.

The Queen: Knew it! I’m saving this conversation.

- Adrien groaned quietly.

Back to the list…

Adrien pretends Lila has won and I bite my tongue –

Adrikins: What?

The Queen: I’ve got to stand aside and let things happen, even when she comes after you… ERRRRR…

Adrikins: lol, I’ll be fine Clo, I’ve had to deal with my Father during fashion week.

The Queen: I know you can deal for a few days but this isn’t like that. This is a trap we’ve got to set just right.

Adrikins: Well, you would know where to get the best Honey to attract her…

The Queen: Well, you are sitting right there.
• Adrien shivered.

The Queen: Sorry, too soon?

Adrikins: Yeah, a little, thanks for noticing.

The Queen: Let me know if I do something you’re uncomfortable with, I want to BEE there for you, not just because you’re so Sweet.

Adrikins: Clo!

The Queen: Whoops! Sorry!

• Chloe snorted and returned to her list.

Back to the list…

Bee all sweet and draw them all in with honeyed words –

Help Kim and Alix win the election –

Adrikins: Great idea!

The Queen: I know, I’m brilliant!

Back to the list…

Get the idiots all dressed to the nines in last years designs – lol

• “Chloe!” Adrien whispered, “that’s not very nice.”
• “We’re at war, I don’t do nice.” She replied with a huff.
• Adrien sighs and attempts to take more notes…

Back to the list...

Ideas…

Have Jagged Stone deny having ever met Lila or owning a cat –

Maybe ask him to say something about his favorite girl from our school? Besides me?

Ask Prince Ali how he met Lila, in front of her.

Have Mr. Damocles ask Lila’s parents about wherever she’s been.

Bee on the lookout for akumas!

…
Adrien also hid a quick text conversation with Nathalie from Chloe while Chloe took the reins in planning out their plan of attack. Nathalie was glad that he was reporting what happened to Sabrina’s dad, but she wanted him to go to a teacher or to Mr. Damocles too, even if they had to keep it under their hat.

Adrien explained things a little better and that he had also decided to tell Mr. Damocles already but was trying to come up with a way to do so privately so as to not draw attention to himself.

Nathalie was willing to agree to keep it from his father for a few days, especially once Adrien assured her that the Mayor would be reigning in the media on this.

As with an akuma attack halfway through class, Adrien asked Ms. Bustier if he could go to the nurse’s office to get away, he had a stomach ache.

Ms. Bustier dismissed him and Adrien quickly went to Mr. Damocles office.

As he walked there, Plagg talked to Adrien quietly from his shirt pocket. “I’m glad you’re finally doing something kid. But I want to ask, where does this put us in looking for Ladybug?”

“Plagg, I’m still looking for her. Master Fu said that I may need to expose Lila, so I’m doing that. I still want you to let me know though when I need to pay attention, just try not to be so harsh about it, Marinette and Tikki wouldn’t be happy if I get as scratched up as I did yesterday.”

Plagg patted Adrien through his shirt, “you got it kid. I’m proud of you.”

“Thanks, Plagg.”

Drawing up all his courage, Adrien knocked on Mr. Damocles door and he answered with, “Come in!”

Chapter End Notes

I also have figured out when another akuma will show up... that fight will begin in chapter 22.

I figured that the next chapter, chapter 21, needed to happen, so hence the delay. Originally chap 21 was only a few summary paragraphs, but I thought it'd be better to have a discussion with Mr. Damocles. (don’t hate me because I write talkative characters please!) Again, the Lila issue had to be properly addressed, and Adrien needed to speak for himself about this in detail...
A Talk With Mr. Damocles

Chapter Summary

The title says it all.
- ps, the chapter ends with a hint about where Marinette is!

Chapter Notes

As an apology for the last chapter's crazy formatting, here is a lengthy chapter, over 3300 words.

Of course, after all that homeschooling, I figured that Adrien has a near perfect memory so he can quote Lila's words easily.

This would be one of the hardest conversations Adrien had ever had, but he was determined to explain quickly what happened and how he wanted to deal with it.

“Ah, Adrien. What can I do for you today?” The kind principal waved Adrien to the chair before his desk as he took his own chair behind it.

Adrien quickly sat down and brought out his phone and hesitantly asked, “may I record this? I don’t want to have to repeat myself unnecessarily.”

Looking a little confused, Mr. Damocles nodded and then he took out his own phone and began recording as well.

“This way we’ll both have a copy.” Mr. Damocles noted.

Adrien nodded in agreement as they both set their phones on the large desk, “yes sir, the reason why I’m here is that I have something disturbing to report. First of all, I lied to Mrs. Bustier, I told her that I was going to the nurse so that I could come and speak with you instead.” Adrien rubbed his elbow to console himself, this wasn’t going to be easy… not at all. “I’m sorry about that, but you’ll understand why momentarily. If you would, please let me tell you everything before you ask any questions, I don’t want my absence from class to be noticed any more than necessary.”

Growing serious, Mr. Damocles took on the watchful eyes of his alter ego, THE OWL, as he listened carefully and only said, “go on. I’m listening.”

Adrien steeled himself and said, “this morning before school, Lila Rossi threw herself at me in the locker rooms. She’s been pressuring me for quite some time, for the last few weeks even, to be more than a classmate or a friend with her. She has constantly been pushing herself into my personal space, touching my arm lightly at times and has been going out of her way to be near me. I’ve been told that her behavior meant that she was flirting with me, I see that now, but it only made me feel
uncomfortable and I didn’t know what to do about it, I thought that if I didn’t respond or if I ignored it, she would stop.”

Mr. Damocles frowned, “but it got worse.”

“Yes sir, let me finish please. This isn’t easy.” Mr. Damocles nodded and Adrien continued, “this morning she cornered me by my locker and told me some tall tale about her sick kitten and how their dog was going to catch feline distemper. As she was talking, she uh… she started to put her hands on me Sir. On my chest and stomach especially, she also pressed herself up against me without my permission… and she touched me, intimately.” Adrien swallowed, “she also wrapped her other arm around me and hung on me Sir. At first, I froze, I’ve never had that happen before, it felt wrong and I didn’t know how to react. Eventually I told her to stop, repeatedly, but she told me that I wanted it, like all guys wanted it. She… she put her lips on my neck Sir. It made my skin crawl. But Rose, well, Rose came in and I thought that I was saved, but she misread the situation.”

Adrien paused to catch a breath, as Mr. Damocles noted. “You think that Rose thought that you and Miss Rossi were more than friends?” He delicately asked.

“Yes, she even said ‘excuse me!’ then squeaked and added ‘I’ll give you two some privacy!’ Then Rose left and I was left alone… with, with Lila.”

“You look uncomfortable.” Mr. Damocles noted.

“Very much Sir, I survived what she did, but I still feel… gross? Uncomfortable? Disgusted? Like I need to go and take a long shower maybe? But,” Adrien sighed, “there’s more.”

“Go ahead.” Mr. Damocles answered flatly.

“Well, I told her NO again, and managed to get away from between her and the locker by grabbing her wrists and prying her off of me. I let her go, but then she threw herself at me again. I had to grab her wrists again, to keep her from getting too close, I tried to be a gentleman Sir, I really tried and I told her that I didn’t mind being her friend or helping her with homework, but her behavior made me feel uncomfortable, that I didn’t like her lying to others that we were going out because she’s not my girlfriend. I doubt my father would like her at all, I know I don’t, ugh.”

Adrien felt the bile rise in his throat at the very idea.

“What happened next?” Mr. Damocles asked, distracting him and prodding him to go on.

“Well, she told me, and I quote ‘I only tell people what they want to hear Adrien.’ Then she called me ‘My Adrien’ and I told her that I’m not hers. Then she said and I quote ‘they want us together. So, who am I to object?’ She then she tried to kiss me again but I was able to keep her arms between us. Then I told her that I was NOT sorry, but I wasn’t interested in her that way and I wasn’t going to change my mind about that.”

Adrien took a deep breath, “she got angry of course and stopped pressuring me physically. I’m telling the truth here Sir, but I’m not sure what to think about how I answered to the next part. Lila implied that I wouldn’t mind if Marinette was trying to hold me like that, but uh, without even thinking I told her that Marinette wouldn’t have to throw herself at me like that.”

Adrien exhaled and explained, “it was at that moment that I realized that I like Marinette, that I wouldn’t mind hugging her or holding her if she wanted that, but I uh, I’m confused about those feelings Sir, Marinette and I aren’t like that, the media has speculated of course, but we were just friends and right now we’re still only good friends, so please don’t tell her that… that I like her.” Mr.
Damocles nodded that he would respect Adrien’s wishes, “after what happened with Lila though, I’m not sure how I feel about anything Sir. I still like Mari though, but I don’t know what to do going forward just yet. I-I don’t want to tell her what happened.”

Adrien looked distracted for a moment as he tried to think of how he would tell Marinette, if he ever did. The whole thing made him feel dirty and he didn’t want to upset her or make her think less of him.

“That’s understandable and I won’t tell Miss Dupain-Cheng how your feelings for her have grown or about this. This is a private meeting as long as that’s what you want. Now I must ask, was that all that happened?” Mr. Damocles asked as he arched his eyebrow.

“Unfortunately, no Sir. Lila could tell from my reaction to her comment about Marinette that I wasn’t against the idea of,” Adrien swallowed, “of someday having a different sort of relationship with Marinette… maybe?” Adrien felt bad about feeling so uncertain, but he still harbored feelings for his Lady, what happened today made him unsure for some reason and he was so confused…

“May I point out for the record that you’re blushing Mr. Agreste.”

“Aw, Sir. Please don’t.” Adrien sighed.

Mr. Damocles chuckled, “just trying to be truthful and to lighten the mood, please go on.”

“Yes Sir. Lila was upset of course that I like Marinette. Uh, then she proceeded to say that I,” Adrien gulped, “that I l-love her, meaning Marinette, but then she called Marinette ‘trash’ and I told her to leave Marinette out of it.”

“How did Miss Rossi respond to that?”

“She gave me two options, she said and I quote, ‘either you’re with me or you’re against me, but be warned, if you don’t choose me, you’ll lose your precious good image and your friends, including Marinette.’ Then she said, and I quote ‘either you’re my boyfriend and you return my advances, or you’re the boy that toyed with my heart, used me and pushed me away like trash. Your reputation here at school will be ruined, I’ll take away your friends,’ then she said that I’d be all alone and my father would take me out of school in disgrace.”

Adrien sighed, “she’s not wrong there Sir. If this isn’t handled properly, it’s likely that my father will take me out of school and may even blame me for this happening, for allowing myself to get into a compromising situation.”

Mr. Damocles interrupted, “Adrien, you must understand, this isn’t your fault. I’ve had other complaints about Miss Rossi, not to this degree perhaps, but, uh, you’re not the only one she has threatened.”

Adrien looked into his principals’ eyes and sat up straighter, “you’re talking about Marinette, aren’t you?”

Mr. Damocles looked away briefly, “I’m afraid that I cannot comment on your classmate’s situation. She had a right to her own privacy and wishes.”

Plagg gave Adrien a light scratch.

Adrien frowned and nodded. “Yes Sir, thank you for looking out for her. She hasn’t said anything, but the rest of what Lila said kind of confirmed that she had threatened Marinette before.”
“Oh?”

“Yes, Lila was convinced that I… that I love Marinette, even going so far as to call her my girlfriend. When she threatened me she also threatened that Marinette would really find out what it was like to be her enemy and she said, and I quote, ‘I’ve seen you look at her and you better start looking like that at me! Because once I’m done with her, no one will want to be in the same room with her, unless you choose me, of course.’ Then she walked away, turned to leer at me like I was a piece of meat and then Lila told me that I had until lunch to make my decision. As she left she blew a kiss at me and she FINALLY left me alone.” Adrien exhaled like he’d finally let go of a huge burden, having shared so much.

Mr. Damocles nodded, “and all of this happened this morning?”

“Yes, Sir.”

“And you haven’t led her on?”

“NO SIR! I didn’t realize that what she was doing before bordered on being inappropriate, but she kept leaning into my space and touching my arm before this happened when we were in class and she’d stand closely to me and take my arm if she could before this happened too. Recently a, a friend said that her behavior and my not telling her no made it look like I wanted to have a relationship with her, but it’s not true Sir! I do not, nor have I ever liked Lila Rossi! She made me feel uncomfortable before this morning, but I didn’t know if I could or should say something, I thought that if I ignored it, she’d stop, but she got worse.”

“So, you’ve never initiated a hug or a kiss with Miss Rossi?”

“NO SIR! I have NEVER thought of her that way. I’ve never even taken her hand to lead her somewhere!” Adrien nervously rubbed the back of his neck, “I’ve really only done something remotely like that with Marinette, and that kiss we almost had, between Marinette and I, was supposed to be for that movie we made a while back, but… but we were interrupted.” He added irritably.

“I’m sorry Adrien, but I’m trying to establish that you were not pursing Lila.”

“I haven’t been pursing anyone Sir! I’ve had the feeling that my father wouldn’t like me dating, I’m always so busy and I wasn’t really ready for that. I’ve tried to date once, kind of, but it was a double date, I went with Kagami and Marinette went with Luka to support me since I was nervous and I wasn’t ready to go with Kagami on my own. We’re just friends now too though.”

“Marinette is awfully supportive of you.” Mr. Damocles noted with a wry grin as Adrien nodded yes and blushed slightly. “Didn’t you go to the movies with Miss Duapin-Cheng a while back though?”

“She was just being a good friend,” Adrien explained, “there was a new ad campaign and there were a lot of fans that were following me around and wouldn’t leave me alone. I ran into Marinette and asked her for her help, she helped me escape by hiding in a dry water fountain at the park, then helped by putting together some disguises so that I could go and see a movie that was playing in the theater. It was only showing that day and it had my mother in it, I’d never seen it before and Marinette was willing to risk going with me. I wouldn’t be surprised if the media brings that up again honestly. We had hardly been in the theater for ten minutes before we were seen though and my akumatized bodyguard came and kidnapped me.”

“Ah yes, I remember that part. I already know the answer, but I must ask, where was your bodyguard during this morning’s incident?”
“As you know, he doesn’t come on school grounds since my father was told that school was a safe place.” Adrien said ironically.

Mr. Damocles sighed, “I’m sorry that it wasn’t for you young man, and thank you for coming forward, I can at least alert the teachers to keep an eye out for Miss Rossi, but what else we do depends on you Adrien.”

Adrien swallowed, “I don’t want this to be publicized Sir.”

“I assumed so, but it takes a great deal of personal character to come forward and I am proud of you for doing that at least. Obviously by law I am required to report this incident, however, the law is clear that the victim’s rights come first.”

“Victim?” Adrien’s throat dried up, he’d never really thought of himself that way before.

“Yes, you have been victimized, but you should not be ashamed. It’s not your fault.” Mr. Damocles softly explained, “what happened is a form of sexual harassment at the very least, some would even say that it was sexual assault as she put her hands on you. You may choose to remain anonymous for the report, especially considering your age, but I must be honest when I tell you that if you do so, it will become harder to prosecute her legally or punish her for this.”

Adrien swallowed, “actually, we’ve thought of that.”

“We? Whom else have you told?”

“I told Chloe as soon as I got to class today Sir, she’s the one that has encouraged me to come forward and to not take this laying down. She recorded most of our conversation when I told her and has sent copies of it to her father and Sabrina’s dad, so the police have been alerted as well. I’ve also told Nathalie. They can help us and help protect my professional reputation. With Chloe’s help, I’ve decided that going the legal route may not be as effective as exposing Lila’s lies.”

“Ah yes, I’m aware that Miss Rossi has a tendency to exaggerate.” Mr. Damocles admitted, “but unfortunately it’s difficult to punish a student for making up stories.”

“Sir, she LIES. That kitten she mentioned earlier or her dog? I doubt she has any pets. She’s lied about knowing the reigning fencing champion in Italy, she told Kagami and I about ‘him’ yesterday. But the last male fencing champion is dead and the current champion of the last twelve years is a woman.”

“Very well, but back to the issue at hand. What do you want me to do Adrien? We need to protect you, but I’m assuming that you don’t want your peers to know about this? Or your father?”

“If at all possible, I don’t want them to know. It-it would be too obvious to change classes. The thing is, my assigned seat is next to Lila though and I don’t want to be anywhere near her. Since Sabrina is sick, I’m sitting next to Chloe today.”

Mr. Damocles nodded. “I can speak with Mrs. Bustier and Mrs. Mendeleiev, we can have the seating arrangements changed, although I know that was done recently, I think we can come up with another reason for it.”

“I’m also worried Sir, Lila is running for the position of class representative, I don’t feel comfortable with her having Marinette’s old job.”

“I’ll speak with Mrs. Bustier, but I cannot take her out of the running without calling attention to all of this without an explanation.” Mr. Damocles frowned.
“Chloe plans to back up Kim and Alix, they’re running too.” Adrien looked sad, “I wish Marinette felt comfortable keeping the job though, but Lila has managed to tarnish her reputation and made her feel so… so alone. I don’t know how she’ll be able to make things worse for her, but I don’t plan to give into her threats.”

“I could send Lila home for a few days to investigate your allegations. But, doing so will bring the situation to light to some degree,” Mr. Damocles warned, “knowing Miss Rossi she’ll put her own spin on what happened and at best she would only get a slap on the wrist, because honestly Adrien, while you give a detailed testimony, remaining anonymous leaves me or the police with very little to work with.”

“I realized that Sir, so Chloe and I came up with a way where we could do something about her, her lies and her threats.”

Mr. Damocles eyebrows rose, “do tell.”

Adrien explained their plans. To expose several of Lila’s lies at the Mayor’s Ball and to invite Lila’s parents. How the Mayor, Sabrina’s dad and the police would control the media beyond the school’s walls until the Ball and how Nathalie will help everyone be properly dressed for the Mayor’s Ball and would try to not tell his Father about what happened until after the fact.

“Are you sure that you want to keep this from your Father?” Mr. Damocles asked.

“We’ll let him know eventually, but I want to take care of this my way.” Adrien told him.

“Very well, but actually, I have one request, may I come to the Ball as well?” Mr. Damocles asked with a small grin, “every time I call her mother, Lila answers and I still haven’t received a good excuse for all of Lila’s excessive absences last semester in writing or from her mother directly. If her mother doesn’t have a suitable explanation, perhaps we can work with that to punish Lila. She could be held back a year for the excessive absences and I will have to talk to the school board about allowing her back to our school over just that.”

“Actually sir, I’d love for you to do that, but maybe you can talk to her mother after we’re done debunking her other lies, she’s used her stories to gain a sort of fan club and losing their support may be the best sort of punishment of all.”

Mr. Damocles nodded. “Anything else?”

“I suspect that Lila will try and make me look bad about not agreeing to be her boyfriend to use the term loosely.” Adrien frowned slightly, “she’ll probably go after Marinette too.”

“Can I give you my advice?” Mr. Damocles asked and Adrien nodded, “speak to Marinette.”

Plagg scratched Adrien deeply immediately.

“I-I plan to sir. I want to let her know what we’re planning and to see if she wants to help us, but also, I’ve been worried about her. I don’t know why she’s not at school today.”

Mr. Damocles sighed as he twiddled his fingers and finally said, “has anyone said that specifically?”

“That she’s not at school? Well, she’s not at this school today.” Adrien said slowly as he came to a realization and he felt yet another deep scratch on his chest from Plagg when he asked almost in despair, “Sir, has Marinette gone to another school?!”
Ah, Adrien grows yet again. He figured out something... sort of. Marinette is due to be back Friday. In the story it's still Wednesday.

Also, sorry that Mr. Damocles kind of has his hands tied, I figured I'd make that as close to reality as possible and they really need victims to come forward usually to do anything (here in the USA that is), Adrien doesn't want to risk his reputation if at all possible, his father wouldn't want that and it's embarrassing and in this story there are alternatives. Adrien doesn't want to pursue something that likely won't work either, so long as he doesn't have to sit near Lila and they can take her down otherwise. It's a bonus that Mr. Damocles is aware of the situation now and can help with Lila's parents.

I love how he figured out he likes Marinette though and that's a big thing he's considering on his mind, he's just too confused about what to do about it all still. Eh, guess you can't have everything, but it's something right?
Chapter Summary

Adrien returns to class and an akuma shows up.
Queen Bee has to fight the akumatized victim on her own and barely stays one step ahead...

Chapter Notes

Well, this is a regular length chapter. Just a warning, I'll probably post the next chapter in 5 days or so unless I miraculously find some time and get some extra and unexpected time to write this weekend lol.

Thank you all for the great comments, the kudos and support!

Mr. Damocles wouldn’t answer Adrien’s question about Marinette attending another school with words, but he had given Adrien a small nod that might have been a yes. He cited Marinette’s privacy rights and told Adrien to ask her himself, again.

Of course, Plagg had scratched Adrien, again. Adrien of course was confused by the action and he was kind of worn out after their loaded discussion, so he barely noticed.

Still, Adrien felt better that Mr. Damocles was there for him, well, as much as Adrien allowed him to be anyway.

Thus, the meeting ended as Mr. Damocles reluctantly agreed to do as Adrien asked, promising to help however he could but insisted upon privately questioning Rose about what she saw and then he gave Adrien his private cell phone number in case he would allow him to help further. He also reminded Adrien that he would have to file a complaint about Lila’s abusive behavior, alert the school’s teachers to keep an eye out for her for now, and to send a report to the school administrators and the police but that would take time, perhaps weeks, especially since Adrien wished to remain anonymous. Still, it left no guarantee that something could be done legally.

Mr. Damocles asked a final time if this was what Adrien wanted, Adrien replied that it was and Mr. Damocles reluctantly agreed to keep the report anonymous for Adrien’s sake, only Mr. Damocles would know that it was Adrien who reported ‘the incident.’

…

That was how after less than thirty minutes, Mr. Damocles wrote a pass for Adrien with a note for Mrs. Bustier, which didn’t explain the situation, only that he had delayed Adrien from returning to class after seeing the nurse and to please excuse him. Mrs. Bustier had taken the note, read it and nodded to Adrien to return to his seat.
Adrien gratefully managed to cross the room without disturbing anyone because everyone was working in groups when he got back and Chloe had arranged for him to join her and Sabrina. Since Sabrina was out sick, that meant that Chloe had been working on her phone and her to do list instead of the project while he was gone. Obviously, Mrs. Bustier had high hopes that Adrien would get Chloe to put in some more effort of her own… again.

*If only she knew.* Adrien though randomly, wondering how Mrs. Bustier would react if she ever knew everything that had happened this morning.

“Come on Adrikins! We’re finally in a group together!” Chloe called out happily when she saw him arrive so he rolled his eyes lightly and he chuckled to himself, feeling much more like himself now after speaking with Mr. Damocles as he walked over to his new seat.

“Psst!” Nino quietly called out as Adrien passed him by and mouthed ‘Sorry, Dude! Chloe, am I right?’ Adrien shook his head at the irony, but as he sat down at his temporary seat, he pulled out and pointed at his phone.

Nino understood the unspoken ‘Text you later’ and he nodded in the affirmative as he turned back to Alya, Lila and Nathanuel.

“Look! I even wrote our names on the assignment!” Chloe boasted like she’d done a lot of work. Then she winked at him as he sat down and whispered, “I got SO much done while you were gone.” She waved at her phone and her list. Adrien chuckled finding that he liked this new dynamic they had going.

…

A few minutes later, after Adrien finally got Chloe to review the assignment together and they emailed Sabrina about their project, Adrien was able to deal with something that was on his mind.

“Hey Clo,” Adrien whispered, “can I have a few minutes to text Nino?”

“Adri-Honey, I don’t know why you bother, but sure.” Chloe shrugged, “I’ve got a few more things to arrange anyway.” She waved her phone happily, Adrien wondered if she was enjoying this a bit too much… *nahh.*

“He’s my friend Clo, but thanks.”

“Whatever.” Chloe waved it off but gave him a small smile as she kept texting on her phone.

Chloe didn’t know how to handle thanks or praise, which he understood, but Adrien was very thankful for her today so he just smiled back and quickly pulled out his own phone. Looking over to see that Nino would be able to hide his phone from both Alya and Lila, Adrien risked texting his best friend.

…

Adrien: Bro. Just wanted to warn you. Someone is about to get mad at me and accuse me of something that’s not true.

Best Bro: Dude, who’d be mad at you, besides your Dad?

Adrien: Can’t tell you now. It’s not my Father though, unless he finds out what really happened, but… there is too much to tell. But you know me Dude. I’m trusting that you’ll be there for me and you’ll be able to believe me.
Best Bro: Totally Dude! Count on me.

Adrien: Thanks.

Adrien could only hope that Nino would still be there for him in a few hours, after Lila did whatever she was planning on doing…

…

Adrien managed to get Chloe away from her phone to work on their project for an hour, and they surprisingly got a lot of it done together since the topic was on fashion, of all things, something they both knew entirely too much about.

Adrien was finally beginning to relax, happy that Chloe was on his side and it looked like Nino would be too. Of course, since it was towards the end of class, the akuma alarm went off.

“Excuse me Miss! Duty calls!” Chloe jumped up from her seat and ran off to transform.

“Yes, very well Chloe.” Mrs. Bustier said, “now everyone, let’s head to the evacuation point!”

Adrien watched Chloe leave to deal with the akuma without giving an excuse with a strange pang of jealousy, but he was thankful that she was there to help his Lady.

This was the first time that Adrien stuck around to see what an evacuation was like. He wasn’t too surprised that Rose and Mylene had frozen with fear, so Adrien picked up Rose and Ivan carried his girlfriend as they followed their class to evacuate the school. Which wasn’t easy, because as they got out into the hall, they found these giant globs of a deep green goo scattered around, oozing little tendrils of ooze as they reached out to connect to each other.

The goo practically had a pulse, as if it were a living... thing. There were also smaller fist sized balls of goo splattered on the walls, the same strange tendrils spreading away from them to connect with the other globs of goo. It didn’t take too long for everyone to realize that touching the goo or one of the tendrils oozing from the globs made it attack, capturing anyone that it touched it and turned them into one of the giant globs of goo fairly quickly.

The akuma of course was there and he laughed, “none of you could stick to your seats so now you’ll be stuck where you are forever!”

Ms. Bustier was the first one hit from their class as she tried to protect her students. The goo spread over her in less than ten seconds!

Everyone ran as the akuma shot at people’s feet with small globs of goo from the small beaker that seemed to produce it.

“I am The GOO Teacher and I will make everyone stick to their school work and to their seats!” The akuma proclaimed, Adrien recognized the green haired, clown faced man as a substitute that wasn’t very good at keeping his students in line. He managed to dodge a shot as Queen Bee showed up and she began to fight the akumatized victim in hand to hand combat.

Adrien wondered, why doesn’t she just use her special ability?

Still, it was mayhem and Adrien had to stay out of reach of the growing goo and to lead what was the rest of their class to safety. Most of their class had escaped through the front entrance, but The GOO Teacher blocked it with a wall of goo. Adrien ran back to a classroom, leading Kim and Alix to a window and he helped them escape, passing Rose to Kim to get her out of there.
The hero in him however, wanted to help, so he returned to the scene of the fight. The goo on the ground was growing, Adrien hopped on some railing to stay out of reach as he called out, “Chloe! Use your power!”

“I can’t!” She screamed as she flew by him before darting back to kick the akuma in the face, causing him to fall down for a moment.

Confused, Adrien yelled out at her, “well, what can I do to help?”

They were the last ones in the courtyard that weren’t frozen. The akuma was too busy with Queen Bee to pay attention to Adrien.

Chloe was using her weapon to stay ahead of the akuma, still fighting her hardest, but she was getting winded, it was getting harder to avoid the growing and pulsing goo. Realizing that everyone was frozen solid, on her next pass by Adrien she screeched something that he never thought that she’d ever say…

“You wanna help? Get your cute little cat butt out here! We need to get rid of the goo!”

“What!” Adrien yelled at her in shock.

“You heard me!” She answered as she attacked the akuma head on as she added, “Ladybug won’t be here for twenty minutes!”

Chapter End Notes

Oh, I'm assuming that Queen Bee's attack only lasts for about five minutes until she de-transforms, it seems like too much of a good ability otherwise, but that's why she can't use it, how she knows that isn't enough time, well, that'll be discussed later, he hee.

P.S. This is probably one of my better Akuma names, The Goo Teacher, well, it's definitely a step up from Tiger-man...
Ladybug Returns

Chapter Summary

The Goo Teacher is attacking and Queen Bee has told Adrien to 'Get your cute little cat butt out here!' in a moment of desperation. She is facing her greatest enemy after all, something icky, dirty and gross! Adrien leaves and returns as Chat Noir, and he helps to defeat The Goo Teacher. As the title states, Ladybug returns in this chapter, as does someone else...

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

“What do you mean she won’t be here for twenty minutes!?” Adrien yelled back at Queen Bee.

“Forget it! I could use a little help here!” Queen Bee yelled back.

Adrien groaned and then ran towards an empty classroom to transform since it seemed like Chloe knew more than she had previously let on, how embarrassing! He mentally chided himself.

“I can’t believe this! How does she know who I am and that Ladybug is running late? Does SHE know who my Lady is?” Adrien whined as he entered the classroom.

Plagg merely snorted and guffawed.

“Plagg! Ugh! Come on, there’s no time for that, Chloe needs us Plagg!”

“She sure does! Looks like the…” Plagg started.

“Not now Plagg! Claws out!”

“Adrien!!! Take it Eeasy!” Plagg cried out as he was sucked into Adrien’s ring and he was transformed into Chat Noir.

Chat Noir quickly checked his baton and sure enough, Ladybug hadn’t transformed. He’d have to race in there, help to get the situation under control and then get out of there before Ladybug arrived.

Adrien shook his head, in complete and utter disbelief that Chloe of all people had discovered his greatest secret, but he tried not to think about that as he charged out into the courtyard, only to be hit by a flying Queen Bee. They landed on one of the tendrils left by the Ooze balls and both were quickly sucked into a growing pile of goo underneath them.

“Use your Cataclysm you dumb cat!” Queen Bee ordered. “Ugh! My HAIR!”

“Hey, BEE nice! I’m on it!” Chat Noir yelled back as the goo climbed their chests, “CATAclySM!” He called out to activate his power and he hit the goo on their bodies, as he tried to focus the negative energy.

Much to Adrien’s surprise, his attack was VERY effective.
The goo disintegrated, and since it was all connected, it released all of the hostages, but his attack also went on and affected the school…

The whole building turned black and turned to dust, the ground rocked as cracks traveled across the city, across roads and through buildings for kilometers around the school as if a bomb went off. The school quickly became a blackened pit with the cracks radiating from it. It was worse than what Plagg had done on his own when Style Queen had attacked. Even the nearby buildings rusted and decayed from the destructive power.

As Chat Noir and Queen Bee stood up, flabbergasted at what had just happened, they were like ants in the giant chasm left behind after all, surrounded by the freed students and faculty as the akuma himself groaned and stumbled, unable yet to get back up on his feet.

Queen Bee snorted, “well, that’s one way to get out of school!”

Chat Noir groaned and lowered his head in shame. “I didn’t mean it do that!”

Queen Bee tried to cover her mouth as she chuckled some more, trying to spare Adrien, just a little bit. “You’ve got to admit though, it’s a goo reason to BEE missing class.” She offered and Chat Noir smiled slightly and rolled his eyes.

“Not bad.” He commented.

The students freed from the goo however, looked around in disbelief and a moment later, they all cheered.

“Well, you just fulfilled every student’s fantasy now Chat Noir, school is officially out.” Queen Bee chuckled as she waved it off, “you better get out of here though, Ladybug should be on her way shortly. I got it from here cat!” Chloe then quickly raced to the disoriented Akuma as she spoke and tied him up with the string from her spinning top like weapon.

“But we need to talk, Chl… I mean Queen Bee.” Chat Noir tried to say.

His Miraculous beeped twice, more insistent than usual. Where did my first beep go?

“Ugh, stop by my house later.” Queen Bee groaned with a wave as she sat on the back of the akuma, the akumatized item itself, a beaker, was sitting a few feet away. The akuma was too worn out to struggle and seemed to accept his fate.

“Ladybug is going to hear about this soon enough and will be on her way.” Queen Bee continued as she looked at him knowingly and Adrien got the distinct feeling that she knew he wasn’t supposed to be transformed when Ladybug was. “Now scat cat!”

His Miraculous beeped four times, “fine, I’ll see you later.” Chat Noir frowned as he whipped out his baton and vaulted into a nearby alley to de-transform.

…

“Plagg! What’s up? Why did I only have a few minutes?”

“Cheeze!” Plagg whined and Adrien frowned, realizing he’d forgotten his bag.

“Sorry Plagg, I forgot my bag.”

Plagg groaned, “Kid, have some respect! I’m sick remember? Not like I could have held your
transformation and kept it intact anyway. You’ll just have to get me something somewhere else, ugh, I miss my Camembert!”

“Oh, yeah, sorry.” Adrien started walking towards where the school used to stand, and seeing the bakery on the way, glad that it had mostly been untouched by the blast of his cataclysm, he stopped in since they were still open for business.

“Hey, can I get another cheese Danish and a croissant?” He asked Tom.

“Sure thing, son.” Tom’s face grew serious for a moment as he wrapped up his order and Adrien paid.

“Thanks. Say Hi to Marinette for me?” Adrien asked and Tom nodded with a small smile.

“Sure thing.” Tom answered somewhat sadly though as Adrien waved goodbye and then left.

Knowing that Ladybug should be arriving to fix things soon enough, Adrien stopped behind the remains of a blackened tree on the way to feed Plagg his Danish, which he ate quickly.

“Hey Plagg, how do you think Chloe knew that Ladybug wouldn’t be there for awhile, giving us enough time to help out?”

His kwami was oozing darkness again and he shrugged before floating back into Adrien’s pocket, “you got me kid and if I did know, I probably couldn’t say.”

Adrien briefly worried about his kwami, usually he didn’t look that bad until the evening, he wondered if the attack had been too much for him or if there was something else that had happened, but he knew that Plagg wouldn’t say, so he tried to focus on the matter at hand.

“Do you think that she might know who Ladybug is too?” Adrien whispered as left his hiding spot and returned to the flattened area that was the school. “I still have to find and help her.”

Plagg patted Adrien twice thoughtfully since there were several people and students around now, then Plagg gave Adrien a light scratch, as if he were saying ‘yeah, Chloe probably knows’.

Adrien looked around and found his class, Mrs. Bustier was gathering them together on the sidelines, but several students were still missing. Mr. Damocles came over and took her to the side to speak with her for some reason.

Queen Bee looked bored as she sat on the akuma’s back as she inspected her fingers as if looking at her nails again. Her weapon acting as an effective lasso.

Then they heard the familiar whizzing sound of Ladybug’s yo-yo and she landed beside Queen Bee.

“Oh, there you are! Look what me and the cat dragged in!” Chloe proudly showed off the growling akumatized substitute teacher beneath her.

Ladybug seemed amused, “thanks Queen Bee, you really saved the day. If you see Chat Noir before I do, please pass on my thanks to him too.”

Chloe nodded and grinned, “I’m just glad to be of service Ladybug!”

With Ladybug’s arrival, the students on the sidelines drew closer and approached the heroes, with some of them calling out their thanks as the crowd grew. But the heroes seemed to tune them out as they talked and went on to save the day.
“There’s the item!” Chloe pointed at the nearby beaker. “This one called himself ‘The Goo Teacher,’ it was disgusting! Blech! My hair barely survived intact!”

Ladybug chuckled, “well, your hair looks nice now.”

“Of course it does! Thankfully, that cat showed up to clean up a bit.”

“Is that what happened to the school?” Ladybug asked as she picked up the beaker and looked around at the dust everywhere and the blast like crater they were effectively standing in.

“Yep, I even got to use that new nickname for him.” She teased as she grinned at Ladybug.

Ladybug cowered for a moment at the news before turning to face Queen Bee. “Oh no, you did not!”

With a quick glance at Adrien, Queen Bee looked back at Ladybug and grinned, “hey, you’re the one who said he had a, and I quote here, ‘a cute kitten butt’ to begin with.” She made quotation marks with her hands to emphasize the comment as she added, “own the truth LB, don’t hide it.”

Ladybug blushed deeply and covered her face with one hand as she muttered, “I can’t believe this is happening.”

Which was exactly what Adrien had been thinking.

Plagg woke him from his shock though with another scratch as his mind went a kilometer a minute, wait, where have I heard my backside being described like that before?

“Hey, I can’t help it if you think that our last and only male member of the team is a fine model example of the male figure.” Queen Bee teased as she tried to draw an outline of a guy in the air with her hands, but failed miserably. “Although I’ll admit, for a mangy cat he is kind of hot.”

“Dude!” Adrien heard Nino mutter a few steps behind him as Chloe talked, “what about Carapace?”

Plagg scratched him, but in a light wide manner across his chest, not down, as if to say that’s important but not really related to Ladybug herself. *Oh yeah, didn’t Master Fu say that Carapace and Rena had lost Ladybug’s confidence, wait, and Chloe knows about that too?!

Alya tried to call out to the heroes for an interview from the back of the crowd, but her pleas were either ignored or unheard. She was having no luck getting through the crowd it seemed.

Adrien thanked his father in that moment for all the model training that he ever had, it was all that kept him from revealing himself by all the strangely sweet and embarrassing comments coming from the heroines before him. Ordinarily they would have been creepy from anyone else, but he knew this was Queen Bee’s way of both teasing him and letting him know that Ladybug had noticed him! He couldn’t believe it, Master Fu had hinted that something had been changing in their dynamic, but this was too good to be true! The fact that Ladybug liked him was confirmed!

Adrien could die happy. *Wait, no, I’ve got a job to do.* He reminded himself with a small grin. *I can scream into my pillow later and drive Plagg nuts as I wax poetically about our love later.*

Meanwhile, Ladybug almost whined, “please don’t let that get back to him Queen Bee! Chat’s head will get paws-itive too big if he knows that I find him attractive!” Her eyes bugged out as she realized what she had done as she quickly slapped her hand to her mouth as if she had cursed or something.
“Well then, it looks like your Kitty problem is rubbing off on you.” Queen Bee looked a little sheepish as she waved out towards the crowd, “but, maybe we shouldn’t have this talk in front of the masses.”

Ladybug just sighed as she dropped her hand and shook her head as she held the beaker with both hands, preparing to break it.

“Adrien!” A banshee like voice called out and Adrien shuttered as Lila appeared and called out to him from the other side of the crowd. “I’ve been looking EVERYWHERE for you sweetheart!”

Chapter End Notes

First of all, Plagg looks awful because he’s been away from Tikki for so long, usually they can cuddle a bit during school, but since Marinette isn’t there, Tikki isn’t either. Releasing some negative energy by using Cataclysm has actually helped him a bit, not that Adrien had noticed, because it is hard for him to control his own powers and using it to that extent let him sort of release a pressure valve.

I tried to have a little fun with this chapter because the next chapter is shaping up to be somewhat... interesting, this Lila will be at her ‘finest.’ Will she go too far? Is there a too far to her? Eh... probably not.
And Tongues Will Wag

Chapter Summary

AKA... Adrien vs. Lila, round 2
Score: Adrien 0 and Lila 1 ... so far.
Points double for each round. So this round counts for 2. Who will be victorious?
Adrien denies that Lila is his girlfriend. What will she say?

Chapter Notes

Warning, this is a pretty angsty chapter.

Now, let's see who will be ahead at the end of the chapter. Dun, Dun DUN!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

“Adrien!” A banshee like voice had just called out and Adrien shuttered as Lila appeared at the other edge of the crowd and called out to him. “I've been looking everywhere for you sweetheart!”

Adrien looked around, he was now cornered by the crowd and couldn’t get away, but thankfully that meant that Lila would have to fight her way to get to him.

Why now? He thought, I was hoping to, I don’t know, say Hi to Ladybug, not deal with Lila! I truly have the worst luck!

Before he could try to run though, he was distracted by Ladybug as she quickly called upon her Lucky Charm power, and a small clock fell out of the sky.

“I guess that means that it’s time to wrap this up.” Ladybug commented quietly with a small frown as she broke the beaker with her foot. A dark butterfly flew out and she cleansed the akuma before she called upon her special ability to cleanse the city and restored the school as she called out, “Miraculous Ladybug!”

She certainly sounded like she was in a rush to Adrien.

It was the first time though that the effects of the Miraculous cleansing was met with so many groans. The school was back, as pristine as ever, and classes would obviously resume, much to the displeasure of many of the students.

“Ladybug! Can I have an interview?” Alya called out as she came rushing forward from the crowd, finally getting close enough to be heard.

Adrien thought he imagined it as Ladybug rolled her eyes and ignored Alya as she quickly frowned at Lila as she drew closer to Adrien.

“Adrien Sweetheart!” Lila called out.
Adrien frowned, risking his father’s outrage at the momentary lapse, but he schooled his looks and answered the liar loudly and frankly. “Don’t call me that Lila. You’re not my girlfriend.”

Even though he knew she had to have heard him, she kept coming.

Lila finally made it through the crowd and sauntered up to him, then latched herself onto his arm, despite his trying to get away from her. Let GO of me!

“Oh, my Adrien! I forgot that you wanted to keep our relationship top secret. Whoops!” She tried to cover her mouth prettily as if embarrassed, but he knew that she wasn’t.

Adrien knew now that her behavior was likely a calculated move after all.

“Last chance.” Lila stood on her toes as she forcefully pulled him down and whispered in his ear, in a move that almost looked like she was kissing him.

Adrien tried to pull away from Lila with a controlled look of ‘does something smell around here?’ or at least a mild look of revulsion. It was the nicest face that he could manage at the moment. He was still trying to maintain some semblance of his public image after all.

Unfortunately, Lila had a vice like grip and she wouldn’t let go so easily. Adrien was getting frustrated, he really didn’t want her hands on him at all!

Ladybug, unaware of her Kitty’s torture, had already swiftly turned towards Queen Bee, trying to ignore the ‘couple’ before them and only said, “well, I’m glad that I still have you and My Kitty at my side Queen Bee. Thanks again.”

“No problem Ladybug!” Queen Bee nodded with a small smirk to the Bug, her back to Adrien and Lila. “It was my pleasure!”

Ladybug threw her a small grin, waved briefly to the crowd and after sending a pained glance Adrien’s way, she tossed her yo-yo to connect to something on the school’s roof, “I’ve got to go.” She muttered to Queen Bee, who turned and understood what was probably bothering her, “Bug Out!” Ladybug cried out as she whisked herself away from the scene as her Miraculous beeped for the first time.

Adrien wished that he could leave like that, or at least have his baton to defend himself, but then he was distracted by the voices of his friends in the background, who were apparently unaware of his predicament.

“Nino, am I imagining things, or did Ladybug just ignore me?” Alya whispered to Nino who only shrugged.

“She didn’t deny that diss from Queen Bee either, what did the Bee mean that Chat Noir is the only guy on the team?”

“Adrien…” The grating voice of Lila purred as she held onto him tightly and squeezed his bicep, reminding Adrien that she was still there.

His skin crawled as she smirked at him and loudly said, “I’m SO glad that you’re here ADRIEN, I could really use the support of my BOYFRIEND after all that stress.”

Queen Bee watched with a blank face as Alya snuck up to her side to question the Bee instead of the Bug, simply because she was there.
Queen Bee ignored her as she noticed that Adrien’s cool façade was about to crack.

“I can’t watch this.” Queen Bee scoffed as she did her best to contain her anger, “I’m out of here, you’re all being ridiculous, utterly ridiculous!” She tossed her weapon and swung herself away to de-transform.

Adrien finally raised his voice loudly enough to be stern but full of conviction as he ripped his arm away from Lila. “Lila, I’ve told you, I’m not interested in you in that way. You are NOT my girlfriend, you’ve never been my girlfriend and you will NEVER be my girlfriend!”

“Adrien! What are you saying?!” Lila cried out as she pulled away from him, “after all those secret dates and rendezvous!!” She gasped and dramatically put her hands on her face for a moment and then she tamped her foot and changed her demeanor from hurt to volcanically upset.

“It’s her isn’t it?!” Lila accused as she pointed at him angrily, “that little tramp finally sunk her claws into you! All because I wouldn’t give myself to you!” She raised her arm dramatically to her forehead for just a moment. “I can’t believe you’d do this to me!”

Their classmates gasped.

“But, but I…” Adrien was still trying to catch up as their classmates started gossiping and arguing about what happened.

“I can hardly believe it!”

“But Lila wouldn’t lie!” Alya commented.

“Dude, but neither would Adrien!” Nino objected.

“No girl wants to be seen jilted like that, why would Lila do that?”

“Maybe it is true…”

“Lila?” Rose’s little voice finally asked, “what are you saying? I-I thought that you and Adrien were together?”

There were voice of assent all around.

“Yeah!”

“You’re so adorable together!”

“What happened?”

“Is he lying?”

Before Adrien could interject, Lila flashed a small grin at the crowd before she sobbed almost painfully, “I thought we were together! He even said so! He… he even called me his sweet little amour!” Then she cried into her hands as she wallowed in her lies, “but I found him with… with her! Just because she was willing to give him what I wasn’t.”

The crowd gasped.

“Oh my!”

“Just goes to show he’s a playboy!”
“Just like every other celebrity.”

“So much for wanting to slum it with us little guys.”

“Dude, he, he wouldn’t!” Nino muttered.

“I, I don’t know Nino!” Alya countered, and that hurt Adrien the most.

Adrien’s face clouded over, having caught the insinuation that he was less than a gentleman. “I haven’t done anything like that! I never would! I’m a gentleman!”

“Until you’re alone with a girl!” Lila wailed. “Then it’s hands everywhere, you, you cheater!” She broke down in sobs, Rose tried to comfort her as she patted her back.

“Just like a guy!”

“Taking what he wants when he can get it!”

“Wait! Seriously guys! How can you all believe this!” Adrien tried to defend himself. “I’ve never tried to do anything with her or, or anyone!”

“Why does he still deny me!” Lila tossed her heart broken self on Rose’s shoulders as she continued weeping as she explained her side of the story, loudly. “I tried to be a good girlfriend, really I did, but he was just u-using me and when he couldn’t get what he wanted from me, he went to HER! She was so, so SO willing! What could I do?! Then, then I found out she had to go to the doctor’s today, he, he made her go to cover up their mistake! I thought it could be a new beginning! I tried to make up, I tried to forgive and work it out but… but…”

“Who? Who was she?” Someone from the crowd called out.

Lila turned and smirked at Adrien ever so briefly as he realized just as she was about to call out her name, the girl that would be blamed for their fictitious break-up. Adrien blushed slightly at the thought of having a supposedly secret lover, that it was her and he shuttered at what the gossips would soon be saying about his sweet and attractive friend as Lila tarnished her name as she said...

“It was Marinette.”

Chapter End Notes

Whew... Since this was an angsty chapter I posted this early, I just couldn't bring myself to posting THIS on Valentines day. So, it'll be up to 6 days until the next posting... (sorry for any suffering that this chapter may have caused... maybe.)

Lila said that Adrien called her his sweet little amour aka sweet little 'love', which I found ironic, because his loving feelings for her are so small, they're non existent. Which is why I used that phrase.

Also, just to defend Chloe a little, she didn't want to leave Adrien, but couldn't risk losing her credibility with the crowd and their classmates. I think it was mentioned previously but she needs to be trustworthy enough to get everyone to the Mayor's Ball so they can try to take Lila down publicly as planned. Basically, she knew that Adrien had to take one for the team as they say, but in her defense, she had NO idea it would be
like this and had she known or been there, she probably would have done something without thinking about how her coming to Adrien's defense would jeopardize their plans.
Oh well, C'est la vie. (that's life).
Round 3 Anyone?

Chapter Summary

Yep, Lila just said THAT.
Basically she told everyone that Adrien was secretly seeing her, but slept with Marinette because she was all to willing and because Lila wouldn't stoop that low... yeah, then she topped it off by saying Marinette was gone that day because she was getting their 'mistake' taken care of...
How do you think Adrien will respond?

AKA Adrien vrs. Lila round 3
Current Score: Adrien 0 and Lila 3
Why? Because that last comment from Lila the Liar was a round ending hit if I ever saw one.
Points double with each round, so this round is worth 4 points, who will be the victor?

Chapter Notes

Eh, felt like posting a day early because the next chapter is short and I MIGHT wind up posting 3 chapters total this week instead of the usual two, it depends on how much I get edited really, so I'll probably post the short short chapter in a day or 2 after this...
Whoops, messing up my own schedule, silly me...

Well, anyhow hope you like the chapter!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Lila had just claimed that Marinette was the one that had stolen Adrien’s affections, from Lila, because Lila claimed that Marinette would do anything to… to be like THAT with Adrien. For a brief moment Adrien was in shock because he of all people knew that Marinette was not like that, she wasn’t pursuing him or anyone like THAT so there was NO way she could be carrying anyone’s… baby. It actually hurt Adrien to think that anyone would believe that Marinette of all people would do something like that and actually think a baby was a mistake and that he would have thought that too and that he would have gone so far as to insist or pay for, one of those... procedures.

The crowd of course had gasped at Lila’s revelation and Adrien, after a brief growl, went into full defense mode.

“No wait a minute, you can say what you will about me, but Marinette is NOT like that, everyone here knows that!” Adrien looked around, looking for support, but surprisingly found… none.

“I mean, we’ve, we’ve never!” Adrien gulped, *I can’t believe that they think either of us would do that! We’re just kids and we hardly know each other for crying out loud! He thought. Besides, my father would kill me!*

Kim spoke up, “so that’s why you and Marinette are always disappearing together during akuma
attacks. You were actually seeing two girls Agreste? Not cool man.”

Lila sputtered, “yea, he… he even made her get rid of the evidence!”

“Evidence?” Alya asked, “look I know Marinette, she, she couldn’t, no, she wouldn’t be like that… would she?” she said doubtfully as she looked at Adrien and then at Lila.

Lila looked away, almost looking like she hadn’t meant to rile up the crowd.

Oh, she plays innocent WAY too well! Adrien thought as he squeezed his fists hard to remind himself to remain in control.

“Maybe I should ask her?” Alya muttered and tried to call Marrinette. “Strange, she sent me to voicemail again.” Alya blinked, “why is Mari avoiding me?”

All the while, Lila began to cry even more, “can, can you take me somewhere else Rose, I, I can’t look at him.” She sniffed, Rose nodded and walked Lila away from the crowd, Juleka and Mylene not far behind.

“You gotta admit though, if anyone could have taken advantage of Mari like that, it would be Adrien.” Alix growled. “How could you Adrien? What happened, did your father pay for her to go to the doctor and get rid of your ‘mistake’ or something? Or was that all on you!”

Adrien looked at his classmates in shock, he turned to Nino for help.

Even Nino looked down bashfully, biting his lip, doubting him.

“Nino, please! You know it’s not true!” Adrien pleaded. “Marinette isn’t like that and neither am I! I was NEVER dating Lila, Lila’s not even my type! Not… not like Mari kind of is, but, but still, she was just a friend!”

“Was huh?” Alya challenged, but Adrien ignored her as Nino looked torn. “Are you saying that she isn’t anymore because she gave you what you wanted!”

“What?! No way! Look, if I was going to have a girlfriend, she’d be honest and true! Like Marinette!” Adrien defended. “She’s the opposite of Lila, how can any of you believe that I’d date HER over Mari! Only a jerk would go out with two girls or do something like any of that and I am NOT like that!”

“Yeah, but it’s strange that you’re practically admitting that you liked Marinette now, but still saying that she couldn’t be your girlfriend in the same breath practically. Like she either never was or isn’t good enough anymore.” Alix hissed.

“What! No! I… I…”

“Sounds like you just had the perfect opportunity and used it dude.” Kim said mockingly, “I can’t believe you’d do that to either girl, but it totally makes sense!”

Adrien was shocked, “how does it make sense!? Lila’s the one that’s been throwing herself at me! I’ve just been too nice to push her away!”

“Until today!” Alix noted, “when she told us all about you and what you’ve been doing with her and Marinette! No wonder the girl’s been acting strangely lately!”

“And why she doesn’t like Lila!” Someone added.
“Come on guys, this is all just one big misunderstanding!” Adrien tried to explain but everyone was obviously on Lila’s side.

“So, where’s Marinette then?” Alya demanded, “she’s been avoiding me for a while now, and now she’s going to the doctor? To get rid of ‘it’? Adrien, that’s proof enough! How could you!?”

“I could never hurt Marinette like that Alya! Nino, please! You’ve got to believe me!” Adrien begged as people shot him dark looks from abusing his supposed ‘relationship’ with Marinette. He came closer to Nino and whispered, “this was what I warned you about! I knew Lila was going to say something! Lila’s lying!”

Nino didn’t know what to say as he looked between his angry girlfriend and his now ostracized best friend. “…I don’t know Dude.” He answered honestly. “I hate to say it, but, it’s not a huge jump Dude. I mean, I know you hide stuff from me Dude and that’s totally up to you, but this… Marinette’s my friend too, and knowing her…” Nino shrugged, “Kim may have a point, I mean, I uh, I don’t know what to believe.”

“Ni-Nino!” Adrien sputtered.

“Come on Nino, let’s go get lunch.” Alya pulled her brokenhearted boyfriend away.

“Sorry Dude.” Nino apologized over his shoulder.

Adrien’s shoulders slumped and he drowned out the accusations of the crowd. He just couldn’t believe that anyone would believe those lies!

He fought the tears in his eyes, he was an Agreste. He couldn’t cry. The lunch bell rang and Adrien had never felt so alone.

Mr. Damocles finally showed up from his conference with the teachers that was too far away to have seen or heard what happened. Mr. Damocles wasn’t stupid though, and realized that something had happened when he assessed the crowd and their attitude towards Adrien.

“Everyone! It’s time for lunch, not dawdling! Get moving people!” Mr. Damocles called out as he broke up the crowd, once he did, he finally turned to Adrien. “I’m sorry I took so long to get over here, are you alright son?” He patted Adrien on the shoulder and led him through the crowd to the entrance of the school, knowing that Adrien went home to eat lunch frequently.

Once they were alone, Mr. Damocles asked quietly, “do I need to record this conversation? I can send you a copy.”

Adrien only sighed and nodded yes. “I’ve been made the villain here Mr. Damocles.” He muttered once Mr. Damocles had his phone on and recording. Adrien rubbed one arm with the other nervously. “I’ve done nothing but try to tell the truth, but they believe Lila and her lies. How could it have gone so far? For them to lose confidence in Marinette and I like that? We’re good people and we’ve done nothing but not take Lila’s side and believe in her lies.”

Adrien pulled out his phone as he spoke and sent a text to his bodyguard to come and pick him up in a few minutes. He needed some breathing room after all of THAT after all.

“I’m sorry Mr. Agreste, but crowds become mobs far too easily, especially when they’re following the wrong leader.” The wizened principal sighed, “we can still report this if you would like. The time stamp on all of our recordings and with our contact with the police will prove that you’re the victim here.” Mr. Damocles explained.
Adrien sighed, “No. That won’t be enough. That might be enough for the police or the media for a slap on the hand for Lila at best, but no matter what happened there, it would still ruin my reputation at school permanently and Marinette’s too.”

“Excuse me?” Mr. Damocles eyebrows rose in disbelief.

“Lila made good on her threat Sir. She told the whole school that I was dating her secretly and that I cheated on her with Marinette, and, and that…” Adrien took a deep breath and exhaled as he forced himself to repeat the lie. “She said that Marinette was pregnant with our baby and that I paid to have her get rid of… of the ‘evidence’ as Lila put it. Even if something like that happened, which it didn’t, I couldn’t do that to my own kid. My father maybe, but not me. I wouldn’t let him, I… I can’t even imagine that. We’re well off Sir, I have savings and a trust, I have no excuse to even consider such a thing if it had happened.” Adrien sighed, “what I don’t understand is who would call a baby evidence Sir? And how… how can my friends think so little of me?”

Mr. Damocles sighed, “that’s the danger of rumors and gossip Adrien, wagging tongues can wound swifter than the sword.”

Adrien nodded. “Yes Sir, today just proved that. Were they ever really my friends?”

Mr. Damocles sighed, “that’s hard to answer Adrien. They’re people, they’re young and they’ve been tricked. Without even knowing it they’re exposing the worst of themselves, I think it will be a test of your own maturity on how you will go forward, once the truth is out.”

“I couldn’t have said it better myself.” Adrien pouted, “it’s not going to be easy though.”

“The best things in life must be fought for, including wanting to forgive your friends if you decide that’s what you want to do someday. I must know though, how do you want to handle this?” Mr. Damocles said. “You’ll be having to hold your own against the rumor mill for a few days if you stick to your plans or you could just stay home. Going to school would be traumatic I think, since the rumors will be changing people in ways that you and your classmates wouldn’t expect. While I have warned your teachers about Lila, even they may treat you a little differently just to try to keep your secret and to see Lila’s response. I would be willing to excuse you from school if that is what you wish.”

“Actually Sir, no, that’s not necessary.” Adrien sighed, “look, I’m glad that Chloe left before Lila started spouting those lies. She wouldn’t have been able to be trusted by everyone if she killed them after they believed Lila’s new lies after all.” Adrien chuckled half-heartedly, “I still think debunking her publicly at the Mayor’s Ball would be the best thing, then maybe they’ll believe me and figure out what they’ve done.”

“Very well, and what of Miss Dupain-Cheng? She should be warned about these rumors Adrien, at the very least.”

“I’ll try to speak with her after school.” Adrien frowned, “I, I don’t know what I’ll say, but I do need to talk to her about this.”

“You should warn her sooner than later, if she’s your friend, she deserves that.” Mr. Damocles said with concern as he quietly added, “she’s been having a difficult enough time of late as is.”

Adrien nodded. “Yeah, you’re right. I’ll text her something, Chloe too.”

His bodyguard drove up and parked in front of the school, then he got out and opened the door for Adrien.
“I’ll be back after lunch Sir and thank you for your concern.” Adrien waved goodbye as he got in the car.

Mr. Damocles nodded, “you’re welcome and good luck son,” then he whispered as Adrien’s car drove off, “you’re going to need it.”

Chapter End Notes

Just wanted to note that Adrien here is very into the idea of having a family someday and even though he is young, he would probably never consider an abortion for a baby he sired, so there is definitely a note of anti-abortion here in this chapter. I think he knows about the birds and the bees in a technically way, but he’s not prepared for the feelings that such closeness would inspire. Which is a major reason why what Lila did to him before really got to him.

Anvhow, I totally get that some people are pro choice and all, that’s a choice that every woman should make on their own concerning the option of abortion when it comes up, preferably with the input of the father and their doctor, considering their circumstances and for their health etc. I just don’t want to have this chapter turn into an argument for or against abortion in the comments so I’m just putting that out there.

Also, this kind of needs to be said, Nino was feeling the pressure here and was really being pulled in so many directions, he wasn't thinking straight. He's not a bad guy per se but got sucked into the crowd's mob mentality. He knew about Mari's crush, he knew Mari but she's been distant lately and he doesn't know why, Adrien has been busier lately too (hello, fashion show) and Lila has made it look like her and Adrien had gotten close, so even for him he's got to wonder and Adrien's warning? He didn't know whether his earlier warning was to try to keep it all covered up or was a genuine warning. Also, Alya is upset and he's got to deal with her and what's that all about Carapace NOT being on the team anymore? And why was Ladybug ignoring Alya aka Rena Rouge. For that matter, why was Queen Bee called up to help out so much instead of them? Nino had too much to think through really. He may just need some time to sort things out, but he should have been there to support Adrien outright. But, this is an angsty story, so the author thought with Adrien's bad luck, well, Nino being too confused to act right away would fit. (I'm so mean & the author apologizes for the inflicted pain of Nino's betrayal, we'll just have to see if he wizens up in a later chapter...
A short short chapter

Chapter Summary

We get a short POV change...
Adrien texts Marinette and he finds a surprise at the mansion waiting for him...

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Just to change things up a bit, here is a short, short & new POV change…

“Babe, I… I can’t let go of this feeling.” Nino said worriedly as he played with his lunch.

“Nino, I know you want to believe in Adrien, I want to believe that he didn’t do that to Marinette either, but Lila, well, has she ever been wrong?” Alya uncomfortably offered.

Nino mumbled, “it’s also a hard thing to prove.” Nino then looked over at his girlfriend and honestly asked, “girl, I think the question that we have to ask is, has she ever been right?”

“Nino! She’s our friend! We should trust her!” Alya defended.

“Babe, who were our friends first? Friends SHE’s now driven away from us!”

“What? No, that… that was all on Marinette and Adrien.” Alya tried to make an excuse but paused, “Sweetie, do you really think that we would LET something like that happen?”

Nino shook his head as he stood up and picked up his lunch tray, having lost his appetite. “Look Babe, if we did, we didn’t mean to. I mean, so many things have come up lately.” He sighed as he looked at his tray, “I need some time to listen to my beats Babe and think about this, can we… can we talk about it later? With open minds?”

Alya was about to respond, but Nino held up his hand briefly, “I didn’t mean anything against you Babe, I’m doubting myself here and all these facts that only Lila seems to know is all. I just… I need some time. Okay?”

Alya frowned and thoughtfully answered, “if that’s what you need, okay. After school then?”

Looking slightly pacified, Nino nodded and answered, “yeah, after school.”

…

Adrien pulled out his phone and texted Marinette. Thankfully he had her number from working on a project together with Nino and Alya recently, before all of this got out of control.

AA: Marinette, something happened at school today.

AA: It’s important. Do you have time to talk?

MDC: …
MDC: My lunch break is almost over and I’m only allowed to make a call during an emergency right now.

MDC: I’m not allowed to make calls or have my phone on otherwise.

MDC: I have a few minutes that I can text though.

AA: Ok, can I come over after school to talk about it then? After basketball practice?

MDC: Sure, if you want to.

AA: I do.

AA: Look, there, there are some pretty bad rumors going around that I really wanted to warn you about.

MDC: ???

AA: I think I owe it to you to tell you what they are in person.

MDC: Is that why Alya has been trying to get a hold of me?

MDC: Don’t answer that. I’m sure it is.

MDC: Let’s just say that I don’t feel like talking about that right now. 😊

AA: ok

MDC: Was it Lila?

AA: Yeah, this really isn’t something you want to talk about over the phone though. 😊

MDC: … Alright, I’ll trust you.

MDC: I’ll be home after 5:00, I have to take the subway home.

AA: Where are you by the way? I’ve… I’ve missed you.

MDC: Just checking out my options… nothing to worry about.

AA: Oh.

MDC: I’ve got to go. Talk to you later.

AA: Okay, bye!

Adrien sighed and looked out the window, they were halfway home, so he texted Chloe.

He told her everything that had happened and thanked her for leaving, reassuring her that it was the right decision since they were planning on taking Lila down on Friday, Chloe would have to keep her distance from him somewhat to get everyone to come, it was okay and was part of the plan. Adrien reassured her that he understood why she would have to do that and he would be fine.

Chloe wasn’t pleased to say the least, but Adrien got her to promise to BEE the better person and to not akumatize anyone over this. Basically, it was best to stick to the list and do what she had been
doing when it came to Lila, try to stay aloof and out of her way.

Chloe had only answered, “fine. Just BEE my purr-fect self then. Cat-ch you later! 😊

Adrien realized then that he had created a monster.

_Was it always like this for Ladybug? _He wondered.

Adrien then let out a sigh of relief as he put away his phone and the gates to the mansion opened. It wasn’t often that he felt good about going home, but considering the alternative, he figured it would be more relaxing to eat alone at their huge dining room table than in the cafeteria today anyway.

Plagg whispered, “you going to be okay kid?”

Adrien nodded, “yeah, I’m not going to let her win and we’re not going to lose our miraculous Plagg. I’m not going to lose it because of her.”

“What’s the plan then?”

“Make it through the day and talk to Marinette of course. I’ve got a lot to talk to her about.”

“You don’t know the half of it.” Plagg whispered as Adrien got out of the car, thinking that Adrien hadn’t heard him, but he did.

Adrien bit his lip, he had so many things flying through his mind about what his kwami could mean, but none of it made any sense besides causing him to feel a bit more worried about facing Marinette as himself later that day.

Plagg was quiet as Adrien opened the door to the mansion automatically, only to find his father waiting for him at the top stairs… looking a bit more severe than usual.

“Adrien.” His father used that tone where either he had something unsavory to tell Adrien or Adrien was in trouble.

Adrien wasn’t looking forward to either option.

Chapter End Notes

Hope to have the next chapter posted in about 4 days or less...
Father

Chapter Summary

Adrien is confronted by his Father, the conversation takes an unexpected turn.

Chloe makes an appearance.

Adrien makes it through the rest of his school day in infamy, as well as basketball practice.

Chapter Notes

Are you ready?

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Adrien swallowed, “Father, h-how good to see you.”

“Adrien.” His father looked down at his son, his face unreadable before he came to a decision and nodded as he came down the stairs. “We will be having lunch together today son. We have much to talk about.”

Adrien froze, his mind going a mile a minute, as he realized, father knows! But what COULD he know?

…

“Ugh! That, that little liar!” Chloe turned off her phone resolutely after her conversation with Adrien. “I can’t believe she’d sink so LOW!”

Chloe was alone in a classroom, having de-transformed from being Queen Bee and feeding her kwami leisurely, so she wouldn’t have to listen to all the madness that happened earlier, she’d spent some time sending emails and making sure that their plans had been set in motion.

Just when she had started to calm down, Adrien contacted her and she was all riled up again.

Pollen, her kwami, floated in front of her. “My Queen, how may I be of service?”

“Ugh! There’s nothing that you can do Pollen! Adrikins name is being dragged through the dirt!” Chloe pouted, “all because of that little miss lies a lot!” She clenched her hands on her phone and almost stamped her foot, but took a deep breath instead.

“Please stay calm my Queen, you don’t want to risk being akumatized again.” Pollen kindly commented.

Chloe scoffed, “do I look like I’m THAT irresponsible? It’s down to us and Ladybug against that horrid man, although that GRR! Lila could take over for him as villain of the year at this point!”
“I can’t disagree my Queen.” Pollen dipped in the air as if she was nodding her agreement.

“Look, I just need you to distract me for a minute.” Chloe took a deep breath and confessed, “you know, you don’t have to call me your Queen with every sentence.” Chloe smirked, “every other one would do fine.”

“Certainly, my ah, but what shall I call you otherwise?” Pollen angled her head and asked.

Chloe chuckled, “My Queen is fine part of the time, I like it, but the thing is you and I are a team now Pollen, so please just call me Chloe the rest of the time.”

“If that is what you prefer Chloe.” Pollen then smiled at her, “I knew I liked you.”

“Thank you, I like you too.” Chloe grinned, “now let’s talk about the ball!”

…

Gabriel Agreste led Adrien to the dining table. They sat across from each other and didn’t say a word until their food had been served and Gabriel had dismissed everyone from the room, including Nathalie.

That wasn’t a good sign.

Adrien waited for the axe to fall.

Gabriel cleared his throat as he speared a piece of asparagus. “How was your day Adrien?”

“Sir?”

“I asked you how your day was.” Gabriel restated.

Adrien looked down at his plate. He could only wonder, Was this a trick?

“Um, my day was… fine father. Nothing to worry about.”

Gabriel chewed his bite of food thoughtfully.

Oh, boy, he’s not buying it…

“Adrien, I’m disappointed…” Gabriel began…

“Father none of it was my fault! I…” Adrien began but Gabriel held up his hand to stop him from speaking.

“Let me finish Adrien.” Gabriel instructed as he cut him off. “I’m disappointed because you felt like you couldn’t come to me immediately for whatever it is that you’re dealing with at school.”

Adrien’s throat went dry as he swallowed and asked, “Father?”

“While I don’t have all the details, I was alerted by some anonymous associates that were concerned that there are some rumors going around and that you have already alerted the police and from what it sounds like, the Mayor, in order to control them. Even Nathalie wouldn’t elaborate on whatever this is and while I trust her judgement, I want you to know that I can be here for you too. While I am disappointed that you felt like you couldn’t come to me about whatever this is, I will say that on the other hand…”
Gabriel took another bite and slowly chewed it before swallowing, “I wanted to let you know that am pleased that you are trying to address whatever issues these are on you own, with the aide of Miss Bourgeois I assume.” Gabriel granted him a small smile of appreciation, “this shows that you have initiative, a business sense of your own, you know who you can trust, when to reach out AND that you appreciate how busy I am.”

Adrien was in shock, he almost left his mouth open to collect some flies instead of swallowing his first bite that he’d been chewing for a ridiculous amount of time as it was.

Gabriel then gave his son a look, raising one eyebrow, like he was expecting a response.

“Oh, yeah, um, thank you Father.” Adrien thought about what he should tell his Father about Lila’s lies and what she had done to him that morning. But then he became even more resolute as he said, “Father, I meant no disrespect, but I decided how I wanted to deal with things and what would be the most effective response to…” Adrien hesitated, “to what happened. I do not wish to go into it completely, as you said, you’re a busy man, this isn’t over and I can handle this. Although I will tell you everything Saturday at breakfast if you would like.”

Gabriel nodded, “that is acceptable. While I understand there are some rumors that are floating around and the police are controlling the media for us, are you sure that there isn’t anything that I can do to help?” He looked at Adrien with a raised eyebrow. “I don’t want you to be over your head.”

Adrien nodded. “Yes Sir, and no Sir, Nathalie and Chloe have already agreed to help. I’ll be brief, hmm. Let’s just say that there is a girl at my school who is a perpetual liar and she has… she’s come after me.” Adrien frowned, “I’d rather tell you all of the details Saturday after she’s been exposed as what she is, but in case her lies leave the school, I should warn you so that you’re prepared.” Adrien sighed, “her name is Lila and she has claimed that I was dating her in secret, which I wasn’t and when I rejected her, she came up with this grandiose story that I cheated on her with Marinette, and that…” Adrien’s voice grew smaller just a little bit, “and that there may have been a love child.”

Gabriel dropped his fork and stared at his son.

“But there isn’t!” Adrien exclaimed, “that’s kind of something hard to do when you’re just friends, meaning Marinette and I! She and I have only ever held hands or danced at a public party Father. Lila is far more interested in me than I EVER could be of HER.”

Gabriel pursed his lips, took a steadying breath and nodded, “you may go on.”

“Sir?”

“I only wish to know a few things, the rest can wait until you’ve done what you think is best. I am not guaranteeing that I may not get involved afterward as I’m interested in seeing what you come up with.” Gabriel gave a very small and shrewd smirk, “so please, indulge me.”

Adrien swallowed and nodded as his Father went on, “now tell me the relationship that you have with each of these two girls.” Gabriel strangely chuckled a little as he picked up his fork and took another bite, allowing Adrien to explain.

Adrien thought about how his father would classify the two girls and answered, “well, Lila is a social climber and a liar sir, the daughter of an Italian politician.” His father winced slightly at that. “You’ve met Marinette, we’ve been friends for a long time.” Gabriel nodded, “frankly Father between the two of them, I would only date Marinette hands down, she’s, ah, amazing.” Adrien blushed, unable to say more in front of his father.
Gabriel frowned slightly, “I wasn’t aware that you were wanting to date anyone son, much less the
derby hat winner?”

“You remember Marinette?!” Adrien looked surprised.

“Of course, she has a unique talent and will likely go far.” Gabriel hesitantly looked down at his food
and selected his next bite as he said nonchalantly after deliberating, but nodded to himself as he
stated, “I give you my blessing to date her.”

“What?” Adrien’s eyes grew big. “I-I haven’t even asked for that yet!”

Gabriel gave a small and brief smile to his son, “I may be known to be a strict businessman son, but I
remember what it’s like to be in love and I’m fully aware of the problematic issues that may arise
when hormones and youth are involved. Frankly the media will probably be wondering why you
aren’t dating soon enough.” He uncharacteristically shrugged lightly, “so it might as well start with a
girl that I approve of. Now, I trust Nathalie has given you the pamphlets about the methods of birth
control?” Gabriel smirked as he mentioned this.

“Father!” Adrien’s eyes grew big. “I am NO where NEAR thinking about THAT!”

*Especially with everything else that has been going on!* He mentally screamed.

Gabriel chuckled and lifted his hand for a moment to placate his son as he waved that conversation
away, “I was just testing you son. Do not think too much about it. I expect you to be MUCH older
before you even consider that. However, I fully approve of the hand holding and other small tokens
of affection, with an acceptable young lady that will not try to take advantage of you, such as Miss
Dupain-Cheng, so long as I get to approve of the relationship.”

Adrien’s mind was going a mile a minute, *I didn’t expect him to say anything like that!*

Adrien and his father ate quietly for a few minutes as Adrien absorbed all of this as his father focused
on his nearby tablet as he ate.

“Father?” Adrien finally asked.

“Yes, son.” Gabriel glanced up to look at Adrien.

“I, I just wanted to let you know that I’m thinking about asking Marinette to the Mayors Ball and I
wanted to tell you, that uh, thank you.”

Gabriel arched his eyebrow with the unspoken question.

"Thank you for trusting me.” Adrien honestly said.

Gabriel nodded, “you’re welcome son. Good luck with whatever you’re planning, I look forward to
our meal together Saturday.”

…

Adrien returned to school and was met with school wide infamy. No one would listen to his side of
the story and while he still sat next to Chloe, she only talked to him when she had to, looking upset
or annoyed with him, all while sending him supportive texts when no one was looking of course.

Before school was out, Chloe got up and gave a speech about how considering the circumstances
and how ‘traumatized’ that Lila seemed to be, that they should all consider electing Kim and Alix as
joint student representatives for the election that would be held tomorrow after lunch, she’d even order in pizza for their class in support of their campaign so the class can have lunch together.

Chloe earned a lot of bonus points with their class for that bull hockey.

Then she whipped out the invitations to the Mayor’s Ball and another separate invitation for everyone to come to her hotel after school tomorrow on Thursday to pick out an outfit that they could borrow, so everyone could ‘feel’ special at the Ball.

Adrien really was impressed at how thick Chloe was laying it on. Adrien had to wonder whether or not she taking lessons from Lila? No, Chloe couldn’t stand her either, maybe it was just her high class training that had prepared her for something like this.

It kind of hurt though when even he couldn’t see Chloe grit her teeth as she effortlessly invited Lila especially as Chloe emphasized, “after all, preparing for and attending a fabulous ball like this one can help those who are truly important feel better about themselves after such traumatic events.”

Adrien really loved Chloe’s vague wordplay.

Adrien had basketball practice after school and it was the first time that so many of his teammates went after him on the court. His stomach would have been sore if he didn’t have his cat-like reflexes to catch the ball. It was as if the rumor about him hurting Mari and Lila hurt them all personally somehow and they were out for blood.

Adrien tried not to take it personally as he tried to look on the bright side, it was a good workout considering he hadn’t been able to go on patrol lately at least.

Unfortunately, none of his teammates believed him when he tried to tell them that Lila had lied about everything. They all claimed that they’d heard his excuses through the grapevine. Adrien was already getting tired of trying to explain, since no one was listening.

Normally Nino would be waiting for him after practice to hang out, but his best friend wasn’t there waiting for him. His absence made Adrien miss him more and think about what Nino might be thinking about.

Even Adrien had noticed that Nino had been distracted before the big argument happened after all and Adrien wondered if that was why Nino had seemed so overwhelmed and indecisive by it all. He was dealing with an upset girlfriend on so many levels. Adrien wouldn’t condemn anyone to Alya’s wrath after all, she was almost as bad as Ladybug or Marinette if he thought about it. Ladybug had ignored her too and come to think of it, so had Queen Bee.

Also, it seemed like Marinette was ignoring Alya too since she wasn’t answering her phone when Alya had called her and Marinette had answered him instead when he had called her. Maybe Marinette was ignoring the chat box that Alya and Marinette would have had running for their text conversation too. Hmm.

Strangely, one thing kind of stuck out to Adrien, why would the fact that Carapace, Nino’s favorite hero of late, who wasn’t part of the team anymore bother Nino of all people so much?

Chapter End Notes
Like this Gabriel? I figured his attitude would fit since he cares about Adrien subtly but likes to be in control and would be wanting him to learn to deal with important matters in business, as long as it was good for business after all, like having Adrien learning how to deal with real world matters like threats to his image, plus he knew that Adrien wasn't on his own on this. So in a way, he's subtly testing Adrien here.

And no, Nathalie did not say anything, only that she was assisting Adrien to clear up a certain matter when Gabriel asked her, he heard about something from an associate from the precinct who mentioned a top secret assignment that concerned his son and Chloe and only knew it was to control the spread of information. Gabriel has no idea what the full details are or what happened that morning with Lila when she threw herself at Adrien, invaded his space and threatened him.

Next posting should be in just over four days for me, since it's easiest for me to post on Tuesdays and Thursdays for this story.

Also, just in case anyone is wondering, (I'm going to get a little vulgar for me here) I threw in the phrase "bull hockey" because it's the annual rodeo time of year for my area, it fit and it's kind of the same as a cow paddy, it just looks a bit more solid. But being that it's basically a pile of c4@p it's still messy and no one really wants it, much less kick it or use it to actually play hockey, cause that would be messy and no one wants to step in that. Basically it's a phrase that means pretty words that are dressed up and mean c4@p, basically it's referring to uttering nonsense.
An Awkward Conversation

Chapter Summary

Probably Not the one you're waiting for though...

Not sure whether to call this an angsty chapter or a sad one although it kind of starts out as an argument. I'll try to get some fluff in the next chapter, we need the break, (before chapter 30, bwah ha ha).

งามี Mild warning by the way, if you're squeamish and can't handle talking about 'girl stuff’ (guess who learned about inserting emojis!), you may want to skip this chapter, although some important stuff is mentioned. Frankly though, anyone that has gotten through this story so far probably can handle it. I've just met some guys that can't handle talking about periods, this isn't that bad, so yeah, just putting that out there.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

Right after school, Nino had walked Alya to the park and pulled her over to a private bench so that he could discuss things with her. Unfortunately, the conversation wasn’t going as well as he’d like.

“Dudette, please, I beg of you, if I mean anything to you at all, can we please try to see this from an objective perspective?” Nino had finally asked. “Without wigging out, please?”

“Nino I’m a journalist, I see everything in a journalistic perspective!” Alya snapped back, but then she frowned as he took her hand to try to calm her down as if to apologize for being so blunt, “you know that you mean everything to me Nino, but why in the world would think that you even have to say that?”

“Alright, hear me out. I know that Mari hasn’t been answering her phone, that can mean several things, maybe it’s out of power, she broke it again or…”

“No what?” Alya demanded.

His face looked sad as he said it, “or maybe she just doesn’t want to talk to you, or even, she… she could have blocked your number.”

“Nino, that’s crazy, this is Marinette that we’re talking about, she’s my best friend!” Alya waved her hand about like that was a preposterous idea.

Nino frowned at her, “and when did you last talk to her Babe? Really talk I mean? A few days ago? Last week? Sweetheart, even I have noticed you haven’t been spending much time actually talking with her.”

Alya shook her head, “she, she just doesn’t like Lila for some crazy reason, she’s been avoiding me because I’ve been hanging out with her and because she can’t prove that wild theory of hers that Lila told a fib or two.”

Nino nodded, “I think you’re right about that, partially I mean. Here’s the kicker though, isn’t the
reason why Marinette doesn’t like Lila is because she thinks that she’s lying about some stuff to us, stuff that you asked Marinette to find proof about before we would even listen to her about it?”

“Well, yeah. You’ve got to have proof to have an ounce of integrity.” Alya rolled her eyes as if to say ‘duh.’

Nino took his hat off and rubbed his forehead and let out a breath of exasperation.

“All right then, here’s a wild idea.” Nino tossed it out there, “since Marinette wasn’t here to defend herself today and because she’s your friend, still, right?” Nino waited for Alya to nod, which she did almost reluctantly, “then here’s a wild idea Babe. Maybe, just maybe she didn’t know how to explain or prove what she saw? Maybe, just maybe, we should look into things for her?”

Alya rolled her eyes, “well, yeah, of course she’s still my friend, I’m not the one with a problem here. Marinette is the one that Adrien sent to a Doctor to get rid of their ‘mistake,’ which honestly…” Alya had made air quotes as she said that derisively but then grew quieter as she added after she blinked thoughtfully, “that…that is such a wild idea, even I have to wonder about it.”

“Good, now follow me here.” Nino put his hat on with a small grin, “both Adrien and Marinette have said that Lila’s word can’t be trusted, she’s been back to school for what, a month? Do you seriously think that Adrien of all people would have been able to both get into a relationship with a girl and then cheat on her in that time? I mean, yeah the guys is good looking and all, but he’s a social newbie. How in the world could Adrien, our Adrien be able to pull that off?”

Alya smirked, “well, you do kind of have a point there.”

“He may be a model and all, and he’s my Bro, and even I know he’s not that socially skilled. We would have suspected that something was going on. He doesn’t hide things THAT well.”

Alya reluctantly shrugged, “maybe, but there’s that proof thing again. I mean, even you said that he hides some things.”

“Well, yeah, but that’s understandable, I’d hide stuff too if a piece of spinach caught between my front teeth in a random photo would wind up on some sort of rag magazine literally in a flash and my dad called me out on it. That Dude is so busy all the time, especially with that last Fashion Show, how did the Dude even have the time to juggle one girl much less two?”

“Fine, I see your point. It’s suspicious,” Alya gave him that. She bit her lip and shook her head, “let’s say we do this, we’d still need to find proof. Being that Lila admitted to being Adrien’s ‘secret’ girlfriend, I doubt that there is any proof of that.” Alya shrugged, “but if we’re being ‘objective,’ being that she called it a secret, there wouldn’t be any proof.”

“Isn’t that suspicious though? I mean, that’s totally convenient for her side of the story, isn’t it sweetheart?” Nino gave her a small grin.

“All right, I see your point.” Alya sighed, “I don’t like doing it since Lila is our friend, but so is Mari and Adrien. We can investigate a bit, if it makes you feel better.”

“Thank you.” Nino told her earnestly, “and I’ve already decided how we should start going on about that.”

“Do tell?” She looked at him suspiciously.

“Well, the next part means I’m going to have to admit something that’s a bit embarrassing, so bear with me.”
Alya chuckled, “oh, this is going to be good, you don’t embarrass that easily.”

“You’ll understand in a minute.” Nino nodded at her as he went on, “now, Lila claimed that Marinette is pregnant and went to the doctor today, wouldn’t that be easy to check out my dear journalist.” Alya rolled her eyes as Nino even suggested that.

“Not really, it sounded like it was something that Marinette was trying to keep a secret, who would want to tell anyone about such a difficult decision or the bad rep that would go with it?” She guessed.

Nino looked nervous, “now Babe, don’t hold it against me, but I think I may have us a lead besides just asking her parents.”

Alya rolled her eyes, “okay, you’ve convinced me so far, so just spill it.”

Nino blushed a little and chuckled, “well, you told me once that you and Marinette ‘synced up’ like you have that time of the month at the same time.” Nino bit his lip and looked at her hesitantly.

Alya nodded.

“Well, if I remember our health class correctly, and I have thought about this way too much for being a guy and all and checked out websites and whatever, but it takes like a week or two to be able to test positive for a pregnancy after the what, the two weeks after the start of your time of the month to…” Nino swallowed, “to be fertile?”

“Yeah, I think so. The thing is that’s not a guaranteed thing Nino. That’s like what, 80% of women? That doesn’t mean anything really and how would you know when I start?” Alya looked at him incredulously.

“Well, if we can work out a timeline, we can either get some proof or a reason to doubt well, whatever. Basically, a girl needs like three weeks after her period to be able to even begin to test positive. The embarrassing fact that I’m totally admitting to you now Babe…”

“I’m waiting.” Alya smirked at him, knowing that they weren’t like that but thought it was funny that he tried to keep track of her cycle.

“Well, I’ve been observant Babe and I have a pretty good idea of when you start.”

She looked at him suspiciously. “Try me.”

Nino took out phone, checked his calendar app and answered confidently. “You started about ten days ago.”

Alya blinked and coughed as she realized that he was right, “well, you got me there. H-How did you know that?”

Nino answered nervously as he rubbed the back of his neck, “well, your mood tends to change a few days before that and you’re really cranky for about a week, I figured out that it’d be best to keep track of it so I could be there for you and get you that chocolate you like, that way you’re happier and really it’s just a win-win situation for us both Babe, cause when you’re happy, I’m happy.”

“You’re so sweet,” she flirted and gave him a peck on the cheek before Alya weighed the idea, “okay, so you know when I have my period. Now what does that have to do with all of this?” She waved her hand as if at the topic at hand.
Nino looked nervous, but he soldiered on. “Well, like I really want to discuss this, but uh, do you know if Marinette had her period too?”

Alya thought about it and she remembered giving Marinette a few… supplies just over a week ago because she had forgotten them.

Alya grinned, “Nino! She did! This is the best! That means that Marinette probably isn’t pregnant because it’s almost time where that could happen and any test that she’d have to take would be negative because hello, period!”

Nino frowned and sighed, “yea, that part’s the great part, I’m glad that you agree.”

“Alya?” She looked at him, wondering why he wasn’t happy about it.

So, Nino explained his melancholy, “you’ve got to admit that it’s a huge dent in Lila’s story Babe.”

Alya looked down and frowned. “Well, yeah… I-I guess. It’s not solid proof though, just… just probable…”

“Alya, Babe, I know you don’t want to be wrong about Lila being a liar, she did give you those interviews for the Labyblog and all, but we owe it to our friends to find out the truth.”

Alya looked like she was about to cry, as she bit her lip, unable to say anything as she looked down and nodded.

Nino thought about it and then asked, “why don’t we go over to her parent’s bakery and see if they can tell us where Marinette has been? Maybe if she actually had an appointment today?” He suggested, “maybe then we could even talk to Mari about this?”

Alya groaned, “I don’t like this Nino.” She looked up at the sky and exhaled, “the worst part is that I don’t have much time either, I need to get home to babysit my sisters, but… but I really want to get this straightened out.” Then she shakily added, “how-how could we… how could I be so wrong?”

“I know Babe, I feel awful too, we got caught up somehow. It won’t take much time to ask a question or two and I don’t like having to do this either, especially since it took us so long to even consider all of this, but we owe it to them.”

“Yeah, yeah we do.” Alya admitted and you could almost hear her heartbreak. “I-I still don’t want to believe it though.”

Nino sighed as he wrapped his arm around her shoulder to comfort her as she slumped into his side as he hoarsely replied, “I know, I don’t either…because… because it means that we didn’t trust or believe our real friends.”

Alya’s eyes teared up and a few tears fell as she curled up into his side and admitted with a whisper, “I know Nino, I know.”

Chapter End Notes

I imagine that this chapter will get a lot of attention. For me, as the writer, the story had to go this way, Alya and Nino deserved to realize their faults and make some connections to have hope for a redemption (a hope does not = a guaranteed redemption
though). Also, this conversation pokes several potential holes in Lila's story and the recognition that its a hard story to disprove should make them think, hey wait a minute... we can only hope.

Also, as far as the can't test for a pregnancy until 3 weeks after a period starts conversation, I just did some brief research on google and looked at some graphs of a typical menstrual cycle and then looked up how long after actually getting pregnant can you actually test positive. A pregnancy test can be positive as early as about 25% of the time a week after implantation, so I just went with what Nino tried to explain. It may not be completely accurate, but it's close, but please, don't take anything from this story as the absolute truth, it's fiction after all and this was an attempt to be realistic, that doesn't mean that it is a real representation. It's true that most women have a near 28 day cycle, but every woman is a little different etc and some women will very rarely still have a light period during pregnancy or they're just used to not having a predictable cycle, stress can delay their monthly visitor and hence the possibility of surprise pregnancies.

In this story though, Mari's cycle is like clockwork no matter how stressed or tired she is and Alya knows that, which is why she's having a hard time with this and is feeling like a terrible friend.

Also, I think Nino deserves a gold metal for being a natural investigative reporter. 😊
Are There Rocks Ahead?

Chapter Summary

Alya and Nino make another appearance, Tom and Sabine know something, and Adrien gets there early to see some dramatic teens escorting Marinette home...

Chapter Notes

Warning, long chapter ahead - 3900 words - it could have been split up, but, naww, I'm posting a little late anyway and well, I doubt anyone will complain about the length ... Chapter 30 needed to be something else too...

Also, if you're a fan of The Princess Bride by S. Morgenstern, the movie directed by Rob Reiner and the screenplay by William Goldman, hopefully you'll appreciate this chapter as much as I do, it's the silliness and fluff that this fict needed at this point and I'm putting a blanket reference to the book and movie for this chapter, there are several quotes from them here, including this chapter's title. It's one of my favorite movies and I reference it frequently in my fan-fiction, so I hope you enjoy how I tried to incorporate it here (also Adrien still has no idea what some of the quotes mean because he's never seen the movie!)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

About ten minutes after they had calmed down and left the park, Alya and Nino were sheepishly walking into Marinette’s parent’s bakery.

“Hello, Mrs. Cheng.” Alya greeted nervously, “we ah, we were wondering if we could talk to Mari?”

Mrs. Cheng, instead of offering something to snack on asked only somewhat kindly, “why don’t you just call her? She’s mentioned that you haven’t spoken in a while.”

Alya frowned and then admitted, “she’s… she’s not answering my calls.”

Mrs. Cheng only pursed her lips for a moment then nodded and said, “hmm, is that so?”

“Yeah Dude, I mean, uh, Mrs. Cheng. We’re kind of worried about her.” Nino offered.

Mrs. Cheng eyed them warily and then exhaled as she replied, “I see. Well, is there anything that I can do for you today?”

“Um, well, can we talk with her?” Alya asked worriedly.

“She’s not available right now.” Sabine said almost coldly.

“Well, ah, so she hasn’t gotten back from her Doctor appointment yet?” Alya asked leadingly.
Sabine Cheng eyes changed momentarily, her eyes gave off a flash of fire to a look of cool control, before she announced strongly, “No. Marinette is perfectly healthy and hasn’t needed to go and see the doctor in months since her physical a few months ago. Besides, she couldn’t have seen a doctor today because I know very well that she went somewhere else entirely.” She told them confidently with just an ounce of pride.

“Oh, uh, did uh, Mr. Dupain take her somewhere then?” Nino questioned, but he got his answer as the large baker came from around the back and stood beside his wife. He put his large hand on her shoulder as if to answer the question that he had obviously overheard and he was here to support his family.

Tom’s normally kind demeanor was missing and he seemed to be restraining himself as he said with a straight face, “My daughter is quite capable of going somewhere on her own, we know where she went and we trust her. As should you.” He calmly told them. It was a very strange thing to feel tension in the older couple’s presence as they defended Marinette, it was so unlike the joyous welcome and insistence of snacks being thrown their way when they usually came over that the teenagers were thrown for a loop.

It hurt, not being welcomed like they were family.

Alya looked nervously at Nino, acknowledging the support and confidence Marinette’s parents had in her since it was obvious that Marinette had gone somewhere today, but it most definitely was not to a doctor’s office and they were obviously not about to tell them where. Still, it was enough that her parents knew that she had gone somewhere else today and they were proud that she had gone and obviously they fully supported it.

Both Alya and Nino caught that from their body language, and both of them knew Marinette’s parents well enough that they would have been at least partially sad, maybe even hurt if Marinette had gotten pregnant and had felt forced to get an abortion because they were the kind of people that would also enjoy being grandparents despite the circumstances. Their tone of voice told them that the older couple was fully behind whatever Marinette was up to.

Nino swallowed and merely said, “well, can you please let Marinette know that we stopped by? We, ah, wanted to check in on her.”

“We’ll pass on the message.” Tom assured them with a blank face and a small nod.

“Now, have a good day.” Sabine added almost ironically as she dismissed the two teens with her tone as they glanced at each other and then headed for the exit.

“Okay, um thanks for your help.” Nino offered over his shoulder with a half wave.

The two grown-ups nodded briefly and then they turned away from them to go back to work as Nino and Alya finally left, without their usual free treats, a fact that didn’t go unnoticed.

They were quiet as they walked towards Alya’s house. Her voice wavered as she finally said, “Sweetheart, I, uh, I’m beginning to think that we… that I- I mean, that mostly I, made some MAJOR mistakes.”

Nino only answered, “Babe, I think that we both did.”

…

Adrien left the school early, his basketball coach had shortened practice because things were too heated between the rest of the team and Adrien. Adrien briefly wondered if he’d have to quit the
team so that he wouldn’t wind up distracting them all, however unintentionally. The coach had
thrown him a supportive look or two though, so Adrien could only suppose that Mr. Damocles had
run some interference of some kind on his part. Adrien wasn’t sure if he was comfortable about that,
but he was glad that the coach seemed to be on his side at least.

Adrien wished that it didn’t seem like he was fighting a losing battle, since it seemed like no one
would believe him. Well, he hadn’t had the chance to talk to Kagami yet but he was sure that she
would come to his aid, and he was glad to have Chloe on his side too. Chloe was not a girl that he’d
want to face off against alone after all, even while he was suited up. So, Adrien counted his
blessings, knowing that at least he could count on them and that they were strong fighters in their
own way.

Still, he missed Nino and he hoped that he could convince Alya and hopefully Marinette to be by his
side.

After checking his phone and finding no messages from his friend Nino, Adrien threw on his blue
baseball hat that he kept in his bag to wear to help him hide from his ‘fans’ when he just wanted to
be Adrien as he walked towards Marinette’s house dejectedly after sending a text to his bodyguard
that he was walking to Marinette’s and they would be hanging out for a bit.

Adrien couldn’t help but wonder if Nino was still more concerned about Carapace’s position on the
heroic team than he did about his own friend’s issues too.

This would be so much better if he had all his friends at his side. Especially Marinette. She was so
strong and brave usually, brilliant and beautiful. Adrien knew now that he was drawn to her and
knowing that he liked her now, made him uneasy, because his feelings for her were so much like the
ones that he felt for his Lady, he felt torn and didn’t know how to go forward.

Adrien turned the corner as he walked along blindly, he really didn’t know exactly what he’d say to
Marinette, or how he’d handle dealing with Nino if he ever came to his senses. Adrien was early, so
it was a surprise when he looked up to see Alya and Nino leaving Marinette’s parent’s bakery
together, without any snacks and with sad and forlorn looking faces. Alya looked like she was on the
 verge of tears and Nino didn’t look far behind. As they walked away, Nino wrapped his arm around
his girlfriend to comfort her.

“So, what do you think is the matter with them?” Plagg croaked out as he peaked out of Adrien’s
jacket.

Adrien shrugged, noticing that Plagg looked like melting shadows again but darker somehow and
Adrien could feel the hint of a small vibration that Plagg had started doing about an hour ago.

“I don’t know what they’re up to, and right now, I don’t really care.” Adrien honestly replied, “I’m
trying to figure out what to say to Marinette, but I’ve got to say, you look awful Plagg.”

“Yeah, well, it’s hard to keep up these devilish good looks twenty-four seven, besides, I haven’t seen
Tikki in a while.” Plagg lightly scratched Adrien.

“That’s a clue? Ugh! Come on Plagg, sometimes I think that you just enjoy scratching me.”

Plagg rolled his eyes, “I’d knock you into next week if I thought that it’d help.” He told Adrien
honestly then sighed, “look, I really need you to focus now kid.”

Adrien eyed him suspiciously. “Why? I am paying attention, I’m sure that this isn’t going to be an
easy conversation, I mean, uh, once Marinette understands, maybe, just maybe she’ll be willing to
help expose Lila and… and then…?”

“Don’t break too many brain cells over this kid, you don’t have that many to spare.” Plagg teased.

“Hey!”

“I’m just calling it as it is kid… oh look, there’s Pigtails.” Plagg practically groaned as he rolled his eyes as Adrien looked up.

Adrien froze for a moment as he saw Marinette being escorted home by no less than three guys, guys that he didn’t even know. He briefly wondered if one of them was the crush that she had talked about before, but while she seemed cordial with them, she seemed a little overwhelmed too.

“I… I don’t know what to tell her.” Adrien admitted as he saw his, gulp, uh, the other girl he kind of liked. “I don’t know what to do Plagg!” He quickly whispered, “I know I like her but, why are there three guys following her?”

“Well, if you can get close then maybe you can hear what they’re talking about and then MAYBE you can show a bit of bravery and talk to the girl you like!” Plagg groused back.

“Ugh, Plagg, it’s not that easy.” Adrien quietly groaned as he hurried up to hide behind one of his advertisements that was near where the group had stopped so he could overhear their rapid-fire conversation…

In order to keep track of the guys, Adrien named them quickly in his head. There was Shorty, he was just under Marinette’s height, had a weird accent and seemed to think that he was the leader of the group by how he carried himself. Then there was Mr. Flirty, a taller than Marinette Spanish boy who although they all looked near the same age, he had a significant mustache already developed above his top lip, he had long hair and he had a heavy Spanish accent. He kept leaning into Marinette’s space and she would grin a bit too wide for it to be a real grin, if Adrien had to guess she was a little uncomfortable, but he knew Marinette, she could stand up for herself if she wanted to, so Adrien bit back the urge to come in and save her from him.

The last guy seemed to be a lot like Marinette’s dad in demeanor and size and he was also HUGE! He must have either been held back or had one major growth spurt, so Adrien just thought of him as Giant Boy.

Marinette was face-palming as the boys acted out a scene or something as they approached the bakery.

“Are there rocks ahead?” Mr. Flirty asked.

“If there are, then we’ll all be dead!” Giant Boy responded.

“No more rhymes now, I mean it!” Shorty exclaimed.

To which Giant Boy responded, “Anybody want a peanut?”

“Gah!” Shorty shouted and then they all laughed, including Marinette. Adrien was enchanted, being able to see her smile like that again was priceless.

“Well, My Lady…” Adrien gut clenched tightly as Shorty called Marinette by his Lady’s name, but he didn’t know why, “now that you have experienced the awesomeness that is our school, would
you accept our humble plea to grace us with your presence in the future? Any other option would be ‘inconceivable’ to us My Lady. What say you friends?"

Mr. Flirty shrugged and told him, “you keep using that word, I don’t think it means what you think it means.” He ducked just as Giant Boy almost playfully clobbered him. “Hey!”

Giant Boy, “I just want you to feel like you’re doing well. I hate for people to die embarrassed.”

Mr. Flirty turned towards him and held out a pretend saber, “My name is Inigo Montoya, you’ve killed my father, prepare to die!”

Marinette chuckled as the boys darted around her laughing as they pretended to fight.

Giant Boy suddenly stopped and stood tall as he held up his fist threateningly towards Mr. Flirty, “let’s face each other as God intended. Sportsmanlike. No tricks, no weapons, skill against skill alone.”

Mr. Flirty, “you mean, you’ll put down your rock and I’ll put down my sword and we’ll try and kill each other like civilized people?”

Giant Boy laughed and answered, “I could kill you now.”

Mr. Flirty answered, “Frankly, I think the odds are slightly in your favor at hand fighting.”

Giant Boy grinned, “Bwah ha ha, It’s not my fault for being the biggest and the strongest. I don’t even exercise.”

“You’re hilarious guys,” Marinette rolled her eyes at them, “want to come in for a snack?”

“Only after you agree to come to our school.” Shorty smirked at her and Adrien’s blood boiled, Mr. Flirty slugged him and gave him a look, as if to say not to push her.

Marinette straightened her stance and told him, “you mock my pain!”

Mr. Flirty responded with a bow, “Life is pain Highness, anyone who says anything differently is selling something.”

Marinette pouted and then added as if she was afraid, “we’ll never survive.”

Mr. Flirty bowed again to Marinette and took her hand grandly, making Adrien tighten his fists again as he said, “nonsense, you’re only saying that because no one ever has!” Then he leaned over and almost kissed the back of Marinette’s hand.

Adrien was about to announce himself but Marinette had pulled her hand away and then pushed Mr. Flirty away with a finger to his nose playfully, a move that was alarmingly familiar to Adrien for some reason, he just couldn’t put his finger on it, as Shorty booted and Plagg gave him a light scratch.

Marinette scowled at Shorty playfully, “Why do you do this?”

Shorty chuckled and waved his hands, “because you had love in your hands, and you gave it up!”

Marinette put her hands together as if to plea for their approval dramatically, “But they would have killed Westley if I hadn’t done it.”

*Westley? Was that the name of Marinette’s crush?* Adrien wondered.
“Your true love lives!” Shorty was really falling into his roll, “And you marry another, True Love saved her in the Fire Swamp and she treated it like garbage. And that’s what she is, the Queen of Refuse. So, bow down to her if you want to, bow to her. Bow to the Queen of Slime, the Queen of Filth, the Queen of Putrescence. Boo. Boo. Rubbish, Filth, slime, muck Boo, Boooo!”

Astonished, Marinette looked like she was about to cry.

“No, I’m sorry Marinette! I really got carried away with that one!” Shorty apologized.

“You know you’re special Princess.” Giant Boy soothed as he patted her shoulder.

“Yeah, we wouldn’t have escorted you home to entertain you otherwise.” Mr. Flirty answered. “You said that you’ve felt awful even considering leaving your old school and well, we understand. We don’t want to put any pressure on you, we just want to see you smile.”

Marinette seemed to calm down and smiled softly as she then answered with a strong voice, “you’ve mocked me once, never do it again! I died that day!”

“Again, we must offer our apologies Princess,” Mr. Flirty bowed to her as Shorty and Giant Boy clapped for some reason, “but we do need to take our leave.”

Marinette chuckled, “would you like a few cookies to go then? I don’t mind spoiling my friends now and then.”

“You are wonderful.” Mr. Flirty answered and nodded yes.

Marinette did a quick mock bow before opening the door to the bakery, “Thank you, I’ve worked hard to become so.”

“Obviously you’ve succeeded our dear Princess Buttercup.” Giant Boy answered as he was the last one to enter, allowing Marinette to go before him and then he closed the door behind himself, their chuckles disappearing behind them.

Adrien couldn’t hear them anymore.

“What do you think that was all about Plagg?”

“I don’t know, you humans like being crazy like that sometimes, now why don’t you go in there and just get us some bread.”

“More Cheese Danishes?”

“Something in between now I think.” Plagg sighed, “I don’t need sweet just yet, but that last Danish was a bit, blech.”

“Fine. Should I wait till they leave though?” Adrien asked. “Marinette looked like she was having fun, for the most part.” Adrien bit his lip indecisively.

“I wouldn’t wait, they could be moving in on your territory.” Plagg warned off handedly.

“Plagg, I… I may like her, but Marinette is still just my friend.”

Plagg scratched Adrien hard, “Hey! What was that for!”

“For being dumb, obviously whatever perfume that girl is wearing is attracting other guys that AREN’T you! Now get in there!” Plagg ordered.
“Alright, alright!” Adrien took a breath to calm himself and then he walked towards the bakery.

As Adrien opened the door to the bakery, he found the other four teens laughing again as Mrs. Cheng saw him enter.

“We’re glad that you’ve perked up a bit since that akuma at lunch.” Shorty told Marinette.

*What, Marinette was attacked again?* Adrien wondered since he knew they probably wouldn’t sound so worried about the attack that happened at his school earlier.

“Thanks, guys, for being there to cheer me up and to chase off all the weird guys today.”

“No problem you’re Highness,” Mr. Flirty bowed to her, “it was our pleasure.”

Sabine looked distracted as she sized Adrien up noticeably, but then nodded and finally spoke up and said, “Oh, hello Adrien,” then everything went quiet in the small bakery.

Marinette’s new guy friends were each clutching a small bag of treats as they glanced at Adrien and then at each other before the Giant Boy stepped forward. “Is this guy causing you any trouble Princess?”

“Because we’d be more than willing to escort him out.” Shorty added as he came to his friend’s side, not that he would need it.

“Anything to defend her Highness.” Mr. Flirty offered with a small bow in her direction before he went to join his other friends.

Marinette glanced at them and then at Adrien and sighed, “no guys, this is Adrien, I invited him here, he wanted to talk about something with me.” The other boys nodded, not caring about the lack of an introduction, “look, I figured I’l’d give Adrien a chance guys,” she shot them with one of her devastatingly gorgeous smiles, “it was nice meeting you today though.”

Sabine, Marinette’s mother turned away from them as she turned to Adrien to help him make his selections with a sad look in her eyes, as if she was resigned to do something.

The boys nodded and then lined up to hug Marinette goodbye, “Bye Princess.” Shorty told her as he gave her a hug.

Adrien tried not to react from their interactions as he turned to the cases and pointed to a few things to buy while Marinette said her goodbyes. Sabine wrapped up his selections and he offered to pay. But Sabine shook her head and said, “this time, it’s on the house.” Adrien understood that in the future, it may not be like that with that tone.

“Call us if you need anything, it’s not often we can find someone to quote The Princess Bride with.” Giant Boy patted Marinette’s shoulder after he gave her a bear hug.

“That goes double for me. Remember and hear this now, I’ll always come for you, Princess.” Mr. Flirty told her sweetly and Adrien felt like he could deck him, all of them, for using his nickname for Marinette, but Adrien kept himself under control, they were leaving after all and they had made Marinette smile and laugh and that bought them a lot of patience on his part.

“How can you be so sure?” Marinette smirked at Mr. Flirty in reply, “and don’t you use the next line,” she quickly added, “we’ve only known each other for a day, so that’s not happening!”
The guys laughed and started to head out the door, glancing at each other as they laughed again before they called out to Marinette, “As You Wish!”

“You wish guys!” Marinette laughed back at them and then they left, leaving Adrien packing his purchase into his bag and eyeing Marinette shyly.

“So, what was that about?” Adrien asked her.

“Well, I just met them today, they’re pretty decent guys. All of them are in the same drama club apparently and they’re also fans of the movie the Princess Bride, like I am.” She explained with a small smile, “we were quoting the movie a lot today and it was pretty fun.”

“Oh.” Adrien didn’t know what to say, he still had to see the movie after all.

“So, you wanted to talk?” Marinette asked him.

Adrien swallowed, “yeah, it would be best if we could talk privately, uh, do you… do you want to walk over to the park? Or would you like to uh…go to your room? This could take a while.”

Mrs. Cheng cleared her throat behind them. “I think the park would be preferable, being alone is how rumors are started after all.” She looked at Adrien meaningfully and he swallowed, freezing for a moment, realizing that she had heard something already and while she obviously didn’t believe it, she wasn’t about to allow anything else to happen that might make the rumors about them seem to be true.

“Maman?” Marinette asked, apparently not knowing what they were referring to.

Mrs. Cheng waved them off, “I just needed to let you know that Alya and Nino were here earlier and they wanted to talk with you, there’s something else, but we ah, can discuss that later. Unless of course Adrien here wants to tell you about it himself that is.”

“Adrien?” Marinette looked at him, “what’s going on?”

Sabine shook her head, “just go on a walk with Adrien to the park and hear him out. I expect you to be back in half an hour, do you have your phone?”

Marinette pulled it out and showed it to her mother, “well, yeah. It never leaves my side.”

“Okay Dear, we’re here if you need us.” Sabine told her daughter as she came up beside her and put a hand on her shoulder as she turned towards Adrien and said solemnly, “we’re trusting you with her Adrien.”

Actually, catching her drift Adrien nodded as he set a timer on his phone, “I’ll have her back in half an hour.”

“So, is the park okay then?” Adrien asked her again as he turned towards Marinette hesitantly, acknowledging that she wasn’t acting like her normal self. She hadn’t stuttered around him at all and while she had been happy when those guys had been there, she was muted again, like she had been at school recently, now that he had thought about it. His missed the real Marinette, the one he would be able to glimpse as Chat Noir.

Marinette finally nodded and told him to go on ahead, but when Adrien insisted on holding the door for her, she only shrugged and sadly passed him by. As she did so, she almost heartbreakingly whispered under her breath something that an ordinary guy wouldn’t hear, but he was Chat Noir after all and was no ordinary guy, so he clearly heard her say as she passed him by as she sighed as if
it pained her to say the whispered words that left her sweet mouth, “as you wish.”

Chapter End Notes

Just a Princess Bride reminder, "As You Wish" = I love you.

Also, just to clarify, when Marinette ended this chapter saying it that way, in that tone, it's like she is saying it in past tense... Dun Dun DUN!

Also, the three boys, Shorty, Mr. Flirty and Giant Boy (never gave them names besides what was in Adrien’s head lol) were created in the likeness of (teenage) characters from the movie the Princess Bride. Shorty of course was given a slightly better personality lol.

The 'Bwah ha ha' was suggested by my kid, go figure.

Oh, did you see the implied Ladybug tendencies? Fun tidbit, as I understand it, ladybugs put out pheromones when they're looking for a mate - pfft!

* From the Author

Also, just to let you all know, I appreciate and love all the wonderful comments that I get on this story!

Thank you all for your support and for reading my story, I hope you liked this chapter!
Chapter Summary

As promised, this chapter will be something else...

Adrien and Marinette have their talk in the park, Tikki joins Plagg in Adrien's pocket, Adrien warns Marinette about the possibility of the tabloids making it look like they're dating, he mentions the Mayor's Ball, she alludes to her new 'perfume' and he asks to sniff her...

There's more, but it's a long chapter... about 3000 words and I can't wait to share it... so read on, at your own risk.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Adrien walked quietly beside Marinette for a minute or two until they came to a private bench in the shade at the park. Adrien waved at it as if to ask if she would like to sit down and Marinette nodded as she took a seat on one side and he sat on the other side uncomfortably.

Knowing that he didn’t have much time, Adrien exhaled to let out some tension and just dove into it, hardly recognizing Plagg’s shift in position in his pocket. It must be Adrien’s imagination, but Plagg felt heavier and warmer too, but that must just be his nerves.

Adrien took a deep breath and said as he exhaled, “let me start with the easy stuff please.”

Marinette nodded. “Okay, go ahead.”

“Well, I guess first of all, I thought that you’d like to get a heads up about that article that had us dating a while back, it may be coming back to haunt us.” Adrien bit his lip slightly as he rubbed his neck nervously.

“Oh, well, that’s no big deal. We both know that you’re not interested in me that way,” Marinette replied as she looked out across the park and his heart clenched at how detached she sounded. “You could have just told me about that over the phone Adrien.”

“I kind of knew that.” Adrien grasped his hands and twiddled his thumbs on his lap as he looked down and shook his head. “Well, that’s not all though, there’s more Marinette,” he sighed and then brushed one of his hands along the back of his neck nervously again, “so much more.”

Marinette frowned a little with that adorable little pout of hers. Adrien glanced at her and blushed a little before he looked away from her as she answered, “alright, you’re kind of acting like it’s the end of the world here Adrien,” she waved with one of her hands, “and it’s kind of scaring me, it’s probably not as bad as you think it is, so please, just tell me.” She told him honestly.

“Well, before we get into the messy subject, I… I wanted,” Adrien swallowed and then admitted as he smiled hesitantly and told her, “well, it’s not bad first of all, it’s something good… I-I hope, oh, I, uh, I’m messing this up.” Adrien sighed, “I’m sorry. W-what I’m trying to say is that I-I’d like to invite you to be my date to the Mayor’s Ball on Friday?” Adrien finally looked up at her hopefully.
“Please.”

“As friends?” His heart almost broke as he heard both the disappointment and the certainty in her voice.

Adrien swallowed, “no, as… as maybe something more?” He asked hesitantly. “Like, maybe as a real date?”

*Please Marinette, believe me, I like you and I want to see where this, us, can go.* He mentally pleaded as he gazed into her oh so familiar somehow and yet gorgeous bluebell eyes, his focus entirely on her.

Marinette was stunned and then, just blinked at him, surprised that Adrien of all people was asking her out. “Wait, is-is this like a prank or something Adrien? Did someone put you up to this?” She looked around and after she was certain that there was no one nearby she turned to him and blinked in shock once more as she lightly gasped, “It’s, this is not a trick. Is it?”

Plagg scratched Adrien lightly.

“What? No!” He took one of her hands in his own, “I mean it! I mean, uh, are you really asking me if someone is pressuring me to ask you out?” He asked in disbelief, so now Adrien was the shocked one. “NO! I’ve… I wanted to ask you to the Ball all on my own.”

_Since this morning when I realized that I like you that is._ He thought. _I can’t find Ladybug, and I’m not giving up on finding her and fixing things, but, but you’re here and…_ Ladybug? Adrien was so confused in his mind, but in his heart, this… this felt right.

Marinette still looked alarmed for some reason and was speechless, hardly believing that this wasn’t a dream as he squeezed her hand painfully, lost in his explanation…

Adrien began to ramble, “look, I’m sorry if I messed up, I’ve never asked someone that… that I like so much out before,” Adrien was looking away bashfully as he rubbed the back of his neck like he had a rash or something before he pulled his hand off of his neck and started gesticulating with it, “I didn’t even think that I was allowed to date and when I mentioned that, to Father that is, that IF I could date that I’d like to date you, and, and he… he literally gave me his blessing to date you!” Adrien kept on going without a breath, “and here you are, so beautiful, so amazing and kind and… I don’t want to lose this opportunity and…”

Marinette smiled at him and placed a finger just in front of his lips to stop him, “Adrien, please, just breathe.”

Adrien took a deep breath, as he smiled at her and gazed into her beautiful and yet still disbelieving eyes. “I know that it’s kind of out of the blue, but…but I’d really like to be the one to escort you to the ball if you’ll let me.” Adrien told her earnestly. _It really shouldn’t be this hard for me to ask out a girl, but, but this is Marinette! Please, say yes!_

Marinette bit her lip for a moment as she considered it.

_Adorable_, Adrien thought.

“Just, just humor me here Adrien, because I-I need to know.” She asked and he nodded, that wasn’t a no after all and whatever this was, it was important to her.

“Is this like a split-second decision thing, or was it part of the reason why you came over here?” She frankly asked, “Look, uh, I’m not explaining this well, I guess what I mean is, uh, were you already
planning to ask me out, before you asked to see me?” She looked at him with a raised eyebrow. “Or did you decide just now?”

Adrien looked confused, “uh, well, it was part of the reason why I came over here honestly, I do have that other big thing to tell you about, but I was planning on asking you, which was important and I wanted you to say yes, which is why it’s the second thing I mentioned…”

She smiled, “you’re doing it again Adrien.”

“Sorry, it’s just, there are some other things that came up and I uh, well, I didn’t want you to say no, that’s why I led with asking you out. Why do you ask?”

Marinette looked a little embarrassed as she explained, “well, let’s just say that a friend of mine, uh, loaned me a scent, I mean a new perfume?”

Plagg scratched Adrien. “No, a… a perfume, that kind of attracts guys?” Marinette chuckled to herself and blushed before adding as she looked away, as Adrien received another scratch, “let’s just say that I’ve been getting a bit more attention than I’m used to today. Those guys that walked me home were kind of fending off the creepy guys from me all day.”

“Oh, I guess that makes sense. Although I don’t see why you’d need a perfume like that.” Adrien tried not to wince as he felt two distinct scratches being made on his chest. He cleared his throat, “you’re already really, uh, pretty attractive already.”

Marinette blushed and whispered, “thanks.”

“May I?” Adrien nodded and asked politely as he leaned towards her.

“May you what?” She eyed him suspiciously.

“Well, I was just wondering what your perfume smells like.” Adrien blushed a little.

“You can’t smell it?” She looked surprised and then a little sad, but then confused as she eventually said, “well, I’m told it’s kind of like a floral honey…”

“Wait, you can’t smell it?” Adrien asked. Plagg clawed him a little bit deeper this time. “I mean, why would you put on a perfume that you can’t even smell?”

“It just works on, uh, guys that would be a good match… I’m told.” Marinette blushed prettily for him again.

Adrien weighed that comment as Plagg used him as a scratching post again and then asked again, “well, may I? I’m kind of upwind here.”

Marinette shyly replied with a small nod, “sure.”

Adrien slowly scooted closer to her, realizing that since she was downwind from him, he wouldn’t be able to smell her if it was a weak scent, so he leaned over and almost put his nose on her neck as the scent he caught that was emanating from her drew him in immediately. He breathed in her amazing, intoxicating scent and then he exhaled, his breath making her shiver. “Oh, wow,” he sighed, “you smell better than, well, anything…” he took another deep breath, “I, I never noticed before…”

Oh, my gosh I could die happy. Adrien’s mind was mush as he took in another breath of her scent and without even thinking about it, he let go of her hand and wrapped his arm around her shoulders,
pulling her close.

*If Ladybug was a perfume, this would be her.* His scent addled mind whispered to him as he took another long whiff.

“Um, Adrien.” Marinette brought him back to reality as she gently pushed him back a little by the shoulder, her face a deep rosy color. “You were trying to say something?”

Adrien blushed, *oh, that, that was a bit much wasn’t it?* He told himself because smelling pretty girls was not something that normal guys usually did, at least that he knew of.

“Oh, uh, yeah, the Mayor’s Ball.” He cleared his throat and leaned back a little, leaving his arm around her shoulder since he was still a little intoxicated by her scent but didn’t want to leave her completely, “will you go out with me please Marinette?”

“Oh, huh.” Marinette looked at him warily, and honestly, after smelling her perfume, he could believe why she’d been getting so much unwanted attention and didn’t believe him at first as she answered, “look, I don’t even have a dress ready for something like that.” She told him hesitantly.

“We have lots of dresses at Father’s office, I’m sure he wouldn’t mind lending one to you, we could go pick one out tomorrow after school?” Adrien offered hopefully.

“You’re willing to lend me an original Gabriel dress?” Marinette’s eyes went wide in disbelief as she smiled sweetly, Adrien’s heart nearly took off as he watched her grin as he nodded yes.

Marinette did that adorable biting her lip thing as she considered, “well, let me think about it.” Marinette carefully answered.

“As the lady wishes.” Adrien quipped, not even realizing what he said.

“Now,” she took a breath and readied herself, “you had something else that you wanted to talk to me about? Something big?”

Adrien swallowed, *well, this was it.*

“Right, well,” he rubbed the back of his neck once more with his free hand, leaving his other arm across her shoulders, he didn’t want to move away from her for some reason after all. “Well, there’s been some stuff going on at school and long story short.” Adrien took a deep breath and told her in one exhale, “Chloe and I are planning on exposing Lila’s lies.”

Marinette quickly scooted away from him like he had slapped her, he felt her absence immediately as she left his side and turned to face him directly.

*Oh no.*

Marinette’s face went from upset, *to Krakatoa,* he thought with an internal shiver as his arms fell to his sides as the analogy of one of those volcanoes that literally blew it’s head off and sank into the ocean, destroying the island it was once a part of seemed both appropriate and not enough.

He told himself in that instant, *this is WAY past catching someone putting gum on your seat.*

Adrien, Chat Noir, son of Gabriel Agreste, knew in that moment the meaning of the word FEAR.

Marinette took a deep breath and exhaled. Once, then twice.

*She’s carving my coffin…*
Adrien could barely handle the suspense…

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“WHY?” She loudly asked shakily. “What changed YOUR mind?” She demanded.

Adrien swallowed, she looked furious to say the least. “Well,” he nervously replied, “she’s been spreading these rumors about me and, and…”

Marinette shakily pointed her finger at him, “WHY NOW? Whatever happened to taking the high road? To not stooping to HER level and making things worse FOR HER? What happened to knowing that she was lying was ENOUGH? Is this because she came after you and not someone else?!” Marinette stood up, she was shaking.

“Please, let me explain Mari!” Adrien interrupted as he pleaded, “you don’t know everything!”

“I think I know enough, because that’s a double standard there Adrien! She’s been threatening and bullying me for weeks! Weeks Adrien!” She steadied herself as if she was defending herself from an akuma attack.

*Even Ladybug wouldn’t be able to look so prepared to rip my head off.*

“Do you have any idea what that’s like?!” Her voice broke as she took another deep breath and lowered her shoulders as if in defeat and then hugged herself for some self-comfort as she released her deepest and darkest fears. “Do you KNOW what it’s like to just take it? For SO LONG! To not have anyone there for you? For the one person that you thought that would be there for you if it got bad enough ignoring what was right in front of him? As if he… as if he APPROVED of your suffering?!”

Adrien couldn’t breathe, he covered his mouth and felt his heart break over what he helped start because, yes, he kind of knew how feeling like that felt, especially now, but her painful words just kept coming, as her eyes grew wet as she fought her tears, “I- I tried to follow your advice, to not expose her or to humiliate her, I tried not to hurt her, I dared to hope that either the lies would catch up to her on their own or she’d just quit it.” Marinette swallowed.

Adrien could only sigh her name, “Mari…” as he sunk into the bench in his guilt.

Marinette looked directly at him, her eyes burning a hole into his soul, “no, let me finish. Let me tell YOU something, not doing anything didn’t make her or the situation better Adrien, it allowed her to get worse and to carry out her threats! She feels unstoppable now, I’m sure of it. That’s why she went after you, because you… because WE let her.” Marinette whispered to herself as she held herself shakily, as a tear fell from her eye, “I used to think that I was strong Adrien, that I could take on anything, but now I know that I can’t, not alone anyway. I-I wasn’t meant to be alone.”

Plagg clawed Adrien in three quick swipes urgently, but Adrien… Adrien collapsed in on himself as he looked down at his lap and loudly groaned as he covered his face for a moment as his voice shook, “Oh, Mari, I AM SO SO SORRY! I-I know that now. She came after me after I told her that I didn’t want to be her boyfriend, I-I didn’t realize that she’d been spreading that rumor or had been trying to make it look like we were… that we were… that way.”

He looked up at her, devastated, “I had no idea that she was threatening you either! Why didn’t you
Marinette looked away, “don’t turn this on me.” She muttered.

“M-Mari?” He weakly asked.

She shrugged before she explained, “no one would believe me as it was. To Alya, I needed proof, even for the things that I’d seen with my own eyes since my word wasn’t good enough, to my best friend of all people. Nino agreed with her, you told me to let Lila do her own thing. Besides my parents, who let me decide to be a pushover until they insisted Monday night that I try out a different school or two so I could leave to just breathe! So, so I could have some hope and eat again! I’ve lost 4 Kilos (almost 9 lbs) in two weeks Adrien! That’s not healthy! I’ve been getting weaker every day!”

Marinette started shaking, “I-I can’t afford to give in to all of this Adrien.” She almost whispered, as she kind of waved that small fact off, like there was more to it. Adrien heard her though, not understanding what she meant.

Plagg gave Adrien one long scratch, but the boy barely felt it, it hurt him more to see this wonderful girl before him suffering so.

How did it get to this? How didn’t I see it coming?

Marinette looked up and exhaled, “besides, who could I to tell at school? Who would believe me?” She sighed again as she wiped her eyes. She swallowed before she asked, “now, is that everything then Adrien?”

Realizing that she was so burdened that she didn’t have any energy left to give to this conversation and that she was about to just dismiss him, Adrien loudly replied, “NO! T-There’s more to it, but first I HAVE to let you know that I AM SO SORRY Marinette, I had no idea that she was like that, like this! That was terrible advice that I gave you and I AM SO, SO SORRY!” He finally looked up her and pleaded as he fell to one knee before her, “I’m sorry, I wasn’t there for you, please forgive me.” He choked as he muttered, “I c-can hardly forgive myself!”

“Well, you’re the last person that I thought I’d find her hanging out with!” Someone loudly announced behind them, “how can you even look at her, or do THAT after what you’ve done?!”

Chapter End Notes

Of course as the writer here, I know who said that last line, but no spoilers!

To me this chapter practically tied with the one where Lila went after Adrien with the level of angst, had to have it peak in chapter 30 with some karma there. (maybe, we'll have to wait and see if that's as bad as it gets, I find that I keep surprising myself with how bad things can get.)

Some notes,
Tikki is in Adrien’s pocket getting what little time she can get with Plagg to alleviate their symptoms since Mari isn't going to school with Adrien right now, she'll probably leave when she has to without anyone noticing...

Marinette distinctly admitted to her ladybug tendencies, her pheromones, that Tikki embarrassingly told her were to help her attract a 'partner,' so Marinette is a little distracted by that and the fact that most guys that reacted to it were further away than
Adrien. (Adrien is already her partner, he is upwind from her and their miraculous is messing with their balance and thus how her pheromones will call to him, although they still do the closer that he gets to her). Mari mistakenly thinks this is kind of a puberty thing, but it's brought on by the lack of balance, Tikki is trying to keep her in the dark, hoping that Adrien might get a clue and somehow fixes things. (maybe one of those scratches was hers?) (thinking face)

Yes, I threw in there that one of the reasons Mari is considering changing schools is because she is so stressed out, she is hardly eating and losing weight far too quickly due to all that she does as Ladybug. She has been struggling during the battles from physical weakness, but she's kept that to herself and Queen Bee thus far. As a responsible teammate, Queen Bee noticed that something was off about her and has volunteered to help however she can.

Hmm, will she forgive Adrien? Who came to her defense? Will she even consider going out with Adrien to the Ball after this? Will she help take down Lila? Will she change her mind about returning to her old school? Hmmm... can't say, answers to those questions are spoilers after all he hee.

(next chapter posting should be in 3 days or less. 😌😌😌😌 )
Surprise!

Chapter Summary

Their surprise guest that interrupts Marinette's and Adrien's conversation stands by Marinette and confesses to telling her parents about the big issue at hand...

Chapter Notes

I feel like I've succeeded as a writer because no one saw who came to Mari's defense specifically.😊

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Well, you’re the last person that I thought I’d find her hanging out with!” Someone loudly announced behind them, “how can you even look at her, or do THAT after what you’ve done!!”

Both Marinette and Adrien turned around at the angry voice of a handsome and yet usually very quiet young man. Adrien rose to his feet, his face flushed with his guilt, but could easily be mistaken for embarrassment.

Oh, my gosh! It looked like I was proposing to Marinette! Adrien realized belatedly as he focused on the young man before them.

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“Nathaniel!” Marinette exclaimed and then added, “how, how long have you been there?”

Nathaniel looked angrier than he’d ever been, as either himself or as the Evillistrator.

“Long enough.” Nathaniel briefly closed his eyes to take one long breath to steady himself before he walked over to Marinette and put one hand on her shoulder protectively as he stood beside her. He didn’t give any sign that he was affected by her perfume, besides his daring defense of her.

“I saw you two over here and I thought that Marinette could use some moral support.” Nathaniel gave her shoulder a small squeeze. “I probably heard most of your conversation after you didn’t see me come over here.” He told them coolly and quietly.

Adrien was about to interrupt but Nathaniel held up his hand to stop him. “Adrien, I’ve been watching what has been going on at school and to be honest, I’ve been worried and wondering about Mari here for over a week or two, honestly. I don’t know how you couldn’t see how she hasn’t been herself, no matter how oblivious you are. I thought you were one of her best friends, despite the circumstances.” Nathaniel gave Marinette a small smirk and Marinette blushed a little and gave him a small and appreciative smile as she covered her face with her hands in embarrassment for a minute.
“I have to apologize to you too.” Nathaniel told her, “I’m so sorry Marinette, I didn’t know what to say,” Nathaniel angled himself so he could look directly at Marinette as she looked up at him. “I’m not the best at words and, I hate to say it Mari, but at first I was taken in by Lila’s lies, but they just got so outrageous and… and it took me awhile to realize that she’s been trying to make you the outcast and after the whole class representative thing, well, I knew that something was up for sure, but I didn’t know what you were going through, had I known, I would have spoken up sooner.”

“Wait, you’ve spoken up?” Adrien asked.

“I haven’t confronted Lila if that’s what you’re asking.” Nathaniel looked a little embarrassed, “I’m afraid that I’m the one that came and told your Mom what’s been going on Marinette.”

Then Nathaniel sighed, “I didn’t know what to say, until today, until after I talked with your Mom. It shouldn’t have taken so long for me or for any of your friends to figure it out, YOU deserve better. I’m sorry Marinette and I’m sorry that I wasn’t there for you today either.”

Marinette looked up at him shyly and then patted his hand that was still on her shoulder reassuringly and graced him with a small smile. “Thanks Nath, that’s really sweet of you.”

Realizing that he hadn’t been forgiven yet, Adrien pouted. “I’m sorry too.” He muttered.

“You should be.” Nathaniel scolded.

“Nath.” Marinette lightly reprimanded.

Nathaniel groaned, “has he even told you why he came groveling over here? I know he was asking for forgiveness when I came over here.” Nathaniel gave Adrien a warning look, telling him he knew what that looked like from afar.

“Nath!” Marinette reprimanded again.

Adrien stood and replied, “look, I meant what I said too Marinette.” He turned to her and tried to be as convincing as he could be as he told her, “I did come here to ask you out, but, but he’s right Mari. I took WAY too long to come over and apologize and I probably should have told you why I needed to talk to you so urgently in the first place.” Adrien took a deep breath, preparing himself to explain the rumor that Lila started because he was not going to tell her what Lila did to him in the locker room in front of Nathaniel of all people.

“Well, the girl’s waiting.” Nathaniel practically sneered.

Marinette was not up to dealing with any more posturing today. “Nathaniel,” she sternly said, “if you can’t be nice maybe you should just go.” She told him sadly as she finished.

Nathaniel looked at her and then at Adrien, seeing that she was okay and didn’t seem to be about to attract another akuma, so Nathaniel merely nodded, shot one more hostile glance at Adrien and then gave in as he patted her shoulder sympathetically. “Look, I’ll let you talk, but call me after he’s left Mari, I want to know that you’re okay.”

Mari nodded at him, “I will.”

“Then that’s all that I can ask.” Nathaniel looked away for a moment and nodded to himself as he decided to be a little brave as he leaned over and gave Marinette a quick peck on the cheek. Leaning back, he brushed his hair out of his eye, pleased with himself as he grinned, “you take care of yourself Mari, and give me a call soon, ok?”
Marinette blushed a little and nodded, “I will, thanks for looking out for me.”

Nathaniel nodded back and gave her a small wave before walking off after checking her out and throwing her a small but roguish grin.

Adrien’s blood was boiling, as he clenched his fists and reminded himself that girls usually didn’t like it when guys fought over them, which is why he bit his tongue for the most part while Nathaniel was there. Then again, Adrien didn’t think that it would look very good to Mari if he clawed out Nathaniel’s eyes either.

Mari turned to look at Adrien and bluntly said, “look, I told Maman that I’d be back soon.”

Adrien pulled out his phone and glanced at the time, “yeah, we don’t have much time left.” He commented sadly.

“So, what’s so important that you’re so obviously afraid to tell me after all of that?” Marinette asked.

“Maman and now Nathaniel are acting strangely and Alya blew up my phone trying to contact me after pushing me away this past couple of weeks, so it must be something big.” She blinked those gorgeous eyes at him, reading him like a book. “Something that has to do with Lila I suppose?”

Adrien nodded dejectedly, “yeah, but uh, I was wondering if you’d forgive me too first? Please.”

Marinette bit her lip thoughtfully and Adrien thought she really needed to come with a warning when she did that,

and they thought that I’m the model!

“I’m thinking about it Adrien, honestly, I think that I need some time. Nathaniel didn’t know that Lila was lying originally and he eventually came to apologize and check in on me once he figured it out, with no ulterior motive.”

“Oh Mari, I’ve so messed up.” Adrien looked downcast. “I’m sorry it seems that way. I really should have spoken up earlier. I’m not making an excuse here, but please, let me try to explain a little? I’ve been taught to just let things go, that fighting back, especially when it comes to rumors or lies, fighting back can only make you look guilty in most cases, that’s how it is with the press. Saying nothing usually lets the rumors die on their own faster than if you put up a rebuttal. Besides, have you met my father?”

Marinette chuckled at that. “I have.”

“Ok, well, just, will you think about forgiving me at least?” Adrien pleaded with his kitten eyes.

Marinette gave him a confused look, but then settled on a small grin and smiled. “I can think about it, but what is this big thing? We don’t have much time left.”

As if to agree, the little alert from Adrien’s phone let them know they had less than ten minutes left.

“Alight, I-I’ll try to give you the short version.” Adrien told her, “as you know Lila has been a bit too friendly with me lately.”

“Yes, she’s been telling everyone you’re going out secretly.”

“Yes, she’s been telling everyone you’re going out secretly.”

“You knew?!”

Marinette shrugged, “I doubted it honestly, but since you didn’t do anything to discourage her, I thought that you didn’t mind, or maybe that you liked it or, or that maybe it might be true?” She sadly admitted.
Adrien shook his head, “that’s the furthest thing from the truth. I thought I wasn’t allowed to date and I’ve never liked Lila like that, she’s too pushy and, and I know she lies, like, a lot. Besides, why would I go after a girl like her when you’re around?” Adrien gave her a small flirtatious smirk.

Marinette gave him one back and tapped her watch. “eight minutes Mr. Agreste.”

“Ugh, don’t call me that, I’m not my father.” Adrien groaned, “okay, the short, short version. Lila told everyone that I was secretly dating her.”

“Yeah, I got that.”

Adrien bit his lip briefly, Marinette looked a little frazzled as he looked away and went on, “she came to me today and told me that I had to be her boyfriend, or, or she’d make me pay, she’d ruin my reputation, and, and yours.” Adrien swallowed, “she apparently noticed that I liked you and held that over me.”

Marinette was taken aback at first but then managed to ask, “Is that why you want to expose her?” Marinette raised one eyebrow at him.

“Um, that’s not all.” Adrien went on, “to be brief, when I let her know after the akuma attack today that I was not going to be her boyfriend and that I’d never be her boyfriend, she spun this crazy lie that she and I had been dating secretly and that, I, uh, had some wild um, urges.” Adrien glanced at her uncomfortably, seeing her blush deeply too, and then he looked away as he continued, “and, uh, and then she said that when she wouldn’t give in to my, my urges, that I, that I cheated on her with… with you.”

Marinette blinked in astonishment, blushing heavily after he glanced at her again as she said with a whisper, “what?”

Adrien gulped, “she, she made it sound like I had bewitched you or something and, and that we, uh, we did something together.” Adrien said sheepishly.

Marinette covered her mouth and finally chuckled, “you can’t even say it can you?”

Adrien looked pained as he finally said, “I can, I just didn’t want to embarrass you.”

“Adrien,” Marinette took his hand and gave it a quick squeeze reassuringly, “I’ve taken sex ed you know.”

“I kind of guessed, all I’ve had were pamphlets.” Adrien shrugged as he tried to wrap her hand up in his own, but she had already pulled her hand away, so he confessed the hardest part, “but Lila went even further.”

“How?” Marinette looked confused.

“She, she suggested that since I couldn’t… since I couldn’t get what I wanted from her, that… that I went to you and, and that I uh, that I got you, uh, pregnant.”

Marinette looked scandalized.

“She told the whole school this Marinette,” Adrien loudly told her as he looked away as if he was guilty of something, “because I didn’t insist on her not climbing all over me, everyone believed her.” He swallowed, “they even believed it when she claimed that you weren’t at school today because either I or my father paid for you to go to a doctor and make you… to make you, uh, get rid of our ‘mistake,’ as if a baby is a mistake!” He exclaimed.
Marinette put her hands over her mouth and just shook her head in shock.

Adrien turned to her, “first of all, I’d never do that! Cheat on a girl that I care for, much less do, do that! We’re too young, and, and uh, I wouldn’t get rid of my kid! I’m a millionaire already Mari! What excuse could I have for that huh?”

Marinette’s look went from one of surprise to one of mixed sympathy as she gave him a mixed look of acceptance and dropped her hands to her side. “I know you wouldn’t be like that Adrien.” She sighed then took his hand and gave it a tug and started to walk back to the bakery, leading the way.

Gee, she’s taking this better than I thought! Adrien found himself thinking as he let the hopeful thought run through his mind, she’s holding my hand! She doesn’t hate me!

“Mari? Aren’t you upset?” He couldn’t help but ask.

Marinette nodded, “a little bit.” She sighed as she admitted, “I’m not surprised though, and frankly I’m trying not to let Lila or her lies get to me anymore, if I do move to a new school, well, she won’t be a problem for me anymore and maybe things could get better for me. It’s no surprise to me that she would come up with that at all.”

“What! Why aren’t you surprised?” Adrien swallowed as he voiced his confusion, “besides the fact that it’s Lila that’s saying it, but why in the world would anyone think that you, that you’d be like, like that… with, with me?”

Marinette shrugged her free shoulder and gave him a nervous chuckle as she shook her head, “you know Adrien, you’re pretty handsome for a blind guy.”

Plagg shook in his pocket with concealed laughter as Adrien got a two-scratch reminder that the little pain was still in his pocket.

Now it was his turn to ask, “what?” As he shot her a slack-jawed look as she opened the door and pulled him back into the bakery.

“Maman, we’re back!” Marinette called out.

“I can see that Dear.” Mrs. Cheng was handing a large box to their most recent customer who turned around and gasped.

“What are YOU doing here?!”

Chapter End Notes

I'm surprised no one listed Nathaniel as an option specifically after the last chapter as a guess, I loved the commentary by the way. Especially the suggestion that it could have been an adult that came to her aid, because I hadn't thought of that.

I chose Nathaniel as the one to come to defend her because he obviously cares or cared about her, he's always had a sort of bird's eye view of the class (assuming he's paying attention) and he couldn't believe it, so he went to her parents to tell them what was going on rumor wise right away and to confirm his suspicions. He's a good friend and became more defensive than usual once he was close enough to smell Mari, perhaps bringing up some old feelings? (shrug)
So Marinette hasn't agreed to go to the ball with Adrien and she hasn't forgiven him either, she's thinking about it because she's still hurt. You don't have to forgive and forget when someone apologizes, it's nice, but you forgive at your own pace and of course, you never really forget, you learn to be cautious, so, we'll see what she decides later.

I just had to leave another cliffhanger didn't I? Oh yes, yes I did. 😊😊

Hopefully I'll have the next chapter out in 5 days, but it maybe a week since I'm a bit behind in writing and life has been busy. Don't want to rush it, so just putting it out there that it may be a week until the next chapter gets posted.

Thanks for all the great comments and kudos!
Taste Testing

Chapter Summary

We see who greeted Adrien and Marinette at the bakery.

Adrien goes over to Chloe's and they have a talk about what she knows...

Chapter Notes

Warning, this is a bit long with 3500+ words. I probably could have cut it up, but I'm being generous since this is the only chapter that I'll be able to post this week, eh, I bet that's okay.

So let the frustration continue... 😄 😻 😎

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“What are YOU doing here?!” Chloe demanded, then she grinned and snickered to herself as she measured the shocked looks on both of Marinette and Adrien’s faces as she rolled her eyes. “What? Look, I had to help Daddy expand the menu for the Ball Friday, so I thought that I’d be nice for once and see if your families’ bakery was as good as everyone says, so I’m buying a box of samples of the various macaroon flavors.” She then turned to Mrs. Cheng, “I’ll call and let you know what flavors we’ve decided upon in the morning. You will be able to make about oh, say a thousand for the Ball once we’ve decided upon the flavors, correct?”

“Of course.” A happy Mrs. Cheng answered, “we can manage that by Friday afternoon, with the twenty-four-hour notice.”

“Wonderful!” Chloe looked at her butler that appeared at her side, “Jean-Marc, take this box for me please and ready my limo, I’ll be out in a minute.”

“Yes Madam.” Her butler bowed and left.

“Well, aren’t you going to say anything?” Chloe gave Adrien and Marinette a signature Chloe smirk. “It can’t be that surprising that I’m trying to help out my Daddy, especially after he was so accommodating to expand the guest list for me.”

“Guest list?” Marinette asked.

“Oh, just some old friends for our little local liar to say hello to.” Chloe waved that information off. “Oh, and Adrikins, just to let you know, Kagami gave me the low down on that famous fencer. She was thrilled to get a free vacation this weekend if only she’d show up at our little party.” Chloe pretended to cover her mouth as she giggled.

“Chloe, I uh, I haven’t told Mari anything about it yet.” Adrien glanced at Marinette worriedly.

“Oh, Adrikins, stop dragging your feet and just invite her to the Ball already.” Chloe tossed her hair,
“then I want you to come with me, we’ve got so much to discuss!”

“Chloe!” Adrien choked out with a slight blush, “Marinette, she, she…” he didn’t even know what to say.

Chloe of course looked proud of herself for flustering Adrien.

Marinette cleared her throat and gently put her hand on Adrien’s shoulder, letting him know that she’d explain for them. “Chloe, Adrien did ask me to go out with him to the Ball, but honestly, I need some time to think about it.” She gave Adrien’s shoulder a squeeze and told him, “I’ll let you know by lunchtime tomorrow.”

Adrien smiled gratefully as he turned towards her since that meant that he still had a chance.

Mrs. Cheng nodded and smiled approvingly, but realized that she wasn’t really part of the conversation and turned around to fiddle with something behind the counter.

“Thank you, Marinette, thank you so much! I know that it’ll take some time to earn back your trust, but thank you for thinking about it. I look forward to your answer.” Adrien told her earnestly as he bashfully took Marinette’s hand from off of his shoulder with one hand as he bowed slightly and gave the back of it a quick peck.

Marinette looked away briefly and blushed a little, bringing her other hand to her face momentarily. “Oh stop, you’re reminding me of my favorite Kitty!”

Her comment made Adrien grin. She likes me! She really likes me! Adrien thought happily.

As Adrien stood up, Plagg shifted in Adrien’s pocket and started to cool down and as if Adrien didn’t know any better, it felt like he had just lost some weight all of a sudden, of course he didn’t think much of it.

Meanwhile, Chloe rolled her eyes at Adrien’s old-fashioned chivalry, “and that’s my cue to get out of here. Come along Adrien, I need the help of a friend to pick out some flavors. See you later Dupain-Cheng.” She said lackadaisically as she stood by the door waiting for Adrien as she looked out the window to give them a small sense of privacy.

Adrien grinned at Marinette when she glanced back at him and she quickly looked away for a moment and blushed before he let go of her hand and then he went to open the door for his friend. Chloe left and Adrien called out to Marinette as he smiled at her, “I look forward to hearing from you Marinette, I hope you have a good evening.”

“Good night Adrien.” Marinette rolled her eyes and finally nodded at him, in an oddly familiar manner, so of course Plagg scratched him and then Adrien left to catch up with Chloe.

…

Chloe had led Adrien up to her suites and had her butler leave the macaroons on the coffee table in front of her couch and then she sent him to get them a selection of drinks, some cheese bread, a few breadsticks and some honey cakes to help wash them down.

“Alright, now that we are alone, I wanted to let you know that everything is underway.” Chloe waved her hand as if it was no big deal.

“Thanks Chloe, have you given invitations to Kagami and Mr. Damocles too then?”
“Of course, Kagami is already volunteering to help with the introduction to the fencer and I’ve arranged for Mrs. Bustier to attend as well.” Chloe looked very proud of herself.

“You’re doing great Chloe, I don’t know what I’d do without a friend like you.”

Chloe rolled her eyes, “you’d probably either be dating Lie-la or you’d be pulling a Dupain-Cheng and either be returning to homeschooling or trying out another school.”

Adrien looked down and frowned at his feet with a self-depreciating sigh, “you’re probably right. I’m going to work on being more straight forward in the future now.”

“Good. Ladybug deserves to have a cat with a spine.” Chloe commented both harshly and yet kindly as she attempted to be supportive before there was a knock at the door.

“Madam, your snacks.” Chloe’s butler brought in a cart filled with the aforementioned treats and some drinks.

“Thank you Jean-Bob,” Chloe told him, “Adrikins and I will need to not be disturbed for a while, please make sure of that.”

Her butler bowed and answered, “I will stand guard outside then Madam, good day.”

He left as Chloe and Adrien got up to select something else to eat and drink to go with their macaroons.

“On another note.” Chloe mentioned as she gave Adrien a small smile as she sat down with her selections, “we can let our kwami out to breathe now if you’d like.”

“Wha-?” Adrien started before he was interrupted by Plagg. *I forgot she knew.*

“Finally!” Plagg zipped out of Adrien’s pocket and attacked the cheesebread on the cart, *thesh gurl ayen’t uhaphf baud.*

“Geeze Plagg, swallow before you talk, that’s rude!” Adrien scolded as a Bee themed kwami flew out of Chloe’s purse gracefully and calmly floated over to the honeycakes, selecting one to nibble on.

Plagg snorted and just dove into the cheese bread.

“Looks like I was the one who was lucky enough to get a kwami with manners.” Chloe commented.

“It’s not hard not to have manners compared to Plagg.” Adrien answered. “By the way, Plagg, meet Chloe and uh…”

“Pollen.” Chloe finished for him. “Although I’m sure that they’ve already met.”

The Bee kwami swallowed, “of course my Queen. We’ve met several times over the millennia.”

“Not to mention during that Sandboy incident.” Plagg offered, which caused Chloe to laugh, “oh, Ladybug had the funniest and most ironic story about that, or should I say her kwami did.” Chloe covered her mouth as she tried to control her giggles as she looked at Adrien.

“Wait, you know who Ladybug is under the mask?” Adrien asked her with wide eyes.

“Well, like with you I guessed correctly.” Chloe explained as she rolled her eyes. “After the old man with the gawdy Hawaiian shirt gave me my miraculous…”
“Hey, that’s the Guradian, he deserves a little more respect Bee-Girl.” Plagg uncharacteristically defended.

Chloe chuckled, “Bee-Girl, I kind of like it.” She reached over and tried to pat Plagg on the head, but he dodged it.

“I only let people that I like pet me.” Plagg hissed.

“Plagg.” Adrien scolded.

“No, he’s fine. He’ll love me once he gets to know me. I’m still working out the kinks with Ladybug, trust and friendship isn’t built overnight you know.” Chloe admitted, shocking Adrien.

“Wait, you’ve always said that Ladybug was your best friend.” Adrien pointed out. “Although I knew it wasn’t true as, as my other self.”

“Well, that was kind of more of a hope than anything,” Chloe admitted kindly, “I’m trying to be a bit more honest now. We have a working relationship at least, the best friend thing, well, it seems like that’s up for grabs thanks to you.” She eyed Adrien suspiciously.

“Wait, what did, the uh, old man tell you?” Adrien asked.

“Master Fu answered a few questions. Like why he was trusting me with my miraculous until you, I mean your kwami, was better.” She gave Plagg a glance, “he doesn’t seem that sick to me.”

Adrien took a closer look at his kwami, who was curling up next to the cheeze bread after letting out a large belching sound. “Plagg!”

“Sorry,” Plagg coughed, “still having issues with the cheese, I couldn’t resist.” He said sheepishly, as he laid down on the cart. Adrien noticed he had that sucking in the shadows look, but it wasn’t as severe as it was before his basketball practice earlier.

“Huh.” Adrien commented, “hey Plagg, why do you look better now?”

Plagg was comfortably laying down so he only replied, “I can’t really answer that one. Too big of a clue. All I can say is to think about it.”

Adrien looked confused and Chloe snickered, “you know, I think I like him. So, it’s true then, you’re trying to figure out who Ladybug is?”

“Wait, Master Fu told you that?!”

Chloe scoffed, “of course not, he said that Chat Noir had ‘accidentally’ messed up ‘the balance’ between himself and Ladybug,” of course Adrien could tell that she was trying to both be nice and rude at the same time as she made air quotes around certain words. “I already suspected that you were Chat Noir, I mean, who else would treat me like that while wearing a mask?” She asked like it was obvious.

Adrien sat back and waited for it.

“Besides, once I thought about it, I mean we did grow up together and I know how you look, I doubt that there is any mask in the world that could hide us from each other for long, since I know the real you pretty well from when we were kids, including the awful puns!”

“Hey, my puns are pun-tastic!”
“Yeah, uh huh. Keep telling yourself that CCB.” She inspected her nails with a wry grin.

“CCB?” Adrien gave her a weird look.

Chloe smirked, “Cute Cat Butt of course, it’s a play on Ladybug’s new endearment for you.”

Adrien blushed as she continued, “after all, she’s the one who let it spill that you have a cute kitten butt while we were talking after I figured out her identity.”

Adrien gasped, “so you do know!”

“Of course, it wasn’t a hard leap knowing that she’s supposed to balance you out. That’s how I knew she’d be late to the battle earlier. I’ve pieced together some of the clues to her identity and thus her schedule.” She shot Adrien a knowing wink, “and besides I knew you, all I had to do to figure her out is think of a girl that has many strengths that you don’t or weaknesses that you don’t have. Master Fu or whatever explained about your balance, the yin and yang. There were other clues, but Ladybug didn’t tell me by choice, I guessed and she was a bit distraught about you leaving for a time so I may have tried to comfort her over that,” Chloe shrugged. “Apparently getting a manicure and truffles late at night can help, but you can’t buy Ladybug’s love.”

Adrien chuckled, “I could have told you that.”

“Well, I’m learning. Long story short, if I hadn’t been so rash with showing off my miraculous originally, I bet you would have been the first to recognize who I was. I just did the reverse and figured out the whole team. After figuring you out and connected the dots to Ladybug.” Chloe beamed at Adrien with that little tidbit. “That led to the others.”

“Wait, you think you know who everyone is?”

“I don’t think, I know. While Master Fu or whatever selected you and Ladybug, he’s let her select everyone else, except me because I’m exceptional.”

“Uh, huh.” Adrien raised an eyebrow at her as he tried another macaroon.

“Alright fine, I found it after mother turned into Style Queen and Ladybug defeated her, with the aid of your kwami I assume.”

“Guilty.” Plagg muttered.

“Anyway, Pollen explained to me that our kwami can use their powers without their chosen if they’ve grown a decent bond with their chosen already, although it’s harder for them to control it on their own.” Chloe looked irritated as she admitted, “my Pollen told me we have a way to go to get there.”

“You’re on your way My Queen!” Pollen cheered from the cushion that she was sitting on as she watched the two teenage superheroes talk.

“Thanks.” Chloe told her.

“So, you think you know who Carapace and Rena Rouge are?” Adrien asked.

“I know who they WERE. Ladybug doesn’t trust them right now remember? She has to trust everyone on the team and while admittedly I’m kind of on probation, she really didn’t like me learning her identity after all on top of everything else, I was her best choice to team up with after you, not that she knows why.” Chloe said proudly.
“So, you know what’s going on?” Adrien wondered.

“Let’s see, to sum up.” Chloe cleared her throat, “you got all high and mighty about giving Ms. Lies A Lot a chance, or should I say chance after chance, hoping that she’d eventually shape up on her own. You got busy and didn’t notice the little things…”

Adrien looked sad but didn’t disagree.

“And over time the Liar wore down Ladybug and that’s how this started.” Chloe coughed, “and let’s not mention Marinette, who now distrusts you when she used to have an embarrassing crush on you Adrikins.”

“Wait, a crush? On me???” Adrien swallowed shocked, “Marinette! The Amazing Marinette has a crush on me?! Wait, you knew about that and you didn’t tell me?!”

“Well, she did, and while this will sound selfish, I’m going to put it out there anyway.” Chloe explained calmly, “you’ve been spending a lot of time with Kagami since your Father and her mother have had business dealings together lately and frankly, Kagami didn’t like me initially. She literally told me off once. I didn’t like that and I didn’t want you to be distracted by Marinette too.”

Adrien looked at her in disbelief. “Kagami wouldn’t have done something like that unless you tried to order her around.” He blinked and then pointed a macaroon at her, “you did didn’t you?!”

“Well, you’re not wrong there.” She waved it off, “let’s just say that we’re learning to work together over this Ball thing for you. Anyhow, I didn’t tell you about Marinette because you were oblivious to her crush and I kind of preferred it that way, besides, I’m not her keeper, she needed to step up on her own to be worthy of you.”

Adrien looked annoyed, “Chloe, I’m the one who decides who is ‘worthy’ of me. I-I like Marinette, that’s why I asked her out, not just because we’re taking down Lila, but because she’s genuinely an awesome girl, I like her and I’d have to be an idiot to not be interested.”

Chloe rolled her eyes, “I know, either that or blind and you were the last one to get that memo I think, well, besides her. I think you’ve really confused her with that Ball invitation by the way, which is a good thing.” She nodded at Adrien approvingly. “Now you’re just like nearly every other guy in the whole school who has fallen to Dupain-Cheng’s natural charms, honestly, I was a bit jealous of that. But I’ve thought about it and since you’re like a brother to me and even I can’t complain about you taking Dupain-Cheng to the ball or losing you to Ladybug, I’m coming to terms with it.” She tossed her hair over her shoulder haughtily.

Adrien looked confused, “wait, are you coming to terms with the fact that I-I l-like Marinette, that’s why I asked her out, not just because we’re taking down Lila, but because she’s genuinely an awesome girl, I like her and I’d have to be an idiot to not be interested.”

Chloe looked over at Plagg, “is he always this dense?”

Plagg opened one eye and merely answered, “what do you think?”

Chloe rolled her eyes and looked out the window, “ugh. Adrikins, you’re hopeless.”

“Huh?”

“Look, it’s getting dark. Shall we order dinner or are you full from all the testing?” Chloe waved at the nearly empty box and the list of macaroons that they liked the flavors of. There were four that they settled on thankfully.
“I’m kind of full to be honest,” Adrien admitted as he remembered that he might be getting a snack at Marinette’s later when he stopped by to get his new scratches cleaned up and he blushed.

“Thinking about her I see.” Chloe gave him a knowing look, without trying to emphasize which girl she was talking about.

“Maybe.” Adrien blushed a little as he finished his last macaroon.

Chloe sighed, “look, Master Fu told me I couldn’t say anything specific. So, obviously I’m not going to since it’s not my place, but I am going to tell you to listen to your feelings. I’ve noticed that you react around Ladybug’s civilian identity almost the same way as you do around Ladybug.”

Adrien swallowed, “I, I do?”

“Yep.” Chloe replied, “now tell me about what happened with Marinette earlier.”

Adrien nodded and told her about what had happened at the park and with Nathaniel.

…

Chloe was laughing.

“It’s not funny Clo!” Adrien pouted.

Chloe wiped her eyes, “oh, yes, it is! Hopefully you’ll get it someday.”

Adrien frowned at her, “Chloe, can’t you just tell me what’s so funny?!”

“Nope! This is ridiculous, utterly ridiculous enough as it is. You’re on your own CCB!”

“Oh, come on Chloe! That’s more embarrassing than Adrikins!”

“Which is why it’s your superhero nickname from me.” Chloe chuckled. “I think it’s ironic. Especially since you’re Cute Kitten Butt to Ladybug~” Chloe practically sung as Adrien blushed harder.

Adrien’s phone vibrated and he took it out and sighed, “looks like Nathalie wants me to get back to the mansion. I’ve got to be rested for that photo shoot tomorrow afternoon after all.” He stood up and put his phone away.

“Last minute shoot to get away from school?” Chloe asked as she got up to see him out.

“It was already on the schedule, I’ll be missing lunch and the last half of school probably.” Adrien admitted.

“Lucky you, you get to miss the insanity that will be the election tomorrow.”

Adrien snickered a little, “hey, I’m alright with that. Good luck with it and all the fittings for our classmates tomorrow.”

“Please,” Chloe scoffed, “I’ve got that in the bag. I’ve selected about four off the rack, last season or last year’s designs for each of them to try on, there’s no time to do fittings for them after all. Nathalie has been a godsend with helping to arrange that. Our classmates will never know the difference and that’s going to be fun.”

“Chloe.” Adrien shook his head at her.
“Well, all I say is that I wouldn’t mind seeing Nathaniel in a Tux though.” She blushed a little, “I’ll tell him Marinette may be there, it’ll probably be the only way that we’ll get him to wear one.” She looked kind of sad, but Adrien understood. Nathaniel, like Marinette, didn’t come from their class of upbringing and it was unlikely that her parents would approve of him for her, as he was lucky enough to get his father to approve of Marinette that is. Besides, even Adrien knew that Nathaniel was too busy writing comics with Marc to even think about dating right now.

Chloe stopped before she opened her door, “aren’t you forgetting something?” She raised her eyebrow at Adrien who picked up his bookbag that he’d left near the door, “oh, yeah.” Then he called out, “Hey Plagg! Buddy! Time to go!”

Plagg grabbed a couple of breadsticks, “coming, coming. Thanks for the food Bee-girl.” Plagg said before he floated into Adrien’s bag as he closed it behind him.

“Well, you’re welcome I guess cat.” Chloe rolled her eyes, “don’t be a stranger Adrien, I’m here if you need me.”

“Sure, thanks Chloe, we can plan what’s going to happen through text later.” Adrien thanked her as she opened the door and waved goodbye. “I’ll see you tomorrow, goodnight!”

“Goodnight Adrikins, and say hello to Dupain-Cheng tonight.” Chloe smirked as she closed the door behind him.

Adrien looked at the door in confusion, not remembering when he told her about visiting Marinette as Chat Noir. *Maybe Tikki told her somehow? Huh.* He could only wonder…

Chapter End Notes

Adrien, Adrien, why must you be so oblivious?
Oh yeah, right, because it's fun and well, duh... this is Adrien.

Also congrats to the commentators that guessed it was Chloe at the bakery!

Thank goodness Chloe is there to move it along a little, so Adrien now knows that Marinette had an embarrassing crush on him. Hopefully he'll remember that.

Also, I must sadly note that this is the only chapter to be posted for this work this week, I hope to have the next chapter out in about a week. I've got family visiting over the weekend, I've been sick and I don't want to rush the next chapter (not really a spoiler as it was hinted at but I'm hoping for another Marichat appearance! Thus I need to be healthy and able to focus, hopefully there aren't too many mistakes in this chapter, I did an extra edit just in case) 😊 (fingers crossed) If there is a major editing issue with this chapter please let me know and I'll try to come back and fix it. Thanks everyone!
Falling

Chapter Summary

Hmm, Chat Noir is going to go see his Princess, when she's wearing that amazing perfume of hers... Will the Kitty survive?

Chapter Notes

Warning, there be Fluff ahead.

Poor Tikki...

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Adrien had to wait until 9:00pm to leave his room to go to Marinette’s. Thankfully he didn’t need to bring anything besides himself.

It’s a good thing that I’m wearing my mask. He thought as he launched himself across rooftops as Chat Noir, while I know that I like Marinette, I just found out that she likes Adrien, or liked me. How did I not see that?

Adrien sighed inwardly, it would be awkward if she discovered my secret identity right now. I want, no, I need her forgiveness, before... well... before... His head ached as he tried to finish his thought but instead he shifted his line of thinking, I wonder if there’s a way for me to encourage her to go out with me, I mean, Adrien me?

Chat Noir landed on Marinette’s balcony. Seeing that she left her skylight open for him, he walked over to it as he called out, “Purr-incess! I was wondering if I could get your help, I uh…” But before he could explain himself, his sensitive sense of smell was assaulted with the most delectable smell ever created, and he fell through the skylight onto Marinette’s bed, all of a sudden woozy and lightheaded as that smell overwhelmed him completely.

WOW! What is that heavenly scent? Did Marinette take a shower in that perfume of hers? Adrien wondered hazily. It smells as wonderful as she is! I could die happy.

“Oh dear,” Tikki’s sweet voice wearily sighed as she and Marinette looked up at the girls’ bed where the overwhelmed cat boy gasped for air in a very strange way.

…

Oh boy. Tikki mentally groaned. They get so besotted when this happens.

Marinette happily giggled as she quickly finished toweling off her hair and then threw the towel in her hamper, apparently having just gotten out of the shower and ready for bed, as her hair was still damp and she was now wearing her pajamas.
I should have told her to wait until after he left to take a shower. Tikki was still laying on the cushion on her desk. But no, she wouldn’t listen and now I’m going to have to try to pry them apart when he gets here.

Speak of the devil. Tikki heard his approach just as Chat Noir fell through the skylight and landed on Marinette’s bed.

Marinette practically ran up her stairs to get to Chat Noir, ignoring Tikki’s weak shout, “Marinette! No! Give him some space! Remember what I told you!”

“Oh dear.” Tikki’s sweet voice wearily sighed as she and Marinette looked at the overwhelmed cat boy as he gasped for air in a very strange way.

I warned her, Chat Noir will have a strong reaction to her scent as Marinette, since she would naturally mix it with the defensive foul smell that ladybugs can make when she was Ladybug, it’s the opposite when she’s not transformed. She doesn’t realize it but she’s calling every eligible guy that could make a good Chat Noir out of the woodwork with her scent, plus a few nice guys that could be a potential mate, but him especially. Thankfully, he shouldn’t recognize her as Ladybug when she’s Marinette even though it’s just an intoxicating version of her natural scent. Thank you, miraculous magic. He’d have to be VERY aware of Ladybug’s scent and lucid enough to figure it out, right?

Tikki watched the two teens prepare to embrace. Oh, but they do both look so happy.

Obviously, Tikki’s earlier warning was too late, and Marinette squealed irresponsibly as she called back to her kwami, “I don’t care!” As she tackled the groggy superhero back onto her bed as she wrapped her arms around him and rubbed her cheek on his chest.

Chat Noir automatically hissed when she rubbed his scratched area and Marinette pulled back afraid that she had hurt him. Chat Noir however, didn’t seem to notice, because he had instantly wrapped his arms around her too and pulled her closer to him so he could rub his head on hers and sniff her neck, his tail curling around her waist as Marinette giggled.

Yep, he’s definitely got the cat tendencies now too. Tikki sighed. Oh Plagg, what are we going to do with them?

…

Marinette sighed, obviously happy to be the object of Chat Noir’s affections, even though his eyes were lidded as he breathed in her sweet scent and then nuzzled her neck a little, sighing at the intoxicating scent that she was sending his way.

“Princess,” he murmured into her ear as somewhere deep inside him he tried to fight the fog that he had entered once he could smell her perfume? No, it was deeper than that, not that he could fully grasp the idea, as he realized that her scent, that Marinette, was his drug of choice. He was drunk on whatever it was that made her, her and he never wanted her to leave his arms.

“Chat.” She whispered as she gently hugged him back and then brushed his hair out of his face, away from his mask.

Oh Princess, your touch is amazing. Adrien’s mind was mush as he dreamed that she gave him a light peck on his cheek. Do that again!

“Marinette!” Tikki scolded for some reason in the distance. “Get away from him!”

Leave us alone little bug. Adrien hazily thought, I’ll get you a week’s worth of camembert.
“Shush! I don’t wanna.” Marinette hissed at Tikki as she held him tight and turned to whisper to Chat Noir as she ran her fingers through his hair, “my Kitty is here.”

That’s right. Your Kitty.

He dreamed that she nuzzled him and gave him another peck on his cheek, “my Chat Noir.”

“My Princess.” Chat Noir whispered possessively as he instinctively pulled her closer lovingly, cuddling her and rubbing his head on hers as if she was his own little teddy bear. “Mine.”

Marinette giggled, “yes Chat, your Princess.” She answered happily in his embrace as he relaxed and started to melt, unable to control his purr any longer as he began to drift off.

My Princess. My Marinette.

“Oh… don’t encourage him.” Tikki weakly sighed as her voice faded away to Chat, “he probably … know what he’s saying, he is … after all… when you’re … like this.”

Marinette sighed into his collar causing him to shiver and grin just a bit as she woke him up slightly, her head cradled on his shoulder, “I don’t mind. I love my Kitty.”

I … I love you too?

“What about Adrien?” The distance little voice just had to play devil’s advocate in Adrien’s dream, barely aware of the girl in his arms as he squeezed her tighter.

What about me? I love … I love… my everything… my, my…

“Mmm, Princess.” Chat Noir whispered, kissing Marinette’s hair once more as he drifted off into a land of fantasy, of Marinette’s sweet, sweet scent, before adding with a whisper, “my love… My… My Lady.”

Dream Marinette shrieked for some reason.

But that didn’t disturb Chat Noir, who had already started to quietly snore.

…

…

…

(Author’s note: that was almost the end of the chapter, but that would mean at least two short chapters in a row and we can’t have that now, can we?)

…

…

…

In the distance Adrien dreamed that his Princess turned Ladybug whispered in his ear, “I need … my Kitty.”

Wow, her voice. Her voice. How did I not hear that? Oh, please, I need you too, he mentally begged. I could use a good wake up kiss. Then he felt his cheeks warm up at the thought.
“Kitty.” Marinette nudged his shoulder gently and he smiled just a little as he groggily woke up, “Chat Noir, it’s time to wake up Kitty.”

*I don’t want our dream to end, where’s my kiss? Too bright…*

“Nooooo,” he whined as he opened his eyes, still a little groggy as he looked at her, “Princess? Oh WOW, you’re really beautiful. I had the most marvelous dream Love.” He smiled at her and then lazily looked around, “you and I, well, wow we uh…” that was when he realized that he was in her bed, with her kneeling beside him.

His eyes went wide as he sat up quickly and jumped out of her bed, away from her, creating a respectable distance between them as he landed softly on her floor.

*No, no, no! Was any of that real? She’ll never forgive me if I did any of that! Wow! Did I? Did we? He gulped, did we snuggle? Did she kiss me?! Please… say we did…*

Chat Noir looked at Marinette as she blushed prettily from her bed as she avoided his eyes.

He then cleared his throat, “did, did we uh, do anything?” He opened his hands as he bit his lip. Pleading that if they did, that she still wanted to be his friend, that she wouldn’t send him away.

She giggled and he was a goner. *Oh no! Please say that I didn’t ruin anything!*

Her blush intensified as she looked at him as if she was admitting that it wasn’t all a dream.

“Whoa! I am so sorry about being so forward Princess! I, uh, I never meant to cross any of your boundaries, I have no idea why or what I did or how I got in your bed!” He quickly apologized, “I am so, so sorry. Can you please forgive me?”

After a brief sense of déjà vu, Marinette herself shook her head and slid down the banister on the stairs that led to her bed and turned towards him, keeping her distance like Tikki seemed to think that they needed to have, her blush still telling more than Adrien could fathom.

Marinette shook her head again and brushed her hair back.

*Oh my gosh, she’s so gorgeous! So, WOW!*

“It’s uh, actually NOT your fault,” Marinette started, “you have an excellent sense of smell and I guess you kind of got overwhelmed?” Marinette blushed an even brighter red and Chat Noir kind of smirked at her as he couldn’t help but preen a little bit. “We both kind of got carried away from it, so, um, so sorry about that Kitty if I crossed any of your boundaries…”

*There’s no need to apologize, that was the best dream ever!*

Chat Noir let out the breath that he had been holding, realizing that she didn’t hate him.

“Anyway, I, uh, a friend of mine gave me a perfume that’s supposed to uh,” she mumbled now, “attract boys…”

*I knew that.*

*Or, Adrien knows that, look confused Adrien.*

But then her voice grew as she quickly explained, “and apparently, it’s activated by water and it uh, after my shower, it grew stronger?” She blushed.
Adrien’s head really hurt for some reason.

“Well, I found another perfume that covers it up pretty well, don’t you think.” Marinette shyly asked as she brushed back her hair again.

Chat Noir didn’t even hesitate as he took a few steps closer to her and then took a tiny single little small whiff before stepping back again with a grin on his face, “well, there’s another smell there now, but I can still smell you, I mean, your perfume, right?” He bashfully cleared his voice, “and me too. Uh, I think I marked you Princess,” then he added with a whisper, “sorry.”

“No, no, no, it was, kind of both of us?” Marinette waved her hands as he began to think her blush might becoming permanent now, “the scent was kind of messing with me too, so it’s nobody’s fault.” Then she quietly added, “besides, I, I don’t really mind.”

“Oh, okay.” Chat Noir blinked, looked over her shoulder and then touched his chin thoughtfully as he tapped his leg with his other hand to distract himself, trying to come up with a way to change the subject. “I uh, actually stopped by to get your help again and to give Tikki another ride if she needs it?”

“I’d love to help you.” Marinette answered almost sappily.

“Marinette!” Tikki weakly cried, “I need Plagg.” Then the little kwami coughed as she tried to fly, but quickly fell back on her cushion.

“Oh my gosh! I almost forgot! I’m so sorry Tikki!” Marinette apologized. Marinette rushed to the dresser to get a pile of fabric, walking far too close to Chat Noir on the way.

Chat Noir followed her automatically, his nose following her like a magnet as he got carried away with her scent again.

He grinned sappily when she turned around and ran into him, he caught her by the arms as she almost dropped what she had just picked up. She looked up into his eyes and he gazed at her lovingly before leaning in and sniffing her hair, just above her ear as he whispered, “how can I help you Princess?”

Marinette blushed once more as she gently asked softly, “can you, uh, de-transform for me?”

“So forward Princess,” Chat Noir blinked once as he took another breath of her sweet scent before he took a step away from her and then he immediately grinned at her as he answered, “as you wish. Claws In!”

“What?! No!” Marinette shrieked once more.

Chapter End Notes

Phew, that was a fun chapter to write, hopefully I portrayed a decent drunk on love Chat.

I had to practically write another 1/2 chapter from Mari’s and Tikki’s point of view first to rewrite it into the first part of this chapter, if i ever do bonuses for this work I’ll
include it, I'm just trying to avoid writing her POV right now or for this work completely.

Also had to slip yet another Princess Bride reference there lol!

Anyhow, I hope to post another chapter within 5 days.
Meet Plagg

Chapter Summary

Plagg gets an introduction and eventually Adrien takes his shirt off ...

Chapter Notes

Warning, a slightly longer chapter at 2800+ words.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Chat Noir had just whispered into Marinette’s ear seductively, “how can I help you Princess?”

Oh, NO. Tikki blinked realizing that they were far too close together again, in her weak state even she wearily wondered what a sick kwami like her could do about it.

Marinette’s blush grew, of course, as if it had ever left fully tonight, her worries obviously tossed aside as she worried about her kwami.

She’s such a good chosen. Tikki thought hazily.

They needed Chat Noir to release Plagg from his transformation to help Tikki obviously, and Tikki knew that.

Tikki had helped Marinette to plan how to do it earlier too. Marinette had a black robe and a mask in her hands and without explaining what they were to Chat Noir she had quickly whispered back to her love-sick Kitty, in a fog due to his closeness to her, “can you, uh, de-transform for me?”

Both of them had forgotten about her pheromones or how he’d just taken another intoxicating breath full of them. Cats and their heightened sense of smell. Tikki groused internally, why must he torment my chosen by being so close? This isn’t easy for her either.

“So forward Princess,” Chat Noir cooed as he blinked once before he took another intoxicating inhale of Marinette’s scent.

Back up! Tikki mentally cried out before she could do or say anything else.

Chat Noir finally took a step away from her chosen and Tikki almost gave a sigh of relief, at least until the love drunk cat grinned at her chosen as he promptly answered, “as you wish. Claws off!”

Tikki rolled her eyes knowing that it was too late, Adrien might as well have cheered ‘SURE!’ It would have been faster by at least two seconds anyway.

So, of course Marinette shrieked once more that evening. “What?! No!”

Here we got again.
Without Chat Noir right next to her, Marinette’s mind had thankfully cleared up remarkably fast as she tried to quickly turn her back on Chat Noir as the green flash of his transformation almost blinded her as it quickly crawled up his frame.

Tikki gave a sigh of relief, realizing that Marinette hadn’t been able to see his face.

*Sorry, not yet Marinette. He still has some things that we need him to do and thankfully you’re pretty blind too, now beyond transforming you in front of him, how are we going to get this boy to get one single clue?*

Marinette of course, had squeezed her eyes shut as she clutched the robe and mask that she had grabbed from off of the dresser earlier to her face as she mumbled, “I-I only saw your Gabriel sneakers and jeans, I’m, I’m so sorry Kitty!”

Of course, with Marinette being into fashion like she was, and the model that modeled that particular lower half of a particular outfit, practically everywhere, Marinette recognized it immediately.

Adrien wobbled where he stood, “Whoa.” He mumbled as his rubbed his head with one hand and then ran it through his hair as his mind cleared from the fog of Marinette’s awesome and tantalizing scent.

Then Marinette heard a muffled sound of fabric being moved, and then she heard a poufy slapping sound. “Plagg! Ugh! Don’t do that to Marinette’s pillow!” Chat Noir ordered.

Figuring out that Plagg had clocked his chosen with one of her pillows, Marinette giggled a little.

“Idiot!” A gravelly voice chided. “We’re lucky the girl had fast reflexes!”

“Plagg?” Adrien gulped as he looked around, finally remembering what Marinette said. “Oh my gosh, I am so sorry Marinette!” Marinette hazily wondered why she was getting déjà vu, “I don’t know what came over me, no, I mean I KNOW, sort of, but uh,” Adrien babbled, “but it seems so impossible, how… how can your perfume do that to me?” Then he realized that Marinette wasn’t looking at him at all but facing away from him, so he cleared his throat. “Princess, I uh, I’m sorry about this,” he sounded so embarrassed, “but thank you for trying to keep my secret identity a secret.”

Tikki was finally able to whisper, “Plagg, get over here.”

“Coming Sugarcube,” Plagg zipped to her side and Tikki sighed as he wrapped himself around her. “They’re so impatient aren’t they.” Plagg whispered loudly enough for Adrien to hear.

Adrien shot his kwami a look, not that Marinette saw it.

Meanwhile, Marinette audibly swallowed and tried to answer Chat Noir as she held out the robe and mask in front of her, “yeah, uh, no problem, actually we uh, Tikki and I, well I uh, I thought that you uh, could uh, take off your clothes, I mean, put these on while you were de-transformed, uh…”
“What Marinette means,” Tikki interrupted with a weak voice, “is that if you take off your shirt and put on the robe and mask she’s holding.” Tikki coughed, “she can attend to your wounds while… while Plagg and I get a brief cuddle session in before we have to leave.”

“That’s what you’ve been doing?” Marinette clearly asked her kwami.

“Yeah, so what of it?” Plagg answered for them. “Everyone should get a good cuddle in with their other half.”

“Plagg.” Tikki lightly scolded and then yawned, too tired to giggle at his hint.

“Go to sleep Sugarcube, I can babysit, I mean chaperone them.” Plagg whispered to his counterpart as he patted her head for once as she was already nodding off.

“Plagg!” Adrien whispered, “Be nice!” Then he took a breath and tried to introduce his kwami, “uh, Marinette, that voice you heard is my kwami Plagg, he’s a real pain sometimes.”

Marinette chuckled, “Nice to meet you Plagg.”

“Charmed.” Plagg rolled the word off his tongue, “now if you don’t mind, Tikki and I are going to take a nap now. I have my ears open, so you better behave yourselves.”

Marinette and Adrien both swallowed, “is, is that safe?” Marinette weakly asked her eyes still closed tightly as she faced her trapdoor to the rest of the house, which of course was currently closed, “I mean, I-I still have that p-perfume on…”

“Ugh, Tikki would explain it better, but while he’s human, he’s got a human nose.” He told Marinette’s back, “as for you Kid,” he directed his instructions to Adrien, “as long as you don’t put your face in her hair or right next to her face you should be able to keep your hands off of her. Think you can do that Kid?”

Adrien bit his lip, wondering if that was true, Marinette sure is adorably attractive, uh, no, umm… Adrien was beginning to doubt his ability to be a gentleman for some reason.

So, he whined, “Plagg!”

“Ugh, you can do it Kid. I got faith in you. I know you want to keep buying me a wheel of Camembert each day.”

Adrien knew that he shouldn’t pause too long to answer, he still had a strange urge to cuddle and nuzzle Marinette, he could remember how fantastic she smelled, especially with his scent mixed with hers, but his mind was clear enough to control himself now, sort of.

“He eats that much?” He was thankful that Marinette asked, as it broke his concentration on her, her scent, their scent… he tried to breathe in the air to taste it, but found next to nothing.

“Kid?” His kwami irritatingly called him back to his senses.

_Dumb human nose._ Adrien mentally groused.

“Uh, sure Plagg, I think we can behave ourselves.” Adrien finally muttered in a controlled tone.

Plagg quietly snickered.

Forgetting that there were two beings with super cat like hearing in the room, Marinette herself muttered, “speak for yourself Kitty.”
Plagg then snickered not so quietly.

Adrien almost choked, as he blushed with a grin and then he chuckled, “hey, I know I’m great, but I think it’s possible to refuse me if you really wanted to.”

Adrien sadly remembered that afternoon, when she had told him, as Adrien, that she’d have to think about his offer to take her out to the Mayor’s Ball. It was so strange that now, after tonight, it made him think that if he asked her for the same as Chat Noir, she would have immediately agreed. He couldn’t blame her, but, but it made him feel strange too. “So Princess, are you up for this?”

“I’m not the one who fell through my skylight.” She boldly teased.

Adrien grinned at her, she was just so amazing and WOW when she did things like that.

_I’m glad I can think clearly now so I can help our kwami. That is, um, Ladybug’s and my kwami, and do my heroic duty, sort of, because now we, my Princess and I, uh, can’t, err, shouldn’t, cuddle._

…

A few minutes later, Adrien was sitting on Marinette’s chaise waiting for her return. She had left so he could get changed and to get them some snacks.

_She’s an angel._ He mentally praised and couldn’t help the sigh that came from his throat.

Adrien’s shirts were already folded and set aside out of Marinette’s line of sight. He was wearing her black silk robe for a touch of modesty that she had found earlier for him before he had arrived. Her robe even had her signature cherry blossoms stitched on the shoulder. It made him feel, well, a little exposed at how comfortable it made him.

Adrien made a mental note to get one of his own though, it felt nice on his skin in one way, almost like a caress, _Marinette’s caress._ Adrien blushed at the thought. He tried not to think about how the robe he was wearing was Marinette’s because that just made him blush more, and uh, think about what she wore with it. _No bad Adrien!_

He’d already put on the black mask that she had provided, it had a leather part that covered the upper face and nose, but the sides were long strips of a wide but comfortable black fabric so he had to tie it on his head, like he was an old-fashioned pirate or something. It was pretty close to his own mask actually. He made sure to muss up his hair too, to be authentic Chat Noir of course and less Adrien.

In fact, Adrien was in the process of trying to figure out how to sit as he waited for Marinette to return. Should he sit normally, his knees together and back straight? No, that was too Adrien Agreste. Should he lay back, open the robe to show off his abs and pose seductively for his Princess? Umm, no, TOO love drunk Chat.

_I shouldn’t tempt her anyway._ He blushed as he thought of that, or myself, plus there was the fact that he could barely believe that at the mere suggestion she was able to get him to transform for her.

_How can a girl that isn’t Ladybug have that kind of power over me? With or without her perfume, I mean, I’ve never heard of a perfume like that, the inventor would make millions. I wonder if they make one for guys to attract the girls of their dreams, I’d pay some serious money for that, maybe for Mari, I mean Ladybug, err Maribug…, wait no, that’s not… WOW, I don’t even know where that came from, uh… No, with my luck it would only work on Lila. Blech!_

Adrien shivered at the memory of that morning, had it been so little time? It seemed like it had both just happened today and that it was last week, but he shrank at the thought, _not that Lila needs_
encouragement in that area.

Adrien felt like he should tell Mari everything, but he was Chat now and he didn’t want Marinette to accept his invitation to the Mayor’s Ball out of pity. But not telling her felt like lying too.

For some reason, he wanted to tell her everything, she makes me feel so... so confused. His head was hurting again as he bit his lip, what was taking Marinette so long with those snacks?

There was a gentle knock at Marinette’s trap door, “Chat,” she said softly, “I hope you’re decent, I’m, uh, I’m coming up.”

Then she opened the door and came up with a tray filled with two hot chocolates, a plate of cookies and a couple of other pastries.

“Hey Princess.” Adrien replied with a wink as he scooted over on her chaise to give her plenty of space for her to sit too, and so that he could lean against the armrest. I missed her, but now I’m nervous that she’s here too, why?

“I-I was wondering if you l-lost your way back to me.” He tried to say suavely, but he faltered slightly from his unexpected anxiety, Marinette blushed as prettily as ever anyway.

“I, I don’t think that would, I mean, that, that could happen.” She chuckled, “I mean, it is my room after all.” She waved her hand around and then grinned at him confidently. He loved her smile, so much like his Lady’s.

“That it is.” Adrien, no, Chat Noir sans his suit, gave her a small smirk, and if you asked since he’d deny it, he wouldn’t admit to a small blush in return.

Marinette took a deep breath and told him, “again, I’m sorry about earlier. I didn’t mean to see who you are.”

Wait, you saw ME? Adrien sat up at red alert.

Then Marinette rolled her eyes and shrugged a little, “well, not really. I’d almost think you were Adrien but...”

Adrien held his breath as he echoed, “but?”

“But I know Adrien and you two are like night and day in some ways, very similar in others, but there’s no way you could be the same guy.” Adrien exhaled, knowing his secret identity was safe as she continued after she giggled, “as far as I know you could be Wayhem or one of Adrien’s other diehard fans, I guess you’re lucky that Adrien is so popular, your pants and shoes certainly aren’t enough to give away your identity just because of that.” She giggled a little and almost spilled the tray, thankfully she caught it before Adrien was able to catch it for her.

“Lucky, right.” Adrien muttered as he settled back down. While Adrien knew that Wayhem was one of his biggest fans, he didn’t know how Marinette knew that. So, he cleared his throat and asked, “Wayhem huh? Why do you think that I could be him Purr-incess?” She held the tray out to him so that he could select a snack so he took a croissant and took a bite as she explained.

“Well, I saw your pants and shoes and they reminded me of him, after Adrien that is. He’s actually a nice guy. I met Wayhem at one of Adrien’s fan club meetings, and like him lots of Adrien’s fans wear clothes that matches Adrien’s.” She admitted with a bit of a blush. “Basically, I met him a few months ago, I used to go to the meetings when I could, but lately, well, I haven’t been.” She shrugged, jostling the tray a little.
“Over your crush then Princess?” Adrien sadly commented.

“I’ll always like Adrien.” Marinette stated softly, “but I’ll admit that the crush part has been fading, especially since I’ve been seeing more of a sweet Kitty Cat.” She glanced Adrien’s way and shot him a wink.

Adrien almost melted right there.

“Wow, that’s ah, quiet the compliment.” He managed to reply as he brushed his neck nervously.

_She’s too kind to mention it’s partly because I was a spineless wonder that left her in a situation to be bullied and threatened._ He mentally chastised himself. _I don’t deserve her, like, like I don’t deserve My Lady._

Adrien’s head throbbed. He winced a little from the pain.

“Are you alright Kitty?”

He shook his head, “not really, I have a bit of a headache.” He honestly replied as he rubbed his forehead. Her look of concern was so familiar, so WOW, she took his breath away.

“Well, I have aspirin in my first aid kit, would you like some of that too?” She sweetly asked.

“Sure.”

Marinette nodded and then happily went over to her desk and set the tray of goodies on it and then started looking for the first aid kit and the little tub of pink healing lotion that Tikki had made before.

All of a sudden, Adrien wondered why Tikki made it so that it only worked best when applied by Marinette, not Ladybug. _Were they that good of friends?_

Adrien then wondered why his head was hurting so much all of a sudden.

Chapter End Notes

_I should be posting another chapter in 3-4 days._
Insecurities

Chapter Summary

Adrien realizes that he feels uncomfortable as Marinette prepares to help him.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Adrien’s mind wandered as he thought about the lotion that Tikki had made to heal him, *hmm, wouldn’t it have been better if anyone could use it?*

*Wouldn’t Ladybug be the best choice for something like that if only one person could use it?*

*Why Marinette? Is it just because she’s Tikki’s cookie dealer? Like I get Plagg’s cheese?*

Adrien then flushed as he realized something and his mind went a kilometer a minute, *Marinette is going to have to touch me.***

Then he paled, *like Lila did.*

Suddenly, having the clarity of mind of not being in a love-sick haze made Adrien very, very nervous and sick to his stomach at the thought of Lila and her, her methods of persuasion.

Adrien swallowed, *will, would my Princess do that to me?*

No, no, he quickly shook his head, knowing that she wouldn’t touch him like that, or try to kiss him like that without his permission.

*Marinette is not like that. Is that why I’m nervous?*

*Is it different because I kind want her to do that?* Adrien realized with guilt. *Would it feel as… as bad? Or as good as I think it would?*

Adrien swallowed, knowing that he was still uneasy about the nightmare that Lila had left him with. He couldn’t help but feel a bit dirty that he was hiding it from Marinette, or that it had happened at all. He knew that it wasn’t his fault rationally, but it, it still haunted him.

Adrien took a deep breath, held it for a few seconds and then exhaled to relax.

*I can trust Marinette.* He reminded himself, and then his memory reminded him that he had been all over his Princess earlier while he was a bit too honest with how attractive she was to him with his actions.

Now he felt awful about it as he heard Marinette clear her throat, “Chat, are you alright?”

Adrien blushed as he realized how much Marinette drew him in, more so than his Lady.

*How does she do that?*

Still, his guilt ate him up, as he wondered if he had the done the same thing to Marinette that Lila had
Adrien’s eyes widened and he backed up automatically as Marinette sat beside him without a care for herself and with concern in her eyes. For me, she’s worried about me, but still, this, this feels like its… its, too close.

Marinette looked confused as she handed him two aspirin, which he took quickly and swallowed them dry as she asked, “are, are you still having trouble because of my p-perfume?”

Adrien held his hands out with a gentle gesture for her to stop, so Marinette froze.

“I’m sorry, am, am I too close?” Marinette bit her lip with worry.

Adrien shook his head, “no Princess, I, uh, I think I might need to tell you something that, that kind of happened… to me.”

Marinette leaned away from him and nodded for him to continue.

Adrien put his hands on his lap as he slouched a bit as he tried to apologize, “first of all, I’m sorry, I shouldn’t have lost control like that earlier. I-I care about you Marinette and you deserve all of the respect that I can give you and more. I’m afraid I wasn’t much of a gentle cat.”

Marinette smiled and giggled, then she reached out and patted his hand lightly before pulling it back to her side shyly, “well, if that’s the case, I wasn’t much of a Lady. Did you see me complain? I, I liked cuddling with you.” She brushed a bit of lose hair behind her ear and then she looked down at her own lap as he finally saw how much she was blushing.

Adrien blushed too and shyly smiled back, relieved that she didn’t seem to mind too much about his cat like response and happy that she had also enjoyed, well, whatever that was.

*Maybe she’d like to do that again? No BAD Adrien! Focus!*

Adrien tried to relax a little as he put his hands beside him and leaned back a little as he took another deep breath and exhaled.

Still he, he wanted to tell someone close to him and for some reason, that someone felt like Marinette, Chloe was his friend, but Marinette, she’s my La… ah, Princess. His head throbbed slightly at his mental mistake.

“Well, I just wanted to apologize just in case,” Adrien went on, “because now that my head is clear, something came back to haunt me that happened today and I, I think that I need to tell you because, because we’re, we’re friends, yeah and, uh, I like you, uh, and now I feel bad for invading your space especially, because, because I know what that feels like after this morning…” Adrien bit his lip worriedly, glad that he wasn’t transformed because that wasn’t something you did with fangs.

*Why can’t I speak clearly? Marinette is the one that gets flustered, right?*

Marinette looked shocked for a moment before she reached out with her hand to gently comfort him by laying it on top of his hand that was closest to her. He flipped his hand over to hold her hand and entangle their fingers, the skin on skin contact was… refreshing. So, he gave her hand a light squeeze. He opened his mouth to speak, but he didn’t know where to start.

*How do I tell her what happened without telling her it was Lila?*

He could feel his hand tremble in hers.
“Chat, Kitty. What happened?” His Princess desperately asked, her gorgeous eyes full of worry.

“I… I don’t know where to start…” He began honestly…

Chapter End Notes

And the stress level rises again. How will Marinette/Ladybug respond?

Anyhow, it may be a week before the next posting, since the next chapter is still under construction and it will definitely be longer and I'm dealing with a weird nerve injury. Anyhow, I'll probably have to make due with one chapter a week for a while. I've developed a minor injury that makes typing a bit painful so I may be posting a little less often until the nerves heal. It's not carpel tunnel thankfully and I've been told by my doctor that it may take several weeks to heal but I'm still supposed to use my dominant hand as much as I can stand since completely resting my arm is bad. So I'll still be writing, just taking it easy lol.
A Difficult Talk

Chapter Summary

Chat Noir is sitting in Marinette's room as his civilian self, in a mask and robe that Marinette provided. She knows he wears Gabriel jeans and shoes and thinks he may be a fan of well, himself.

What she doesn't know is why he is so nervous and he's about to tell her about what happened with Lila...

Chapter Notes

Warning, this is a slightly longer chapter at about 2700+ words, this one may be tough to put down so hence the warning. 😁

It was recently mentioned that I may like having cliffhangers in my stories... which is SO true. I find that it helps to keep the story alive and this chapter is a fine example of that... so fair warning, bwah ha ha! 😁😄😄😄😄

Hope to have the next chapter out in about a week as my arm and hand continues to heal. Thanks for all the kind words and support!

Now back to the story!

Adrien took a deep breath, thankful for the thick and borrowed mask on his face. For some reason, telling Marinette about what happened with, well, what Lila did, somehow seemed more significant that just what he’d shared with her earlier as Adrien. Now he had to try to leave those facts out but tell her what he couldn’t or didn’t want to admit to her earlier. He looked towards his kwami for guidance, finding Plagg peacefully cuddled up with his other half with only one ear directed towards them, otherwise he looked asleep.

*Lucky cat. Adrien couldn’t help but think.*

“Chat?” Marinette prodded gently, “what, what happened? Do you want to talk about it, and um, can I help?”

Adrien shook his head, “I, I don’t think that there is anything that you can do for me Princess, just… just listen.” He told her hesitantly as he gave her hand another squeeze, it was really nice to hold her hand in his own gloveless one. After a pause he added, “and please, try to stay calm, it's… it's not something that's easy to share.”

She nodded and squeezed his hand back.

*She’s so wonderful, I’m… I’m glad I have her in my life.*

Using his free hand, Adrien rubbed his neck nervously, careful not to loosen the mask that she had
lent him to wear.

“Well, where do I start, ah…” Adrien looked up at her ceiling, “this morning something happened at school, right after I got there. Well, it feels both like it happened ages ago and hours ago at the same time.” Taking a deep breath Adrien closed his eyes, grounded by the touch of Marinette’s hand.

“First, I need to be honest with you Marinette, I’m… I’m not as free as I am without the mask.” She looked at him quizzically and only nodded as he went on, “I’m reserved and far too cautious, I’ve recently learned overly so, like in a bad way, I-I have a tendency to uh, wait and see what happens instead of rushing in. That’s probably the biggest difference between me and well, me.”

He regarded her with trepidation, only to find her listening intently, her face unreadable.

Alright, well, there’s that and I… I have an image to keep up, like seriously I practically wear another mask without this one to… to be the best me that I can be?” He glanced at her briefly with a straight face.

“So, you’re the cool guy?” Marinette attempted to joke, but it fell flat of course.

Some may say that, that is kind of the image that my other mask is meant to project after all, but I’m a nerd and a dork at heart.

He seemed to weight his response, “hmm, maybe. Although, I like to think of myself as just a regular guy, but I’m not allowed to be like that in my daily life. I’m sorry, I’m getting off track.” Adrien took another deep breath and exhaled as he looked at Marinette and rubbed the back of his neck again, she was waiting patiently and she still looked concerned.

She’s so sweet, and… and beautiful. His heart fluttered a little as he thought that, but he ignored it.

She… she really cares for me.

I hope this doesn’t change how she sees me.

So, he voiced his thoughts, “I’m hoping that what I want, no, need to share, umm, won’t change your opinion of me, or, or change our… our friendship?”

Why does being friends not sound, or feel quite right? He wondered as his head and heart ached as he rubbed the side of her hand with his thumb for reassurance.

“I really don’t see you saying or doing anything that could change how much I care about you Kitty.” She offered him a sweet and caring smile. “I’m here for you, so don’t worry so much Chat Noir.”

Adrien melted a little and then sat up, curling into himself as he leaned over putting one elbow on his knee, holding up his chin with that hand and still holding her hand beside him with the other.

“It’s not, not what I did, not really.” Adrien closed his eyes in shame, “it’s more of what happened to me and how I was so taken aback by what was happening when it happened, that I, I froze Marinette.”

“Chat?” She said his name worriedly. “What happened?” She asked in a small voice.

“Just, give me a moment to get it all out.” She nodded in the affirmative with a worried little frown. “You see, there’s… there’s this girl at my school who, who l-likes me and has been spreading a rumor that we… that we were a t-thing.” He shook his head, “I didn’t know that she was doing that
until today either and it doesn’t help that she’s, that she’s one of the girls that liked… that liked to hang off of me.”

“She, she invaded your space?” Marinette asked in disbelief.

Adrien nodded almost imperceptively, as he lowered his voice to tell all, “daily. She, ah, she always was a bit clingier than other girls, but I thought that was just her way and since, well, I’m a gentle cat and all, I didn’t see the harm.” He took a deep breath, not allowing himself to look at Marinette as he was afraid that he wouldn’t be able to finish so he exhaled and continued, “except for today that is. Today she… she cornered me in the locker room and… and she put her hands on my chest, my back and my… my abs…” He swallowed, “she was hanging on me, invading my personal space far more than usual or that I was comfortable with. Touching me. I… I don’t know if it was because we were alone or… or what, but, but she tried… she tried to make me t-touch her too. She tried to kiss me Marinette.”

Marinette gasped quietly.

Adrien turned his body towards her and looked at her, finding that her eyes were as wet as his own, “I, I managed to get away, but I still feel like I failed.” His eyes then wandered around the room, “the whole encounter was probably less than ten minutes, but in ways it felt like an eternity. I’m not attracted to her like she claims, that just because I’m a guy that I’d like that kind of, of behavior from any girl. I… I didn’t want that, I didn’t want her to be near me or touch me that way.” He closed his eyes for a moment and shuttered, “it was a nightmare Marinette, an absolute nightmare.”

“Oh, Kitty.” Marinette whispered as she squeezed his hand gently.

He took a deep breath and let it go, “she threatened me too. She wanted me to, to give into that or she’d…”

Adrien swallowed and looked away from her, If I tell her more, she could discover my identity. He quickly thought.

“Well, let’s just leave it at the fact that she, she touched me inappropriately without my permission and then she threatened me Princess.” Adrien, sighed, “I, I eventually I told her NO and basically let her know that I didn’t care what she said, so now she’s spreading rumors about me and…. and someone else in retaliation.”

I hope that’s not enough to lead her to my identity, but I… I felt like I needed to tell MiLa – no! she’s Marinette! Get it through your head Agreste! Marinette can’t… can’t be… I need to focus, this, this has been hard enough as it is. I don’t even know if I want Ladybug to know about, about this.

No, no I don’t. He finally thought with finality.

Adrien bit his lip again, fighting the tears that threatened to come as he looked back at her, hoping that she wasn’t as disgusted with him as he felt with himself.

“Is, is that why you’re so uncomfortable right now?” Marinette softly asked as she gave his hand a gentle squeeze, lightly putting her other hand on top of their clasped hands.

Adrien nodded yes, squeezing her hand back and then he dared to look at her directly. “Yes. I, I realized that you’re going to have to t-touch me to heal me and, well, it brought up the… the nightmare.”

Marinette swallowed and asked, “will you be alright? Is… is there anything that I can do for you Chaton?”
Adrien blinked, *why is that nickname so familiar?* He asked himself as his head and heart throbbed a little. *Princess? Why is that nick name for my Marinette so right and yet so wrong?*

*I know I like her, that’s why I asked her out as Adrien, she, we can’t get any closer like this, she’s a… a civilian…* Adrien didn’t know why he felt so confused.

“I… I don’t think so Princess,” Adrien, finally replied. Still feeling a little exposed being outside of his catsuit as he talked about this, as he talked to her as Chat Noir. “A friend of mine is helping me to deal with the situation and I think I’ll be feline fine eventually.” He tried to smile a little, for her, “I just wanted you to know if, if I got startled or anything when you… when you had to try to h-heal me again.”

Marinette closed her eyes and took a deep breath before her nose flared as she exhaled and frowned. She squeezed his hand fiercely.

*WOW, she looks as upset as … uh… as when Volpina threatened to hurt illusion Adrien. Adrien blinked and thought, I don’t know why, but that’s so HOT.*

Marinette took another deep breath and Adrien was getting a little worried, both by her calm façade, it reminded him of how she received the earlier news from Adrien and from his own… uh, reactions to her.

“Are, are you okay Princess?” He warily asked.

“I… I don’t know.” She replied as she released her breath and then asked in a strangely calm but loud voice. “May I react now?”

“Uh… sure?” Adrien cocked his head at her wondering what she meant as she stood up, dropping his hand and started to angrily pace the room.

*Uh, oh.*

Marinette started gesturing wildly as she growled out possessively and eventually, he was finally able to make out from her clearly agitated ramblings, “I… I can’t believe that, that anyone, ANYONE would threaten or do… DO that to MY KITTY!!!”

“Whoa, settle down there Princess! We don’t want to attract another akuma!” Adrien stood up and held out his hands to her as he tried to stop her, trying to placate her, but Marinette was on a roll.

She whipped herself around and stomped her foot, “I don’t care!” Then she pointed at him, “Tell me NOW! Did you report it?”

Adrien looked at his kwami, who looked like he was still blissfully sleeping, if it wasn’t for his two alert ears pointed in their direction that is.

“DID YOU REPORT IT!”

“Plagg!” Adrien hissed. Plagg merely peeked through one eye as if he really didn’t want to get involved.

“I mean, come on! How could this have happened?” She had returned to gesticulating madly. “I mean, *WHY* you?!” Marinette continued to rant, “Why MY KITTY!”

“A little help here?!” Adrien loudly asked his kwami.
I could just…!” Marinette stomped her foot again. “GRRR!”

Plagg opened up his eyes and shook his head slightly as he clutched Tikki, as if he was trying to hurry up their balancing process, “just get ready kid.” He quickly whispered, Adrien doubted Marinette was able to hear it. “I believe in you.”

“Huh?” Adrien was obviously clueless as Plagg looked at where Adrien’s shirts were tucked away in the room, the only things there that didn’t belong to Marinette. Does he want me to grab my shirts? Why?

Marinette then yelled in frustration, “I’m gonna go hunt that girl down and hang her from the Eiffel Tower!"

That would be impressive. Adrien internally smirked, but wouldn’t that be Ladybug’s reaction? Oh, no.

“Marinette! Please calm down and you can’t tell Ladybug!” Adrien pleaded as he gently grabbed her by the shoulders. “I… I don’t, I mean, I’m not ready to tell her!”

“She’d want to know Chat! I mean, of course Ladybug loves you and wants to help you!” Marinette proclaimed. She pointed at him, “and not just because you’re partners or friends or whatever! She wants to be more than just friends with you Chat!” Marinette was breathing hard and then looked a little mortified as she quickly apologized. “I’m sorry, I, I shouldn’t have said that!”

Well, that’s a bit revealing. He thought with surprise as he let go of her shoulders and took a step back, hardly knowing how to reply to her outburst as he looked at his feet. The orange Gabriel sneakers didn’t belong on Chat Noir, but he had to remember that that was who he was at the moment.

Could there be any truth in that? Marinette is Ladybug’s friend, she might know what Ladybug is thinking… does… does Ladybug want to be with me, all of me, including the Chat Noir me?

Just when I realized that I like Marinette.

So, Chat Noir frowned slightly, his green eyes dimmed beneath the mask by the truth that he knew, “I know… I know that Ladybug just wants to be friends and partners with me, that to her, keeping our identities secret is part of the job, but, but it won’t always be that way. Still, there are some things that I need to handle without involving her Marinette and I-I know that it’s not easy, but… but I need you to try to keep this a secret between us.”

“Why? She could help you! She’d want to be there for you!” Marinette insisted before adding, “like, like I do.”

Adrien sighed, taking a glimpse at Marinette who seemed to be fighting a host of emotions of her own. “I know that was a lot to process, I’ll be okay Princess.” He tried to give her a small smile as he gently approached her and put one hand on her shoulder to comfort her, “please, don’t, don’t tell her, I… I don’t want to bother Ladybug.”

“You are not a bother.” Marinette vehemently stated as it was clear that she was trying to calm down, for him, but she wasn’t having much success as she finally and shakily pointed her finger at him. “I need a name.” She coolly demanded before almost shouting, “WHO IS SHE?!”

“Now Princess, calm down! I’ve told some people and a friend of mine is helping me…”

“No Chat! That is NOT good enough! That girl DESERVES to get what’s coming to her!”
Marinette challenged, “that girl is going to regret EVER touching MY KITTY!”

WOW. How do I respond to that?

“Well, it’s not like I can disagree but…” Adrien began, before he looked up and saw the inevitable… Marinette had attracted yet another akuma...

…

…

…

Author’s note: Thought I was going to leave it there didn’t ya? … and I was SO tempted. But, here’s just a little bit more…

…

…

…

“Akuma!” Marinette shrieked as she followed his gaze and only managed to dodge it, “I can’t believe I did that again! Aghh!” She jumped out of its way impressively, only to be cornered by her desk.

Adrien remembered Plagg’s earlier hint in a flash as he recklessly decided what must be done as he grabbed his white shirt that he had tucked away faster than lightning and then he tossed it at the akuma, engulfing it as he prepared for the inevitable as he called out to Marinette, “get Ladybug!”

The akuma turned his white shirt purple as it possessed it.

Adrien, no, Chat Noir, fell to his knees as he grasped his head as he fought his overwhelming emotions, his fear, his hurt, his anger and his frustration from the day echoing in his mind.

“Hello, Hero.” Hawkmoth’s voice softly cackled. “We finally meet.”
Another Battle

Chapter Summary

Chat Noir in his civilian form is about to be akumatized.

What will happen?

Chapter Notes

Warning, kind of long chapter at 2600+ words. Just so you're aware and have time to read it lol. 😊

Gee, I'm wondering if taking more time between postings is wise because I still wrote the equivalent of 2 smaller chapters, but oh well, the more the merrier!

Phew! I'll also admit that this chapter was a bear. I'll explain in the endnotes, but basically there were several outcomes that I passed up for this one.

On with the story!

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Chat Noir, in his civilian form, was being akumatized in front of their very eyes.

*Oh Dear!* Tikki worried as she clung to Plagg, as he tried to get to his chosen. “No, Plagg! You’ll interrupt the process and could get akumatized too!” Her unspoken words made Plagg pause, *he has to fight this himself!*

Chat Noir’s face darkened as he groaned and fought the akuma’s influence as the black tar like substance that would create Hawkmoth’s newest akumatized victim crawled up Chat Noir’s unarmored civilian body, but unlike other victims, it was a slow process.

Hawkmoth spoke to Chat Noir’s mind, an almost familiar tone of derision and cruelty echoed in his mind.

“Hello, Hero.” Hawkmoth’s voice softly cackled. “We finally meet.”

“Fight him Kid!” Plagg yelled out, and Adrien, no Chat Noir, fought the transformation, slowing it down even more. “You’re stronger than him Kid! The Black Cat was not meant to bend to that insect’s will!”

“Oh, my gosh! No Kitty!” He could barely hear his stunned Marinette cry out as she broke from her shock as their voices faded away. “Don’t….”

“Chat Noir, you WILL be my champion!” Hawkmoth declared with certainty.
“I will be NOTHING of yours!” Chat Noir mentally growled as the world around him grew dark. It was now a mental battle of wills, one which Chat Noir did not intend to lose. “I will never serve YOU!” He mentally declared derisively.

“You’ve been used and abused minou.” Hawkmoth dirtied the nickname as he said it. “I sense that you have been wronged and that you wish to defend your beloved. I can give you the power to correct those wrongs…”

“No!” Chat Noir gasped, focused only on Hawkmoth and no one else at the moment. “I will not be one of your villains!”

“All the damage ever done has been fixed by Ladybug, I only require your miraculous to make my ultimate wish, who’s to say the world won’t be a better place when I do?”

“I will NEVER trust you.” Chat Noir growled. “NOW LET ME GO!”

Undeterred, Hawkmoth monologued, “in exchange, I will give you power that you need to succeed to right the wrongs against you and your beloved for your miraculous. Then you will be somebody, somebody that Ladybug can love once you’re both free of the burdens of your miraculous and your secret identities…” Hawkmoth did his best to coax the black cat with his smooth and enticing words. “Your beloved will finally be yours…”

“No! I am Chat Noir! I work for NO ONE! I don’t want her if she doesn’t want me and NOBODY tells THIS cat what to do!” Adrien yelled out in his mind, grasping for Hawkmoth mentally.

“CATACLYSM!” Adrien mentally screamed out as he could feel a shockwave leave his body and as he heard Hawkmoth’s mental scream of pain and the akuma’s power over him was no more as their link was shattered.

It took Adrien a moment to reorient himself, he was now lying on the floor, half way on his knees as he was breathing heavily and discovered that he was absolutely exhausted at the moment. After a deep breath, he finally looked up only to see a weakened black butterfly attempting to float away after being forced from his white shirt that somehow Ladybug was now holding.

She looked absolutely gobsmacked.

“Ladybug.” Adrien gasped as he looked up at his partner. Her suit was a dark pink with black spots, clear evidence of the illness of her kwami.

Her name jolted her into action as Ladybug dropped his shirt that apparently, she was too late to rip to release him from the akuma’s hold herself and then she whipped out her yo-yo, capturing and finally cleansing the struggling akuma.

After releasing it, Ladybug knelt by Adrien’s, no, by Chat Noir’s side.

She turned to Chat Noir, who was still almost gasping as if from an extended fight.

“Chaton? Are, are you alright? I didn’t break the object.” She told him, stunned that that had even happened at all.

With one more deep breath, Adrien stood with Ladybug’s help, thankful that Marinette’s mask and robe protected him from his partner’s view, not knowing where Marinette had gone or what she had told Ladybug. His headache throbbed a little as he tried to ignore his curiosity about that fact.

She gave him a moment to steady himself as she held him by his elbows.
“My Lady, I wasn’t the one that it was after,” he looked around the room, “where’s Marinette?”

Ladybug grabbed him by the shoulders, “Chat, you were almost akumatized! Is that all you have to say for yourself?” He gave her a tired look, “alright, I guess that’s too much for right now and uh, I sent Marinette somewhere safe. What happened? I mean, how… how did you even fight the akuma off?”

Chat Noir thought for a moment and answered, “I think that it helped that I had a clear head when it got me, for the most part, besides, I couldn’t let it win. I couldn’t leave you alone Bugaboo.” He smirked at her as he teased her with the nickname out of habit and she blushed under her mask. “Besides, my love for the girl that I love is stronger than Hawkmoth and I-I couldn’t let it get Marinette, she’s… she’s special LB, I, uh, I don’t know how to describe it, but I can’t imagine fighting her,” he admitted bashfully as he quickly added, “any more than I can imagine fighting you.”

“Why does my head hurt so much?”

He wondered.

“I think that this is the first time that I didn’t have to use my restorative power,” Ladybug said almost wistfully. “Not that I mind, but how did you know what to do Chaton? How did you do that?”

“I’m not sure entirely, part of it was instinct.” Adrien answered as he allowed her to help him to sit down on Marinette’s chaise, as he rubbed his head a bit as he looked over at his kwami who was resting on Tikki’s cushion. “Plagg told me to fight, so I fought.”

Adrien couldn’t help but think, *duh.*

“Plagg sighed and wearily explained, “your miraculous and Ladybug’s are the strongest ones that there is, they were meant to lead and work with the others. The Butterfly miraculous cannot control you unless you willingly allow it.” Plagg then turned to Ladybug, “you should know that Pigtails.”

“Pigtails? Plagg, she’s not Marinette.” Adrien looked at his kwami with concern and confusion as his head throbbed again and he rubbed his temple without thinking about it, “are you okay Bud?”

Plagg just flopped over on Tikki’s cushion and groaned.

Ladybug nervously giggled as she rubbed the back of her neck, “yeah, we, ah, just look the same. Yeah.”

“Speaking of the Princess, where is she?” Adrien asked gently, not entirely paying attention to her and not wanting to forget his host and, uh, friend slash sort of, maybe… well, alright, uh, crush.

_She had to have called Ladybug, right? Why isn’t she back yet?_

“Princess? Am I getting replaced Minou?” Ladybug teasingly asked him, breaking his line of thought as she turned and picked up the forgotten shirt. She looked at it, probably recognizing that it was made by Gabriel, then she pulled it closer and Adrien almost choked when she took a deep breath from the collar.

“Uh, I’d prefer that you don’t call me that for awhile LB.” Chat Noir honestly replied as he nervously scratched the back of his neck as he tried to not focus on what she was doing, although he felt smug that she just might like how he smelled. “Hawkmoth called me that while he was in my head. While I don’t think that he was able to figure out my identity, it… it was a bit disconcerting.”
Ladybug nodded. She hardly seemed like she was aware that she was clutching his shirt and breathing in his scent. For some reason, that made him feel oddly nervous. She looked up at him and apologized, “I’m sorry, you ah, you smell really good.” She took his shirt and folded it carefully for him. “Sorry, I didn’t mean to make that weird.”

Chat Noir could deal with being nervous, usually that meant a pun or flirting. This time he chose the latter. “If it’s any consolation, I think that you, ah, I mean, you and ah, Marinette smell REALLY good, but don’t tell her that.” Well, both of you smell good... kind of similar actually now that I think about it... are you related? He wondered as his head throbbed again, knowing he couldn’t ask that of her.

Ladybug chuckled, “I won’t tell her, but I’m glad that you broke free. I’m still confused though. I heard you call out Cataclysm, but you weren’t transformed, then the akuma broke free from your ah, shirt.” Then she finally put his shirt down on Marinette’s desk after another deep inhale of his scent.

WOW.

Ladybug finally turned towards Plagg and gently patted his little head, “do you know what happened Cutie?”

“Cutie?” Adrien scoffed as Plagg grinned and purred a little at Ladybug’s pets and attention.

“Yeah, I’m adorable.” Plagg replied, “the girls love me.” Then he rolled his eyes, “because you asked so nicely and because Tikki will make me explain later if I don’t anyway, basically you’re not without some protection when untransformed. It’s kind of like how you’ve grown physically stronger while out of the suits as you’ve carried your miraculous. Frankly, it’s about time that you showed the capacity for it Kid. You can’t do what you can while transformed, but breaking a forced mental link? Child’s play for a true Chat Noir.”

“Oh, well, that’s good to know.” Adrien sighed as he looked at his almost proud kwami, which was nice to say the least. Then he turned to the heroine in the room, “are you going to stay Ladybug? I’m sure that Marinette would like to see you.”

Ladybug looked a little distracted for a moment before she gently asked as she glanced at her partner, “are you sure that you’re okay?”

With a grin, Chat Noir leaned back as he tried to look seductive as he flirted, “I’m feline fine LB, unless of course you wanted to help put me at ease yourself.” Then he couldn’t help but wink at her, despite being attracted to both her and Marinette, which only confused him more as his head ached at thinking about the two separate girls at once.

What am I doing?

Ladybug smirked, leaned over Adrien and flicked him between where his collar bones met, right where his bell would have rested. Adrien gulped as she leaned forward. He blushed furiously as her nose almost touched his own.

“Well, while I’m tempted to comply…” She drew closer just so, rubbing their noses together just so, giving Adrien an Eskimo kiss as it were as he whined and grinned sappily, and just before they were about to share their first kiss to exist in both of their memories…

Plagg cleared his throat. “Heh, Hem!”

As if breaking from a trance, Ladybug hopped away, leaned comically backwards, almost losing her balance and as she spun her arms twice before she was back on her feet. She looked shocked at her own actions, but then she blushed beneath her mask.
As Adrien came out of his fog from the surprise at what had almost happened, he couldn’t stop himself from thinking, *now where have I seen that balancing act before?*

“Plagg!” Adrien groaned.

“Not that this isn’t entertaining.” Plagg commented, “but the kid needs some cleaning up and my Sugar Cube needs some Kitty Cuddles.”

“Kitty Cuddles.” Ladybug repeated and giggled a little, Adrien almost melted, especially as he heard under her breath as she glanced at him and then turned away as she grabbed one of the cookies that Marinette had brought up earlier as she whispered, “sounds fun.”

Adrien knew just then that there was a good possibility that he was going to die from combustion from this girl.

Adrien took a relaxing breath and tried to steady himself as Ladybug proudly smirked at the effect she had on him.

In fact, she seemed hesitant to go. “Do, do you need anything before I go? I can’t stay transformed for too long obviously.” She waved at her suit, “but if you need something?”

“I uh, I’ll be fine. It’s Marinette that needs to be comforted, but I can be there for her if you send her back.” Chat Noir kindly told her.

Ladybug’s quirked an eyebrow beneath her mask, and Adrien couldn’t help but wonder what she was up to. “Well, honestly, I was just wondering Chaton,… can you explain why you’re in Marinette’s room? I mean, it looks like you’re trying to seduce the poor girl I might add.” Ladybug smirked as she waved at his state of undress, however modest it was.

“What?! No Ladybug! This is totally on the up and up!” He waved his hands in denial, “our kwami are sick remember? They need time together to cuddle and uh, that helps them feel better?” Chat offered. “It’s best if I stay de-transformed and uh, I needed the Princess’s help with a, a couple of little scratches anyway. I would NEVER dishonor my Princess! She, ah, she doesn’t see Chat Noir that way, we’re just, ah, well, I don’t know what we are, friends? Comrades? More than just good friends, maybe? Hopefully? I uh, err…” Chat was really getting flustered as he wasn’t making much sense at that point as he looked both confused and disappointed that he couldn’t put a label on it.

Ladybug giggled, “that’s fine Chat, I trust Marinette, she’s a lucky girl.” Chat Noir gasped a bit at the insinuation.

“What?! No Ladybug! This is totally on the up and up!” He waved his hands in denial, “our kwami are sick remember? They need time together to cuddle and uh, that helps them feel better?” Chat offered. “It’s best if I stay de-transformed and uh, I needed the Princess’s help with a, a couple of little scratches anyway. I would NEVER dishonor my Princess! She, ah, she doesn’t see Chat Noir that way, we’re just, ah, well, I don’t know what we are, friends? Comrades? More than just good friends, maybe? Hopefully? I uh, err…” Chat was really getting flustered as he wasn’t making much sense at that point as he looked both confused and disappointed that he couldn’t put a label on it.

Ladybug giggled, “that’s fine Chat, I trust Marinette, she’s a lucky girl.” Chat Noir gasped a bit at the insinuation.

“What? No, it’s not… it’s not like-like that…” Chat blubbered, blushing brightly. *I wish! She’s, WOW, a, my, my g-good f-friend, a civilian besides n-not you! I don’t know what I mean, I mean I like her, but I, I don’t know! You’re all different because of this balance thing, you reject me all the time otherwise and Marinette, is just, ahh, Marinette. She’s like you, just, ah, she likes me, maybe? I could be reading that wrong though….*

Adrien groaned as he rubbed his temples. “Blasted headache.” He muttered.

“Look, I’ll just go and get her for you.” Ladybug quickly turned to go down the trap door. “Ill have her grab you an icepack.” She turned to wink at him before she left as she whispered as she waved goodbye, “See you later CKB!”

Adrien froze as his mind overloaded because he never expected to see the day where this happened, either of these things! *Because Chloe was right and Ladybug thinks I’m… I’m attractive? Oh, my*
Adrien blushed like no tomorrow. Seriously, his face was a whole new definition of red.

It took him a minute for Adrien to reboot his brain, so it was like he called out randomly once he could function, “WAIT Ladybug!” But she was already gone.

Stunned, Adrien sighed as his heart pounded like he was standing next to Marinette. Just when I start having feelings for Marinette too, I find out Ladybug really does like me, or at least she likes watching me leave. He thought smugly with his trademarked smirk before he sighed again as he felt a small stab of guilt as he dreamed as he placed a hand over his heart, If only they could be the same girl.

Suddenly at that thought, Adrien’s head throbbed and Adrien grasped his head and groaned, “OW!” 😓

“Serves you right,” Plagg muttered. “Ugh, you are the very definition of oblivious Kid!” 😂

Adrien’s head hurt too much for him to answer his kwami...

Chapter End Notes

Honestly, there were several versions of this chapter, it was just one of those that can really change the outcome of the story if it went a certain way. I think once this story is nearly done or is done I’ll be posting an alternate scenes post for this story, because honestly I thought up about 8 ways this could go. Several covering how Hawkmoth was affected by this. I only wrote out about the beginnings of 3 of them, but made a bonus explaining the others. Since I feel like posting these alternate scenes right now may give too many spoilers... I'm going to leave it until then. What I have is a good representation of my crazy writing process I think lol.

Let's see here's a basic summary of them more or less, there was something similar to this but Mari's POV, Hawkmoth's POV, Nooroo's POV, a very quick thinking Adrien calling upon his transformation as he was akumatized with about 4 ways that that could go and versions of those where Lila wound up with the butterfly miraculous (he hee, it was quite a jump from where this story would go but that would have been interesting...). Also the obvious Chat Blanc or other successful truth telling akumas that Chat could become. All of those didn't really fit, although they would have been good stories in their own right.

Honestly, the one with Nooroo's POV was quite fun, because he wasn't as weak as shown in the show. But since he's not really in this story it couldn't be used, that'll just be something fun to look forward to for those alternative scenes lol.

Also, looking for some votes/opinions here...

I see the potential for 1 or 2 more other successful akuma attacks in this story in the future. So far I've only used my own silly akuma in this story, but I see the potential for another Oblivio appearance much later in the story, it's about half if not more over at this point, kind of depends on if I want to extend the story by 2 or more chapters to lead up to and include that.
So, who wants to see an Oblivio appearance here? Thanks for your comments, votes and for reading!
Ladybug went to get Marinette, who returns with Tikki so she can heal Chat Noir's scratches, he's a bit distracted though...

A few minutes later, after Adrien’s headache cleared up again. Adrien was able to focus on anticipating Marinette’s return. His plans included having Marinette coming in to find Chat Noir laying on her chaise, his back propped up with a few pillows with his hands behind his head. His biggest concern at the moment was obviously not overlooked by his kwami as he tried to both relax and look… inviting.

“What are you doing?” Plagg deadpanned as he glanced at his chosen, his robe wide open for the world to see his chest and abs. “Think you’re going to get somewhere there lover boy?”

Adrien choked, “WHAT?! No!” He pulled out of his pose but then settled back into it, “well uh, maybe? I uh, just thought that uh, my Princess might appreciate umm…”

“Umm, what? You? Come on Kid, this is not the time to give into your hormones.” Plagg stated the obvious.

Adrien pouted a little.

“Tie up your robe you animal.” Plagg practically ordered as he rolled his eyes.

“Hey, Marinette might like seeing my abs!” Adrien objected as he slowly sat up and closed the robe half way, tying it loosely.

“Stop trying to win over the girl.” Plagg rolled his eyes, “you’re just remembering that perfume of hers and now that you’ve practically got Ladybug’s blessing, you’re doing what? Trying to convince Pigtails to fall for you? I thought you wanted her to date you as Adrien? I mean, I hate to break it to you, but she won’t do that if her heart is set on Chat Noir Kid.”

“Oh, come on Plagg! I-I do want her to date me as Adrien! Now hush! She might hear you!” Adrien hissed.

“Nothing doing Kid, enough has happened tonight.” Plagg rolled his eyes, “why you don’t act love sick like this around a good and ripe piece of cheese, I’ll never know.”

“Plagg!” Adrien whined.

“Ugh, just remember Kid that Chat Noir cannot date a civilian.” Adrien scowled at his kwami as he went on, “look Kid, in all honesty, we need to get you healed and Tikki to our place so you both can get a good night’s sleep. Whether I like it or not, we need to be responsible here Kid. Don’t forget that you’ve got a job to do and I promised my Sugar Cube a movie tonight and I’m not going to let her down.” Plagg groused. “Plus, you owe me SOooooo much Camembert when this is over!”

“Well, Marinette knows Ladybug, maybe she can help me figure out who she is!” Adrien attempted to argue as he ignored another mental pang.
“You can’t ask that outright, you have to figure it out!” Plagg hissed. “You’re fighting both yourself and the magic of the miraculous here, I know you can do it Kid, you just have to oh I don’t know, be willing to consider what you don’t want to?!”

“Huh?” Adrien realized that Plagg hadn’t been so forward before about helping him figure out Ladybug’s identity. Is he trying to tell me something here? It almost sounds like he’s actually trying to guide me!

He eyed his exasperated kwami who only huffed and looked away as Adrien finally realized, yes, yes, he is trying to help me here… just what is he trying to say?

Adrien swallowed as he looked up at the ceiling as he made himself comfortable. So, I’m fighting the miraculous magic here, which would make me want to look away from Ladybug herself, sort of, like she’d be the last person I’d think of as Ladybug herself. Plus Ladybug would try to hide herself from me if she knew who I am, so I guess I have to worry about context too? Ugh, this is so hard!

Adrien’s head ached, but why would Plagg say that I’m fighting myself? Does he think that I don’t want to find her?

He contemplated that for a moment, or is it just that I’m not looking at it the right way? He’s acting, well actually Chloe too, they’re acting like… like I’m missing the obvious… well, now that I think about it, I think they've said it too.

His train of thought derailed though as he heard Marinette walking up the steps before she knocked gently and then opened up her trap door.

Adrien, still masked as the civilian Chat Noir, stilled at her approach, causing himself to relax into the pillows behind him as he closed his eyes and a smirk flickered on his lips. I don’t know why, but I wonder if Marinette will like what she sees? He couldn’t help but ponder anxiously.

“I can tell that you’re not asleep Silly Kitty.” Marinette almost purred as she crossed the room, stopping at her desk for a moment, even untransformed Adrien could hear that much.

I wonder if I can surprise her.

Adrien thought gleefully.

“Chat?” She whispered hesitantly, as he could sense that she was now almost right next to him.

I love playing cat and mouse…

Then Adrien made the mistake of taking a breath as she drew too close, which is when he discovered that somehow, her perfume was exceedingly strong once again and his eyes blinked open and were instantly half lidded as he was tempted to say, ‘care to join me Princess?’

Or just pounce on her.

Yeah, that’s a good choice. His mind mentally purred with a wicked grin. Cuddle time.

But instead, he listened to what was left of the responsible side of his brain that somehow was calling for a truce for once from their hormone addled night and he yelped with all of his feline grace and jumped behind the chaise away from her. Nope! Not going there!

“Chat?” She jumped back a step, startled at his outburst.

Gotta be good! Gotta fix the balance! He mentally chanted.
“Y-you smell SO good again. WAY TOO GOOD! Why do you smell so…” he took another deep inhale, “WOW!” He was shaking with the need to cuddle her and rub his face on her head and her neck. “I-I, I don’t know how long I-I can hold out Princess!” His knees quivered as he gripped the back of the chaise for all he was worth, “can you do something? Or-or should I just get out of here? Or cuddle you? Yeah, NO! I-I didn’t mean that! I-I don’t want to disrespect you again!”

“What? No! You never…” Marinette almost argued as she stepped back another step and then face palmed as if she just figured something out and then waved her hands, “wait, no, I’ll… I’ll be right back.” Marinette made a speedy exit and it took his everything from chasing after her as the air in the room began to clear.


Oh, but I SO don’t want to! Adrien mentally whined.

Barely able to relax, Adrien commented as he started to loosen his grip, “you’re no help Plagg.”

“Yeah, whatever.” Plagg only chuckled.

There was a quiet sigh and then Tikki’s sweet voice weakly spoke up, “he did fine you Stinky Sock! Now stop teasing him.”

“Sure, whatever you say Sugar Cube. My kitten did good, he knows that.” Plagg kindly told her. Adrien looked over and saw them cuddled on Tikki’s cushion once more, Marinette must have dropped her off when she came in earlier.

“Let’s try this again, shall we?” Marinette’s sweet voice called out as she came back in.

Adrien took a hesitant breath and relaxed a little, finding the air clear again as he came back out from behind the chaise and laid down again, “Alright, sorry about that Princess.”

“It’s okay. Thank you for wanting to be respectful and you don’t need to worry about what happened earlier, we kind of both got carried away. The phera-perfume, it…it kind of stained my skin? It’s going to be fairly strong for a while.” She giggled sweetly, “besides Kitty, I wouldn’t mind, uh, doing that… um, you’re very cuddly you know.” She told him bashfully.

Maybe we should spend some more time doing that… NO bad Adrien!

Adrien blushed more then just a little under his mask, fighting the flirtatious reply he wanted to express to her as his mouth went dry for a moment before he cleared his throat and changed the subject. “I-I’m glad to see that you seem to be feeling better.” He smiled at her lazily as he pulled open the robe a bit wider than necessary to both expose the scratches on his chest and to show off his abs as he did so, Adrien was very proud of his abs after all, plus it was fun to tease her, knowing what Chloe had told him about her uh, crush on Adrien.

Chat Noir smirked at Marinette as she seemed frozen as her eyes drifted downward as she looked at him, then he chuckled and coughed, “well, would you purr-lease help me with these scratches? Or would you like more time to stare at my abs Princess?” He asked coyly. “I know my body is pawsitively purr-fect after all.”

Marinette was startled out of her staring fit and only glared at him before rolling her eyes and getting down to business as she got out the materials to clean his scratches. “Pfft, I’ve seen better.”

Chat Noir choked. “Wha- What?”
Adrien had recently won the hottest male teenage chest award in Paris Weekly after a swimsuit spread he did, so this was definitely shocking news to him as she cleaned him up with the antiseptic without warning, not like he wasn’t used to being stung by now. “Who?” He desperately asked.

Marinette rolled her eyes as she quickly pulled out the healing lotion, acting completely oblivious to his exposed chest now as she took out a dollop, slowing down her movements as she began to gently rub it in, “I’m sorry Kitty, I mean, honestly you could almost tie with him,” she answered thoughtfully with another quick glance before returning to her current job of healing him before shaking her head, “but that’s just not a contest that you can win against Adrien Agreste.”

Chat Noir blushed deeply and coughed as Marinette smirked as she rubbed in another dab of lotion. “I’ve seen his advertisements; I am into fashion after all.” Marinette looked a little flustered as she shrugged and waved off the idea as she blushed and seemed to think about it.

He chuckled, so adorable.

A minute later and she was gently patting his chest where he had been wounded. “Good as new.” She told him and managed to flash him an unsettled smile.

Chat Noir caught her hands before she could pull them away. “Something bothering you Marinette? Is it this Adrien kid?” He lowered their hands so that they were hanging between them, her hands were both soft and strong. Adrien discovered that he loved the feel of them as he started to rub the back of her hands with his thumbs, worried at what her response may be.

“Well…” Marinette began as she bit her lip, apparently not knowing what to say.

Adrien’s heart almost stuttered to a stop. No Princess, please… he mentally pleaded, PLEASE Give me another chance…
Chapter Summary

Mari has mixed feelings, she tells him a little more of why she's confused and he asks her something.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Chat Noir had painted on his alter ego’s model smile as he waited for his Princess’s response to whether or not that he, that Adrien, was the one that was bothering her.

“Well,” Marinette bit her lip, apparently not knowing what to say, until she shook her head, “no. It’s not Adrien himself, well… not really.”

Adrien found that somehow he could barely breathe again since that sounded like he still could hope that she would or could forgive him. Eventually anyway, as she looked away a little and then sighed as she confessed, “I’ve always liked A-Adrien, I mean, I used to have a massive c-crush on him.”

If Chloe hadn’t told him that, Adrien never would have been able to pretend that the ‘used’ to part didn’t hurt somehow. I don’t deserve a girl like you Princess. He mentally scolded himself. I completely understand, more than you know. I really wish that I didn't, but ugh, I don't know what to say...

Marinette blushed a little more as she glanced back at Chat, before looking back at the floor, “it’s this whole situation.” She groaned a little though as she added, “but even I have to admit that he’s… he’s part of why things have been so… so rough at school.”

“Should I go knock some sense into him?” Chat Noir ironically offered, although that would be an interesting thing for me to pull off...

Marinette looked up at him through her bangs like Ladybug would have with a slight glare, WOW, even irritated she’s adorable! So much like my… Lady? No, no… this is my Princess.

His head ached again at his denial, but he decided to try to pay it no mind, or at least he tried to, but there was an idea there that needle at him. Apparently being at Marinette’s makes the headaches worse, or maybe it’s something else? … I’ll… I’ll have to ask Plagg about it later.

“No.” Marinette eventually scolded him lightly in response to his question, as if she wasn’t really sure if she really meant it. “It’s just… it’s just that I thought a while ago that Adrien just saw me as a friend at the very least, as he tended to remind me. Frequently.” She practically spit out, before sighing and adding, “and then… and then after Lila came back, well, I didn’t know what to call us. I thought for a bit there that he, that he liked Lila…”

Are her eyes wet? He wondered as she couldn’t finish whatever she was trying to say. Please don’t cry Princess.

Chat Noir frowned, “I’ve met her Marinette, Lila I mean.” He told her honestly, “I really can’t see anyone liking her, well, like that.”
Marinette bit her lip, obviously fighting a snort and Adrien wanted to lean over and nuzzle her to comfort her. Blasted cat instincts! If I give into that we’ll never get home…

Adrien looked down at their hands, grateful that she trusted him enough for him to hold her hands like that and gave them a squeeze before looking up at Marinette who looked thoughtful still.

“Mari?” Chat Noir tried, “what’s really bothering you?”

She shook her head, “I don’t want to bother you, uh, Chat.” She tried to pull her hands away with a gentle tug, but he increased his grip gently, asking to hold onto her just a little longer without words. She sighed and let him continue to hold her hands.

“You’re not bothering me. You do so much for mew Purr-incess, let me lend you an ear or few as the case may be.”

She closed her eyes for a moment, steadying herself before she nodded and continued. “Alright, well, the short version is that Adrien told me to leave Lila alone when she came back, to take the high road and to let her own lies fall apart. That, that it was enough that only we knew that she was a liar. I didn’t tell him though that she, ah, that she threatened me Chat.”

Adrien gasped lightly and squeezed her hands encouraging her to tell his other side the whole story as he nodded at her. “Go on.”

“Well, she kept lying, convincing nearly everyone, I mean Chloe and Nathaniel eventually saw through it, but… but she managed to carry out her threats and I’ve been so stressed out Kitty. I’ve lost a lot of weight and have lost track of how many times I’ve almost been akumatized...” her voice faded away and he could tell that her eyes really were a little wet.

He felt like his heart was breaking as his own eyes teared up. I’m so sorry My L…, I mean, my Marinette. Why do I keep doing that? No!

He shook his head mentally as he blinked at her, focus on Mari right now! She needs me!

Adrien swallowed as he had to ask uncertainly, “and it’s all Adrien’s fault, isn’t it?”

She flashed him a small glare and exclaimed, “no!”

Marinette almost managed to pull her hands away, but he wasn’t ready to let her go just yet. Something about her touch was addicting and he was somehow afraid, deep down, that if he let go, he could lose her… somehow. Where is that coming from?

Adrien then blinked and seemed resolute. “Look Chat, I’ve thought about it and what it boils down to is what has happened is mostly if not completely Lila’s fault. Much of what little bit is left is my own fault, I shouldn’t have let my crush on Adrien sway my decision to act. Sure, he suggested it,” she began to ramble, “to leave her alone and to place her self-worth above my friends and even my own in the hopes of stopping a future akumatization, but I didn’t have to listen to that advice either. It’s just one of those things that in the moment sounds good, but in the wrong context, can be damaging.”

“Marinette, I cannot emphasize more that what has happened recently, well, it isn’t your fault!” He vehemently defended. “Not one bit!”

It’s mine.

“I know, it all depends on your point of view doesn’t it?” She whispered uneasily as she shook her head, almost unsure about that as she took a deep breath and let it out, “and now? Now A-Adrien is
confusing me again, I thought I was getting over him…”

She couldn’t meet Chat Noir’s eyes as she admitted that there was still something there.

*Oh, please mean what I think you’re meaning Princess…*

“Oh? Still like the model now?” He attempted to lighten the mood as he teased her and almost purred, thankful he wasn’t transformed because if he was, he wouldn’t have been able to stop.

Marinette blushed slightly, “I don’t think I ever fully got over him, I just, I don’t know if I can trust A-Adrien.”

*Oh, that really hurts. Adrien’s heart and mind ached, but I deserve that. I should have been someone she felt comfortable trusting; I should have noticed that something wasn’t right.*

“Besides, my interests have become divided of late.” Marinette nudged Chat Noir’s foot with her own playfully.

He grinned at her as he asked hopefully as he leaned towards her, “really?” He whispered as he tilted his head, beginning to get a whiff of her perfume as he got closer and his mind began to melt again and he didn’t fight it, because he didn’t want to.

“Yes.” She whispered back, leaning in towards him as well…

“Heh, Hem!” Plagg cleared his throat as both teenagers quickly jerked away from each other. “If you’re done, we really should get going Kid.”

“Oh, we… we still haven’t had time to have our snacks.” Marinette mentioned hopefully as she let go of Chat and put away her first aid kit under her desk and then put the healing lotion in one of her drawers as she picked up the tray of snacks.

Plagg looked at Tikki, who was napping beside him peacefully so he grudgingly gave in, “alright, make it quick.” He then flashed a look at Adrien and whispered only loud enough for him to hear him, “just behave. Don’t lose your head again Adrien, you can do it.”

Adrien coughed a little and sat up so Marinette could sit on the other end of the chaise beside him as he adjusted the mask that she had lent him. “What mew-volous treats does my Purr-incess have for me tonight?”

“Well, warm cocoa now, croissants and cookies.” She offered him a mug of cocoa and offered him the tray, he selected two croissants and a cookie.

“Thank you, Marinette.” He told her with a look of adoration.

“You’re welcome.” She told him sweetly as she selected her own treat, offering the tray to Plagg who ripped off a piece of the bread and nibbled it unhappily.

Marinette didn’t notice because she was watching her other Kitty as she set down the tray. “Is everything alright Chat Noir?”

“Oh, uh, I was just wondering if that was the whole story.” He tried to get her to explain further.

Marinette sighed, “no, not really.” She looked at the floor as she sat down in her computer chair across from him and took a bite of her cookie before rolling her chair closer to him and continuing with her story. “Adrien came over today and told me about what happened at school. He said that
Lila insisted that he become her boyfriend…” her voice trailed off as she looked up at Chat quizzically before blinking and shaking her head before looking away, “but he turned her down.”

Adrien didn’t know what to say, “oh?”

“Yeah,” Marinette hesitated, “she ah, got back at him by trying to ruin his reputation, by lying and saying that he had been seeing two girls… her as the official secret girlfriend and that he had uh, been cheating on her with… with me.” She blushed a deep tomato red at that.

Adrien gasped and briefly put a hand on his bare chest dramatically, “she didn’t!” Then he realized that he’d left the robe that she had lent him open, baring his chest and abs, still. So, he self-consciously closed it up a bit and retied it. While he realized that he was far more comfortable with Marinette than he thought he would be and that he trusted her fully, he was still feeling a little ashamed at his own part in all of this. So, he tied up his robe as if to hide the guilt that he felt.

“Of course, Lila would do something like that Chat!” Marinette emphasized, “she even implied that I got pregnant if you can believe that!” The annoyed girl rolled her eyes. “It’s sure going to be fun to go back to school Friday.” She groused.

Chat Noir shook his head, “no, I can’t believe that, my Purr-incess is too pure for that.”

“Really? I would have said that about Adrien.” She chuckled, “not that you’re wrong about either of us.” She added and Chat Noir shrunk a bit, unable to disagree.

“So, here I am now, trying to decide what to do from here. I mean, Adrien asked for my forgiveness after figuring out what had happened… and he asked me out in almost the same breath as he asked me to help take Lila down when he was the one that suggested to just let her be in the first place, like her feelings was more important than my own.” She wrung her hands and then sighed, “I’m sorry Chat, it’s still a sore spot. I’m not sure where to go from here. He heh.” She tried to laugh but she was obviously still upset, but calm enough now that he knew that another akuma was unlikely to show up as she simply sighed and looked at the half eaten cookie in her hand.

Adrien didn’t know if he should ask, but he swallowed his pride and put it out there, “Princess, please tell me, if… if I had done what Adrien did, w-would you be able to forgive me?”

Chapter End Notes

Wow, the scenery has been the same for quite some time here. They’re almost done talking, Chapter 40 will be the last one for this evening in her room. Chapter 41 will have another chat with the kwami & a certain movie will be watched... just for some fun to end the evening to a LONG day lol!. Thanks so much for reading and all the great comments and kudos!
Chat Noir had just asked Marinette, “Princess, if... if I had done what Adrien did, w-would you be able to forgive me?”

Marinette tilted her head, shoved the rest of her cookie into her mouth as she chewed and swallowed it thoughtfully as she held out a finger to Chat Noir to wait a moment and then she smiled gently at him. His non-magical mask was hiding his trepidation at her answer for what seemed like eternity.

Finally, she was able to clarify things for him, “I’ll admit that I was angry at first with Adrien, when he tried to apologize to me earlier and I wasn’t ready to forgive him. But since then, well, I’ve thought about it and have found that I’ve already forgiven him.” She looked past Chat and then looked down as she gave a little shrug, “so of course I would be able to forgive you too, if it was you Kitty.”

Chat Noir let out a small sigh of relief as she twiddled her fingers as she went on, “I-I just haven’t told Adrien that yet, it only took me a few hours after he apologized to decide that after all, but I’ll admit that I’ll be more cautious about trusting him in the future. I know he’s been busy and that he didn’t know what I’ve been going through the past few weeks and all, and since I’m partly to blame, well, I really should have spoken up sooner...”

Adrien couldn’t believe his ears and reached out and put a hand on her shoulder to comfort her, thankful that she had scooted close enough to him for him to do so, “Marinette, you can’t blame yourself! Not in the slightest! Adrien should take most of the credit because he should have kept a look out for you and have been there for you,” before she objected though he held up a finger to silence any of her upcoming objections, “other than that, this whole situation was Lila’s fault!”

And mine. He vehemently thought. You have no idea how bad this whole situation wound up being, but it’s definitely not your fault and I DON’T deserve your forgiveness.

“Oh, Chat.” Marinette sighed his name and she shivered slightly at what that did to him. “My best friend, well, I guess now former best friend Alya, she... well, she has a favorite quote by Edmund
Burke that says, ‘The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.’
Well, I knew that and I chose to do nothing, time and time again when it came to Lila, just because I
took Adrien’s advice about putting Lila’s feelings first and not thinking about everyone else that she
was hurting, including myself. Everything got out of hand after that. Not even Ladybug should have
to put up with that kind of treatment.”

Adrien flinched for some reason, his mind throbbing a little, but wasn’t that part of why the balance
is off….

As Marinette continued, “So, in a way, I let evil flourish.” Then she surprised Adrien and chuckled,
“besides, it’s not good to throw blame around when there is so much to be had.”

She leaned over, cupping one hand to the side of her face as if to tell him a secret, “you want to hear
something disgusting?”

Surprised at the tone of her voice he only nodded uncomfortably but curious all the same, “s-sure.”

“There is another saying that all of this can be applied to, it’s basically the same thing, just a bit
crasser and it gets the point across. I’m going to warn you here though Kitty, I’m going to swear a
little…”

“No!” He dramatically placed a hand on his chest again as he leaned away from her, focusing on
what she had to say and not the hint of her perfume, that was so… her.

WOW. Calm down Agreste
and focus!

She followed his movements and giggled. “Yep. Well, anyway, as the saying goes…you can’t pass
crap along without getting some on yourself.”

Adrien did his best to look shocked, he’d heard worse from Alya or from the locker room of course,
but he was kind of surprised to hear it from Marinette, she always seemed above such things, kind of
like her.

“What a potty mouth Princess!” He teased, ignoring her similarity to his Lady.

She leaned back and chuckled as his hand fell off of her shoulder, “yep. Not so innocent huh?”

He laughed a little and rubbed the back of his neck nervously, “I guess not, but I see your point.”

She sighed and agreed. “Yeah. By not standing up to Lila, I’ve been helping to toss it around like it
was going out of style Kitty. Now the mess she’s made is going to be harder to clean up.”

“Oh?” He really hoped this was going where he thought it was.

“Uh, huh. When Adrien apologized earlier, he asked me out to the mayor’s ball and let me know that
he was finally going to stand up to Lila somehow and, well, I think I’m going to help him, if I can. I
think going to the ball with him had something to do with that, it’s not like he would be interested in
me like that, not really.”

Chat Noir smirked slightly, happy to hear this news but confused, “That sounds purr-fect Princess!
But why do you think that Adrien wouldn’t be interested in a Purrincess like yourself? He’s not
completely blind, is he?”

Marinette chuckled, “you’re sweet Kitty. It’s just this perfume, it makes it hard to see who really likes
me for me, you know? It, it makes me a bit… well, more, to almost every guy I meet, or so it seems,
and Adrien’s sudden interest is just, odd. I definitely wasn’t this popular before I was, ah, wearing
“Well, at least you know how to reduce its strength right? I wouldn’t be able to be this close to you otherwise.” He chuckled as he wiggled his eyebrows at her and knocked her knee teasingly.

“Now about this Lila, I’d love to help mew...” He began, but Marinette chuckled and interrupted him.

“I’m afraid that this is a bit of a civilian matter Kitty, unless Lila gets akumatized that is.”

Adrien sighed, “and I’ve been benched for now.”

She frowned a little and nodded in acknowledgement, “yeah, although I appreciated your help tonight. Even Ladybug has been a bit overwhelmed, she ah, well?” Marinette looked conflicted but then she nodded as if she made a decision, “you may see some of the other miraculous in action if this keeps up.”

“Oh? Anyone I know Princess?” Adrien smiled at her kindly.

She shook her head, “nope. I’ve just been advised that it’s a possibility. Just giving you a heads up for her. You know, if Hawkmoth decided to take advantage right now while you’re out of commission Ladybug wanted to have a sort of a backup plan. She’s been considering some other wielders...” Marinette turned to her desk and opened up a drawer showing him a very familiar box as she grinned at him.

“Is that?” He almost gasped but beamed widely instead as his mind raced, Marinette is PURRFECT for a miraculous! Why have I never thought about that before? “It is!” She grinned at him like she was the one who had come up with the plan.

His eyes actually throbbed a bit as he thought he saw, maybe, a bit of his partner in Marinette? No.

He shook his head at the idea, it can’t be.

Adrien anxiously asked, trying to get back on topic, “so, which one is it? The Fox or the Turtle?”

“Neither.” She told him as she winked at him, “I’m only going to use it if there is an emergency after all, it kind of depends on how well Tikki is doing, every transformation has been harder on her...” Marinette shrugged, “anyhow, it’s a surprise.”

“Really? I-I wasn’t aware that there were others.” Adrien frowned, yet another thing that he hadn’t been told, not that he wasn’t surprised, he hadn’t been as heroic as he had hoped to be of late. I guess I have some things to learn.

“Aww Chat, don’t feel bad, I know that Ladybug would have told you if she could have, I just thought that she’d want me to tell you so you didn’t feel left out. With your current, um, limitations, she can’t really contact you right now herself and she had to take off earlier. Besides, it’s only a temporary back up sort of thing, and well, it really depends on how well Tikki is doing tomorrow. I, I mean that I... I mean, that we’re really worried about her and that this... this could really help her rest more.”

Adrien stood up, “I understand Princess, it’s okay.” Obviously, I’ve got to grow up a little before I’m trusted with that kind of information since even Marinette is expecting me to flip out about it, but I can deal with it. I’m a full-grown cat and I can take it. He thought. It’s the least that I can do to show that I trust my partner after all of this.
Adrien’s head throbbed a little as he looked fondly at Marinette as she stood up too, putting the remainder of the cookies and pastries in a bag to go and then set it down beside the kwami before she turned around respectfully with her back to him.

“Get dressed,” she ordered, “I doubt that you want to appear shirtless, and in my robe wherever you’re going.” His Princess chuckled.

Adrien smirked back at her and only hesitated for a moment, before he quickly took off the robe and put his shirts back on as he told her. “Thanks for the robe and mask Princess, now I won’t have to worry so much about Plagg getting worn out.”

“Hey! I’m not the one you need to worry about!” Plagg groused, “I thrive on illness and destructive energy after all.” Adrien glanced at Tikki and saw Plagg gently petting her little head as she gazed up at him almost lovingly. “It’s Tikki that I’m worried about.” Plagg kindly added, “she’s the one that needs to be strong.”

“Thanks, Plagg.” Tikki sweetly answered as Adrien fought the urge to say ‘aww’, Marinette on the other hand… couldn’t resist.

“Aww!” His Princess commented, as she could see them from the side, “that’s so sweet.”

Plagg almost blushed, “yeah, yeah. Thanks for the bread.”

“Well, we really ought to get going, you two need to get some rest. Should I bring Tikki back in a few hours?” Adrien offered Marinette as he waved at the kwami.

“In the middle of the night?” Marinette waved her hand to the opposite wall, fully aware that Chat wasn’t transformed yet as she asked with a voice of surprise, “I don’t think that’s the best idea, could you drop her off tomorrow, say around 6:00AM? She could just phase in through the window. I-I mean that I should be up and getting ready for school by then and that’s how we can get her to… to Ladybug. Tikki said that she’d need all the time that she could get with Plagg after all.”

“For you Princess? Anything.” He told her earnestly in a kind and low voice.

Marinette shivered a little and acted like she nodded in return.

Seeing that he could trust Marinette, and that it was time to transform, Chat Noir finally took off the mask that she had lent him. It was strange being in her presence without it, Adrien felt exposed in a way and his heart thumped with trepidation as he folded it and set it on the chaise beside the robe.

I wonder what you’d think if you knew who I was? Adrien allowed the thought to treacherously cross his mind.

“We ought to go Marinette.” Tikki almost brightly comforted her chosen as she yawned and tried to look healthier than she was to ease her chosen’s mind. “I was promised a movie after all and I don’t think your parents will be happy if they find Chat here.”

Marinette chuckled, “yeah, they had a late date night but should be home soon, I doubt they would like finding a hot guy in my room at this hour.”

“So, I’m a hot guy now huh?” Adrien purred as he walked up behind her. “I thought I was the cat’s meow.”

“You are.” Marinette whispered to him.
“Kid.” Plagg voiced a warning as Adrien got a little too close to his prey.

_No. Friend, that I happen to like as more than that... that I want to date, as Adrien. So, cool it cat, but... but I need to know if I can trust myself around her._

“I’m fine Plagg, just... just give us a moment please.”

_I can control myself; I just have to think it through. She did cover it up a little..._

Plagg huffed but bit his tongue.

“Kitty?” Marinette asked as he came closer to her.

Adrien took a deep breath of the safe and clean air between them before he drew closer to her and finally wrapped his arms around her waist from behind as he whispered, “close your eyes Princess.”

Marinette quickly complied, “what are you doing Chaton?”

Through the haze of her scent, as he took a tentative little breath, something clicked inside of his head as it throbbed a little as he hugged her and nuzzled her head and neck a little. _That's not one of her nicknames for me... is it? I've heard it somewhere though..._

Marinette giggled, “you're so sweet Kitty.” She reached back and petted his head as he rubbed his cheek against her own.

“Is this okay?” He remembered to ask as he gave her a gentle squeeze and then nuzzled her behind her ear a little more as he slowly exhaled and then inhaled and braced himself, getting a little light headed from her perfume, but finding that he could concentrate if he focused, sort of.

_You smell wonderful My La- I mean, My Princess._

She nodded, “yes.” She breathed before she added, “I like your hugs... Kitty.”

Then she startled him as she turned around and he barely noticed that her eyes were closed as she wrapped her arms around his waist and hugged him back, taking a minute to breath in his scent in herself. He hugged her back gently, and rubbed his cheek on the top of her head before gently kissing it as he fought the intense urge to do more.

_I will control myself around her after all. Why does this feel so... so right?_

“I should go.” He stated the obvious as he nuzzled her more.

“Yeah, you should.” She answered, then let go of him, breaking away. Only to allow her hands to creep up his arms and up his neck to find his face with her hands, her eyes still closed as she drew him down to her level...

“Marinette?” He whispered as she leaned to one side and kissed his cheek, her eyes shut tight and his identity still safe.

_I wonder if she’d still be so calm if she knew it was me? _He wondered again, his heart aching as he took in how beautiful she was, how she practically glowed with the slight blush on her cheeks before him. _Would she be so happy about kissing Adrien Agreste like that?_

He remembered the confusion that he had about the kiss that he thought at the time was merely a kiss of gratitude way back when, the one that she gave him after the events on Hero’s Day at the picnic. His heart ached even more as he realized that he wanted to hug her and stay with her... always.
I wish I could see her mesmerizing eyes.

She couldn’t see the blush on his face, but she could feel it in her hands as she stepped back.

“Wha-what was that for?” He finally asked quietly as he let go of her waist, confusion apparent on his face, confusion that she couldn’t see and could only hear.

“For being you.” She simply told him, “I’m sorry about what happened to you, I’m here for you if you need anything.” She told him confidently, patting his cheek gently before she smirked as she added, finally stepping backward out of reach so he wouldn’t have to work so hard to behave, “you got that Alley Cat?”

He chuckled, “I do.” He reassured her before picking up Tikki gently and the to go bag of treats. Taking another step away from her as he expected the onslaught of her muted scent once he was in costume again as he whispered, “Plagg, claws out!”

His transformation was quick and Marinette finally opened her eyes once the bright light dissipated.

_Huh, she knew when my transformation was complete. I can’t see Ladybug transforming in front of her... He shook his head, his headache threatening a return. How did she know when it was safe to open her eyes?_

“Stay safe Chat Noir.” Marinette smiled at him from across the room.

_Oh, WOW, she is delicious. Adrien was tempted to scoop her up and cuddle the night away with her, but he mentally scolded himself instead, Control yourself cat!_

He gave her his signature two finger salute instead as he told her, “I will if you will Princess.”

She nodded at him sweetly as he hopped up on her bed and called over his shoulder at her with his hand holding the snack bag over his heart, “till we meet again my dear Princess.”

Marinette blushed at that.

That was when he finally left for the kwami’s movie night as he hopped up through the skylight.

_Although he didn’t know if Marinette meant for him to hear her as she whispered as he left, “as you wish...CKB.”_

He caught the words and he wondered if they had a special meaning beyond what they were. As she used the nickname though, it hit him almost physically, causing him to stumble over his own tail as he reached her railing on the balcony. Fortunately, he was able to catch himself before he fell. His mind throbbed and his heart raced, he had to take a deep breath to calm himself as his mind almost drove him crazy with the most insane thoughts, or were they hopes?

_I wonder why she uses that phrase with me? I mean, what does it mean? _

_It sounds like it means... something._

_Also, why did my Princess use Ladybug’s nickname for me?_

Adrien blushed under his mask as he finally hurled himself into the night, heading home with Tikki gently held in his gloved hand, _does that mean that Marinette thinks that I have a cute kitten butt too? Why does that not bother me?_

_Why can’t I stop smiling?_
She would be AMAZING as a hero though, a true… everyday… Ladybug, but with a Miraculous…

Think about something else, I can’t go down that path, think about fixing the balance.

How was it broken again?

Huh, the balance between my Lady and I was shaken when I didn’t stand up and be there for her, kind of like how I wasn’t there for my Marinette…

Wait, no, Adrien shook his head. I’m confusing them, aren’t I?

Am I looking forward to seeing Marinette wielding a Miraculous?

Oh, yes. Yes, I am. I wonder why that is?

WOW, I bet that she’d… that she’d look better than Ladybug, maybe? He thought treacherously, but it didn’t feel that way.

She’d be Purr-fect!

Why does it feel like both my Princess and Ladybug would be thrilled to hear that?

Why do I want to run back to her? To… them? No, don’t go there Adrien, that’s… no.

Don’t hope. Am I hoping… that, that could, could be? Could it?

The further he got from Marinette’s the more he worried, would she even want me to come back?

WHO am I even talking about?

Marinette and, or… my Lady?

Am I being true to her when I’m, well, with her?

He didn’t know which girl he was talking about, but Adrien was about to get an answer to some of those questions…

Chapter End Notes

The next chapter will be having the kwami and Adrien watching The Princess Bride, so there will be several references to it, so if you don't want any more spoilers on that movie... go watch it before the next chapter is out, which hopefully will be in a week, so at the start of next weekend is my next planned posting for this story, I don't think the next chapter will be skip able to the plot either ... he hee.... 😁

Just to be straight forward if it wasn’t clear already...

Adrien is actually fighting the miraculous magic and his own misconceptions... and he is getting close to the truth! 😃

Will he get it with the help of two kwami and a few pillows to the head? 😃 We'll have to see in the next chapter...
Let's Watch the Movie!

Chapter Summary

Adrien returns home with a tired Tikki in hand and his own kwami distracting him enough that it was near impossible to think through the thoughts that were both confusing him and causing his head to throb.

Perhaps a distraction will help him be able to relax and focus... or will a mask wearing pirate and his love for his Princess open up our young hero's eyes..

Chapter Notes

Warning, this chapter was a beast and I decided not to cut it in half and did not give in to my one major temptation in this scene... so fair warning, it's 3700 words so if you want to read it all at once, make sure you have a few extra minutes to spare lol.

Also, there are many references to the movie The Princess Bride here and I repeat, I do not own the movie, the quotes etc, just like I don't own the characters from the wonderful show Miraculous Ladybug, they all belong to their wonderful and respective owners and creators etc..

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Adrien de-transformed as he landed in his room and Plagg flew out of his ring and flew around Adrien’s head a few times, a little hyper for some reason as Adrien pondered their problems…

I have to think about fixing the balance.

How was it broken again?

The balance between our Miraculous, between my Lady and I, well, it was shaken when I wasn’t there for My Lady as a civilian… even when I wasn’t aware of it… kind of like how I wasn’t there for My Princess…

What am I thinking? Adrien shook his head. That’s…no. It would be too simple. Too obvious and I am not that lucky, I would have to be blind...

They keep saying that I need to listen to my feelings… and my feelings are confusing, because while I- I love Ladybug, I can’t help loving, I mean, liking Marinette too.

Adrien sighed.

It doesn’t make sense.

I wonder… what would Marinette look like in Ladybug’s outfit?

Adrien fell to his knees and held his head with one hand, Tikki carefully cupped in the other.
Plagg cleared his throat, interrupting Adrien’s train of thought and stopping him from almost dropping the sleeping kwami in his hand. “Get us my pillow Kid, we’re going to watch a movie.”

Adrien didn’t feel like arguing and only nodded, finally getting back to his feet to answer his kwami. “Sure Plagg, I’ll get everything set up.” Distracted by his racing thoughts as he walked over to his bed, Adrien rubbed his head a little more with his free hand, as if all the thoughts that were running through his head were driving him insane.

…

He’s almost there. Plagg thought as he grinned to himself as he watched his chosen wrangle the miraculous magic that hid his partner from him. I’m sure of it. No one can be THIS oblivious after all FOREVER.

“I’ve got an awful headache Plagg… so many questions…” Adrien muttered.

“Wellllll, I’m sure taking a break and watching a movie is just what the doctor ordered Kid.” Plagg replied.

“If you say so…” Adrien took Plagg’s pillow off of his bed and set it on the couch in front of his television, and then gently laid the sleeping Tikki down on it. Plagg quickly flew over to her side and cuddled up with her.

“I’d rather figure this out first though Plagg, we’re running out of time and I have to find my Lady, how do I help her and fix this balance thing if I don’t know who she is?” Adrien asked.

You’re more ahead than you think Kid, you’ve already apologized, in both forms if I remember correctly, it has been a long day after all. Plagg thought.

Besides, you’ve started being there for her, so you just need to regain her trust, actually see her and expose the Liar. Oh, and a reveal wouldn’t hurt so we don’t have to go through this AGAIN.

Plagg waved it off though. “We’ll talk about it later after the movie, Pigtails mentioned it remember? The Princess Bride.” Plagg chuckled a little as he looked at his resting counterpart and gently patted her. “Tikki made me promise that we’d watch it.”

Tikki thought that the first fifteen minutes or so would be hilarious… for me, and she told me why. Not that I’m going to tell you that. Plagg thought with a telling smirk. “So, are you up for a movie kid?”

Adrien shrugged, totally clueless. “Sure, I guess a break could help, it might distract me from this headache, so why not?” He handed the remotes to Plagg, “you cue it up while I get ready for bed.”

“Nooo problem!” Plagg really had to avoid cackling as he pulled up their video service and paused the movie as he eagerly waited to laugh at Adrien once more for his obliviousness.

…”

Less than fifteen minutes into the movie… and after the third pause for explanations, Plagg had his paws full and even less tolerance for Adrien’s dramatics as he finally understood the meaning of ‘As you wish.’ As told by the movie’s hero Westley, as he told the farmgirl Buttercup that he loved her.

“Plagg! Do you know what this means? Chat Noir told Marinette that he LOVED her!” Adrien exclaimed, jumping up and standing on his couch as he paused the movie again and waved at the television dramatically, “He said ‘As you wish’ to his, to-to MY Princess yesterday! And she kissed
him!!!”

Adrien threw himself on his back on the couch, just barely missing Plagg and Tikki, “Then she kissed Chat Noir! After he said that he loved her!”

Plagg was laughing his head off. “Yeah! And you want to know the best part?”

“Best part? Best part! Plagg! She told Chat Noir the same thing and confessed by a movie quote today!” Adrien quickly answered. “You can’t get more romantic than that!”

Plagg snorted, “Noooo, you did that yesterday Kid, what’s with the third person references huh? Or have you forgotten that YOU are Chat Noir and she kissed you? Oh, and she snuggled you a bit today too I might add.”

Adrien’s face flushed as he stumbled over his own words, “but… but, but, I-I didn’t know that I was d-doing that! I didn’t mean t-to be so, so,” he waved his hand at his tv, “so romantic! I mean I like Marinette, I really do and she smells AMAZING Plagg! It’s just…I, I like, I mean I love Mar- I mean Ladyb…!”

WHACK!

Adrien almost lost his balance as he exclaimed frustratingly, “Plagg! No more pillows!”

Adrien ducked as Plagg tried to whack him again.

“Just… don’t finish that sentence kid.” Plagg warned his chosen as he finally dropped the pillow and floated back down to sit next to Tikki, who was smiling ever so slightly as Plagg focused entirely on the movie. “I’m told that this movie just gets better, and it MIGHT help us clue you in, so now just sit back and relax Kid.”

“But… but.” Adrien started to whine.

“Kid, do I have to spell it out for you?” Plagg groaned, “not that I CAN. Ugh! Dumb rules.”

“Spell out WHAT?” Adrien practically whined as he watched his kwami with distrust as he brushed his hair out of his face.

“Let’s just say that you may not know what you were saying, but she did. Now consider this, how did Pigtails react?”

“Umm, when she when kissed me yesterday? But we’re just…”

WHACK!

Adrien was thrown forward from the pillow that had hit the back of his head. “Plagg! How did you do that?!”

“A kwami never reveals their secrets.” Plagg muttered, having never left the pillow he’d been sitting on.

“Ok, so as I was saying, Marinette kissed Chat Noir because we’re…”

THUMP!

Adrien rubbed his head and angrily looked at his kwami, he’d been watching the sneaky cheese fiend, but somehow another pillow had landed on Adrien’s head, that was when he realized that
Tikki wasn’t cuddled by Plagg anymore.

“Enough with the pillows already!” Adrien exclaimed before he scolded, “Tikki!”

Tikki giggled and floated down to Plagg’s side, obviously feeling well enough to tease Adrien for a moment.

“You need to calm down and lower your voice Adrien.” Tikki giggled sweetly as she snuggled up to Plagg again and leaned her head on him weakly. “Don’t fight it. The miraculous magic breaks faster that way, you’ve got to open up your mind to the truth.”

“And enough with that WORD.” Plagg emphasized.

Adrien looked at Plagg in confusion, then grinned mischievously as something miraculously clicked, “what? Friend?”

“Finally!” Plagg threw himself back on the couch.

Adrien looked confused again, “so the use of the word ‘friend’ is important here?”

“Duhh.”

Adrien waited for his kwami to explain with his arms folded and a raised eyebrow.

“Ugh, alright.” Plagg finally broke, “think about earlier, when you left the shop with Pigtails, what did she say? I know you heard it too.”

Adrien’s eyes went wide, “wait! She, she said it to ME too! To Adrien me! When we left to go walk in the park.” But then he got all quiet and sad as he deflated and realized something else, “but… but the way that she said ‘as you wish’, well, it was like she was saying goodbye.”

She wouldn’t say it jokingly either, she didn’t say it to her three new boyfriends after all. Adrien told himself jealously as he began to pout unconsciously.

“Uh, huh. So yesterday you said it to her as Chat Noir…” Plagg just had to remind him, “and she seemed to like that.” Adrien blushed.

Plagg rolled his eyes as he tried to lay tracks for Adrien’s train of thought, “but today?”

“but today she said it to me, to Adrien me, like she was saying goodbye.” Adrien took a deep breath and weakly replied, “well, she is considering changing schools…” She, she couldn’t miss ME that badly, can she? She had a crush on me. Of course, I’d be stupid enough for her to be over me by the time I realized that though, Chloe had to spell it out to me of all people.

“Don’t take it personally Adrien, this isn’t easy after all. Please try to focus. Distractions are a part of why it works so well, focus but relax.” Tikki said encouragingly with a small yawn. “Don’t forget that tonight she said it when you left as Chat Noir too.” Tikki reminded him but then yawned again and whispered to Plagg, “wake me up when they get to where I told you.”

“Sure, Sugar Cube.” Plagg whispered back to her and then looked up at Adrien and spoke louder as Tikki cuddled up next to him and seemed to fall instantly asleep, “so she used that phrase, ‘as you wish,’ with both of your sides, indicating what Kid?”

“Well yeah, like, like… she ah…” Adrien bit his lip, the dots, er, spots just not connecting.

Plagg merely blinked, then floated up, leaving Tikki to shiver for a moment as he started to look
around the room and told Adrien frankly, “I need something with a little more weight to it than a pillow.”

Adrien rolled his eyes. “I’m not exactly sure where you’re going with all of this.”

Plagg looked at Adrien blankly for a moment until Adrien motioned with his hands, “what?”

Plagg groaned, he really wanted to get to sleep eventually, so he gave up for a moment as he said, “look, let’s just watch the movie. Tikki said that there was some important stuff in there that just might help clue us in on well, on the important stuff...” Then he settled down with Tikki at his side again.

“Important stuff like kissing?” Adrien grinned, having noticed the narrator’s grandson’s not so favorite topic.

“Blech! No, but Tikki said that this movie had it all, ‘Fencing, fighting, torture, revenge, giants, monsters, chases, escapes, true love, miracles.’ (actual quote from the movie)”

“True love huh?” Adrien looked at his kwami suspiciously as he grinned, “like between me and My Mari- I mean My Lady?”

Why do I confuse them? Adrien’s head almost exploded once more.

“I didn’t say that.” Plagg grinned as he hit the play button, “just watch Kid, you’ll get it.”

…

Less than a minute later…

Adrien fought the tears in his eyes as he paused the movie and cried out, “Plagg! Why are you making me watch this! They were in love and he dies? I mean come on! Why would the writers let that happen!”

It’s like Ladybug is leaving me, but I’ll never know for sure who she is! Adrien tried not to cry as a stray thought ran through his mind as he wiped his eyes anyway. I couldn’t handle losing Marinette like that either!

Wait…

“Ugh. Just watch.” Plagg interrupted his thoughts again as he pressed play.

…

Adrien eventually paused the movie, “Wait, she’s gonna marry the Prince even though she doesn’t love him? Who does that Plagg?!”

If Ladybug moves on from me, Adrien me, breaking our balance fully, will she marry, I mean, go out with the new Chat Noir? Adrien worried. What about Marinette? Why do I feel like she’d reject me too if, if that happened?

What was it that Chloe said again?

How do I feel about...

Plagg growled as he pressed play. “Just watch!”
Adrien was really getting into the movie and gushed as he paused it again. “Ooo! I love the fencing scene! Did they use stand ins or did they do that themselves?” (the actors trained and did that themselves)

“Plagg!? Do you think I could do something like that? Without the mask?”

Plagg groaned, rolled his eyes, and stole the remote again, away from Adrien, and started the movie once more.

Adrien paused again, “What? Wait, why is the Man in Black being so mean to her?”

As they saw the duo paused at the top of a ravine where the Man in Black had just been quite rude to the Princess.

“Play!” Plagg almost screamed as he hit the button and they saw Buttercup push the Man in Black down a steep hill.

Adrien reached for the remote to pause it but Plagg threw it across the room as the Man in Black yelled, “As Y-OOOO-U WISH!”

Adrien froze and blinked, as he uttered the word, “Oh.”

Then Buttercup threw herself down the hill after him.

Plagg went and picked up the remote and quickly paused it.

“Plagg! What did you do that for! They just found each other!”

“And why is that?!?” Plagg said leadingly.

“Well, she recognized him under the mask.” Adrien blinked, “wait, uhh….”

“Go on, you can do it Kid.” Plagg encouraged with his fingers crossed, if he had any.

Adrien looked thoughtful, “uhh, wait, nope. I got nothing.”

“Annnnd we’re back at square one. Ugh, Tikki! Wake up Sugar Cube!”

“Plagg!” Tikki whined, “I told you not to wake me until they made it to the Miracle man!”

“Sorry Tiks, but our boy here is being inconceivable,”

Tikki grinned at him, “I don’t think that means what you think that means.”

Plagg chuckled at her as he continued, “my kitten here needs to understand the implications of wearing a mask, like why Buttercup didn’t recognize her True Love.”

“Hey, I get that!” Adrien grumbled.

“Oh yeah?” Plagg challenged, “then explain and then tell us why that is important here.”

“Well, wearing a mask gives you another identity and that protects your civilian self. Buttercup didn’t recognize Westly because she…” Adrien rubbed his head as his head ached something fierce,
“because she wasn’t looking for him under the mask? Because they were too different?”

“And why is that important here Adrien?” Tikki asked gently.

Adrien rubbed his temples, willing the headache to go away as he thought aloud, “well, Westly was all romantic and sweet before he put on the mask, but when he put it on, he became someone else. Kind of like me and Chat Noir and like Ladybug and whoever she is as a civilian?”

“Bravo.” Plagg pretended to clap. “Does that help?”

Adrien slowly shook his head, “that just tells me that as I look for Ladybug, I can’t expect to find someone exactly like her, she’s… well, she’s someone else under that mask too. I mean, she’s her, but not her as her civilian self, not completely anyway… like there is more to her?” Adrien’s head pounded again, “so maybe I need to look for someone that would be like Ladybug if they wore a mask too?”

Plagg looked at Tikki and she shot him a deadpanned look back. “He’s your chosen.”

“Fine.” Plagg groaned, “so what are the attributes that both girls should share? Start with the absolutely obvious things that a blind man like you might notice.”

“Plagg!” Tikki gently scolded and Plagg shrugged his shoulders unrepentantly.

Adrien ignored the kwami as he listed things about Ladybug aloud, “well, she’s short, she has amazing blue eyes, gorgeous dark blue silky hair…”

“Stop! Too mushy, less specific please and I can't believe I'm saying this, but less cheesy please.” Plagg ordered.

“Plagg!” Tikki fussed with a little snicker as she nuzzled up to him.

“Fine, go ahead.” Plagg folded his arms and acquiesced, “just remember that looks aren’t everything. The magic can change that a bit.”

“I know.” Adrien whispered sadly, chastised enough about that.

“And don’t forget to tell us how she makes you feel!” Tikki sweetly added.

Wait… Chloe said that too…

“Well, she’s brave, smart, kind, courageous… umm, I could be here all-night guys.” Adrien bashfully admitted.

“Well then, tell us how she makes you feel.” Tikki suggested. “Remember the miraculous magic will make you see someone else around her civilian self, like she CAN’T be HER.” The little goddess emphasized before she shook her head, “but underneath it all, the feelings should be the same. Now, I can see the mental strain on your face Adrien. Try not to fight it, let the confusion flow over you, you need to accept it before it will go away. Let’s try again, how does SHE make you feel?”

Adrien exhaled and then gently grinned as he let the confused feelings in his mind wash over him, “well, Ladybug makes me feel special, like I can do anything around her. It doesn’t hurt that she doesn’t seem to care about my image and that I’m worth her time and that she can depend on me, like I can depend on her. I feel comfortable and cared for around her, like I’m somebody special to her. Sometimes my heart wants to just beat out of my chest when I think about her.” Adrien thinks wistfully as he added, “I just want to hold her, and hug her and k-kiss her…”
But then he felt a little bad, because he’d been having thoughts like that about another girl lately… wait a minute.

“Ugh! Enough of that! You’re going to make me lose my bread!” Plagg groaned.

“Stop whining you stinky sock!” Tikki chastised. Plagg grinned at her and she rolled her eyes before adding with a cute little snicker, “I think he’s almost got it!”

Adrien swallowed. I’m almost there? Wait, well… there is only one other girl that makes me feel special, comfortable, trusted and loved… one that smells so good… just like Ladybug…

“Oh?!” Adrien asked out loud as his heart pounded as the ache in his head seemed to move towards his heart too as he whispered, “w-why didn’t I think of that? There is a-a girl from school who is all of those things, someone who I wouldn’t think of as Ladybug because it’s… it’s like she’s wearing a disguise but in reverse and she, she makes me feel like Ladybug makes me feel…”

Adrien swallowed as he held his hand to his chest, “Plagg… it hurts.”

Plagg grinned proudly at his chosen, “you’ve got to say it Kid.”

“Just… just, Plagg, wouldn’t they smell the same?” Adrien whispered, confused about that bit, because the two girls on his mind at the moment were similar that way, but not quite identical either.

“Think about it Kid, the miraculous magic does try to hide that to an extent, but not enough to hide it forever.” Plagg smirked.

“You’re doing great Adrien.” Tikki encouraged, “just say her name.”

“Okay, moving on.” Adrien swallowed and tried not to think about it too hard. “She is someone that I want to be around all of the time and hug and cuddle and ahhh…”

Someone who I HAVE hugged and cuddled!

Someone madly clumsy just like Ladybug claims to be…

The most irresistible girl I know…

Someone… amazing.

Miraculous even.

At first, he shook his head as he sighed in denial, “but, but I’m not that lucky.”

Tikki giggled lightly, “she’d tell you the same thing. Think about it Adrien, and then please, tell us her name…”

Adrien’s eyes grew to fill nearly half of his face as the spots began to fall into place as he put his hands over his mouth and then let them travel into his hair and he exhaled as held his head like it was going to explode as the ache in his heart and in his head disappeared as he let his hands fall into his lap and he said, “her name … her name is…”

…

…

…
“Come on Kid! You can do it!” Plagg cheered him on as Adrien gasped and then whisper shouted...

“She’s… My Lady is… My-My Princess! My Marinette!”

Plagg and Tikki floated up a little and spun each other around gleefully cheering at Adrien’s discovery before they landed back on their pillow. Plagg was vibrating a little and Tikki looked exhausted and still very pink, but darker than she was an hour ago.

“My Lady! She’s Marinette!” Adrien gasped louder. “My Princess! My Bugaboo and my Mari are the same!”

“Good job Adrien!” Tikki congratulated him.

“Not bad Kid. Now you can finally get to work!” Plagg commented.

“Plagg! You’re such a pessimist!” The dark pink kwami scolded.

Adrien, still in a fog from his discovery cocked his head and echoed, “to work?” Then Adrien was hit with another realization as he finally cried out as he figured out the other important detail, “wait, what have I DONE!? I could lose them both!”

“Oh, dear.” Tikki weakly yawned, exhausted from all the excitement.

“Plagg! Tikki! Help me!” Adrien pleaded.

“We will Adrien, you’re on the right path now.” Tikki confirmed before she yawned again. “I-I’m afraid that I’ll just need a nap first.”

“I’ve got ya Sugar Cube.” Plagg pulled her close and cuddled her as he whispered to his chosen, “Now you just have to dig yourself out of the hole you’ve dug Kid.” Plagg added.

“Plagg!” Tikki whisper scolded and Plagg just laughed as Adrien groaned.

“What? He’s better off now than when he started all of this.”

“I know that Plagg, but it’s not all his fault and you could really be more supportive.” Tikki yawned again.

“Hey, don’t you worry, I’m here for you both Sugar Cube, till the end.”

Then they began to whisper to each other as Adrien decided to ignore them, as he focused on the future as he thought through the last few weeks and felt torn between elation and misery.

With a sigh, Adrien got up and walked over to his window and looked towards Marinette’s house as he said, “Oh Princess, I know what I need to do now. I just hope that you’ll be able to truly forgive me and trust me again someday...”

Chapter End Notes

My temptation was to leave it at a cliffhanger there where he was about to get it... but, I was generous for once and now he knows that Marinette is his Lady and he’s got some work to do.
Unfortunately, they will not be watching the rest of the movie in the next chapter... because we'll be moving on to the next day, which is day 4 from Master Fu's warning, Thursday, the day of the class election.

The next chapter may be a bit longer than a week to come out, I'm a bit behind in writing on other stories because this chapter was about 2 chapters long and I'm being crazy and contemplating Joining in on the fun of Marichat May lol.

I hope you enjoyed the appearance of yet another playful pillow throwing Plagg and thank you so much for reading, commenting and the kudos, I'm touched that so many people like my story and my writing.
The Next Morning

Chapter Summary

Tikki is sneaky. Plagg does not appreciate her decision.
Adrien does.
Adrien gets a Text from Marinette and talks with the kwami, before heading over to see Marinette in another school's uniform.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Adrien had a strange dream that night… or was it real?

He was drifting between wakefulness and some much-needed sleep as he heard Tikki and Plagg arguing, supposedly floating in the air above him as he tried to get some much needed rest.

In the dream, Adrien guessed that they wouldn’t continue their conversation if they knew that he was listening in, so Adrien kept his eyes closed, pretending to sleep so that he could hear what they were talking about…

“Sugar Cube, you really shouldn’t, you need all of your strength for tomorrow…” Plagg actually sounded worried and concerned for once.

“I’ll be fine Plagg. We are Miraculous after all aren’t we? I’m powerful enough to channel some of my powers for him, for them,” she amended, “besides, he could use the extra luck.” Tikki had replied and Adrien coughed lightly automatically, since something dusty was tickling his nose. “I have some magic to spare for our chosen after all.”

“Tiks.” Plagg sounded serious, “I know that you’re Lady Luck and all, but you know that you’ll need all the energy that you can get if there is an attack tomorrow, I know Master Fu gave us seven days and we’re dieties and all, but still, I know you’re having a tough time holding everything together.”

“I’m FINE Plagg.” Tikki emphasized, “besides, I think what you and your chosen did earlier will have weakened Hawkmoth, we have time.”

“Tiks.” Plagg almost sounded like he was scolding Tikki, “I didn’t want to tell you this but I could sense what Adrien was going through during that akumatization, I really don’t think that Hawkmoth cares enough about Nooroo’s health or comfort here. If he get’s the right opportunity, he’ll take it. Forget if it’s painful or hard on his kwami.”

Tikki sighed, “I know Plagg, I could sense it too.” Tikki paused before adding, “we were close enough to share what we were feeling after all.”

“Yeah.” Plagg sighed wistfully, “I miss that too, but that doesn’t mean that I want you to overextend yourself. I… I care about you Sugar Cube.”

Tikki gave a small giggle, “and I love you too, took you long enough.”
“Hey, you know I’m only good for expressing my undying love once a century.”

“I know, and I know you mean it every time.” Adrien heard a small rustle, like they were hugging or something, “now, are you ready to get some sleep now Stinky Sock?”

Plagg almost sappily responded, “with you Sugar Cube? You bet!”

There was another small rustle as Adrien heard them snuggle together on Plagg’s pillow, which Adrien had placed back on the bed before he had gone to bed himself.

Knowing that Tikki had done something to help him, Adrien was finally able to go to sleep.

...  

Adrien went through his morning routine with practiced ease and speed, his vague memory more like a dream than anything. Although, it felt real since Adrien wasn’t as panicked as he was when the kwami had insisted that he needed some sleep.

Adrien had woken up well over an hour before his 6:30AM alarm this morning somehow too. He had less than five hours of somewhat fitful sleep, which was nothing new, but he felt the full weight of what he had done and now while he had an idea of what to do, he was doubting himself, despite Tikki’s help. Of course, he was pretty sure that he would have not slept at all or only had nightmares if it wasn’t for whatever she had done. Still, some rest was better than none.

After finishing getting ready for the day, Adrien was standing at his window, watching the sunrise as he worried, how am I going to make this up to her?

“Adrien,” Tikki’s gentle little voice interrupted the young man’s introspection. “Please try not to be so hard on yourself. You should be happy, you’ve made a lot of progress and done something that is very difficult after all. Breaking the Miraculous magic is no small thing.”

“Wait, you’re not going to tell me to just pull it together and to get you some cheese? I mean, some cookies?” Adrien glanced at her, unaccustomed to such kindness.

Tikki giggled a little. “No Adrien.” She patted him on the neck as she was resting on his shoulder now. “I’m proud of you and I’m sure that Plagg is too, he’s just not as vocal about things as I am and I’m sure that with time, Marinette will be glad that it is you.”

“I don’t know about that Tikki, I really dropped the ball here.” Adrien frowned. I did break the balance after all.

“I know how to tell him that I’m proud of him.” Plagg groused as he interrupted and flew over and landed on Adrien’s head and yawned, “I’m proud of you too Kid, now quit with the gloom and doom and perk up will ya?”

“Thanks, Plagg.” Adrien gratefully replied as Tikki giggled a little.

“Yeah well, I figured that I ought to say that before you left without feeding the kwami.” Plagg added with a wave of his paw.

“Leave?” Adrien raised his eyebrow. It’s not time for school yet…

“Well, yeah. We have to take my Sugar Cube back to Pigtails by what, 6:00am?” Plagg rolled his eyes, his gaze landing on Adrien’s desktop clock, they only had forty minutes until they were supposed to be there.
Shocked, Adrien shook his head and went to get the leftovers from what Marinette had sent over for the kwami. The kwami floated down to his desk and Adrien cleared his throat as he handed over their breakfast, “I never thought that I’d see the day when you suggested doing something Plagg.”

“Well, don’t get used to it.”

Adrien just chuckled lightly as he checked the Ladyblog for a couple of minutes and gratefully found nothing new, besides the ability to recognize Marinette as she was transformed in the pictures on the site. How could I have been so blind? She isn’t just an everyday Ladybug, she is Ladybug!

“How could I have been so blind? She isn’t just an everyday Ladybug, she is Ladybug!” Plagg interrupted Adrien’s mental self-scolding over all of his mistakes with his relationship with Marinette, now that he knew who she was. “You couldn’t help whatever you’re stressing about and you can’t change the past.”

“Kid, don’t think too hard about it.” Tikki then brightly added, “but you can learn from it!”

“Yeah, I’ve heard that from somewhere before, but thanks.” Adrien then cleared his throat, “well, it looks like nothing happened overnight. Are you going to be okay if there’s an akuma attack today?” Adrien asked Tikki as she swallowed her last bite.

“I won’t be able to hold Ladybug’s transformation for long, but I’ll be fine.” Tikki replied as Adrien nodded and noted that while she looked better than when she came over, she was still a deep pink.

Adrien’s phone sounded a notification that he had received a text.

Princess: I’m in.

Adrien eagerly typed back…

Me: You’ll go to the ball with me?

Princess: (eyeroll emoji) That 2.

Me: I won’t let you down!

Princess: Easy Tiger, we need to talk about somethings, but I’ll help take down Lila.

Princess: Is Chloe behind all of this? Is that who I need 2 contact?

Me: I think she’d appreciate that, she’s handling things behind the scenes.

Princess: While you get bullied by Lila. 😞 (unamused emoji)

Me: Only for a few days, it’s better if this is done in a public setting, in case Lila gets akumatized again and to expose her to everyone.

Princess: You’re playing a dangerous game Agreste.

Me: I laugh in the face of danger. Ha ha ha!

Princess: Enough with the Lion King quotes… are we really doing this?

Me: I’m not Lion.

Princess: Ugh, you’re terrible… and here I thought you were such a catch.
Me: (winky emoji) I am. But I only want to be caught by you.

Princess: Just to warn you, I do throw back the small ones.

Princess: ^ the weak ones!!!!

Princess: That was not meant the way that it sounds!

Princess: Agh!

Adrien of course had laughed loudly enough to make the kwami curious about what was so funny.

Me: I’m neither Princess…

Me: I’ve been told I’m quite the …

Before he finished typing the rest, Marinette’s response appeared.

Princess: don’t you even finish that thought!

Adrien blushed as he chuckled and typed the next part as Plagg gave into his curiosity as he flew up and looked over his shoulder…

“Are you trying to make her have a meltdown Kid?” As he nibbled on his bread.

Adrien dusted the crumbs off of his shoulder, then backspaced and typed something new, hoping that he wasn’t being too forward.

Tikki landed on his other shoulder and answered for him, “oh, he is. He’s too much like you Plagg. Have pity on her Adrien, it’s early and she probably didn’t know what she’s typing.”

Plagg snorted, “aww! Don’t listen to her, send it Kid.” Plagg encouraged him.

Me: As you wish. 😊🌞 (winky & kiss & heart emoji)

Princess: …

Princess: …

Princess: …

Plagg cackled, “you broke her Kid!”

“Plagg!” Tikki pouted for half a second, but couldn’t help smiling about it too.

Princess: Umm… like I said, we’ll talk about… stuff later.

Princess: I’m available between 4:00pm to 8:00pm.

Princess: If that offer to borrow a dress still stands.

Me: Of course It still does.

Adrien checked his schedule and found that he actually didn’t have anything scheduled that night. Wow, I sure am lucky this morning! He thought gratefully.

Me: I’ll pick you up at 4:00pm, after my photo shoot.
Me: After we pick out a dress, would you like to get a quick bite to eat?

Princess: I’ll think about it.

Me: I’ll see you later then Beautiful. 😊 (smiling face with heart eyes)

Princess: …

Princess: Thanks… you too.

Princess: I mean you’re handsome, but you know that...

Me: Yeah, but it means more coming from you, so thank you.


Adrien squealed, “She called me Handsome Plagg!”

“Yeah, whatever, keep your eye on the prize Kid.”

“Plagg, we should be happy for them!” Tikki objected as she flew back to the desk, Plagg following to return to the rest of his bland breakfast.

“I am, but the boy needs to focus Tiks!”

“Right!” Adrien quickly agreed as he spun around in his chair and looked at one of his pictures of Ladybug, of Marinette.

“Alright, now Marinette mentioned a backup plan, is she going to get other miraculous for others besides herself then?” Adrien blinked and then he forgot what he asked as he blurted, “wait, she gave out Miraculous to Alya and Nino! They’re Rena Rouge and Carapace, I mean, they weren’t exactly subtle about their relationship! Ugh! I really was blind!”

“You’re telling me.” Plagg answered as he slowly chewed his bread.

Adrien frowned, “and because they’ve been more supportive of Lila, Marinette, I mean Ladybug, well, now she can’t trust them in battle, huh?”

“Would you?” Plagg replied, “not that that takes a genius to figure all of that out.”

Adrien frowned, agreeing without words.

“Plagg!” Tikki gently scolded before returning to Adrien’s earlier question, “while it is possible to combine Miraculous and use two at once…”

“Besides ours.” Plagg interjected.

“I know.” Adrien nodded grudgingly, “that would trigger the ability to make a reality changing wish, Master Fu told me that the balance of the universe would demand something else in exchange for the new reality. Using both of your Miraculous would be too tempting to use that power. If you wish for a long life, someone dies young, if wish someone to be alive, someone dies, right?”

“That’s right Adrien.” Tikki answered. “That’s why we can’t allow Hawkmoth to get our Miraculous.”

“AND,” Plagg loudly interrupted, “it’s why we can’t let him know that we’re sick.”
"Wait, shouldn’t you be better now?" He looked at the dark pink kwami, "I mean, I know what happened, I’ve found Ladybug and apologized."

"There’s still some things that you need to do." Tikki replied gently, "You still need to be there for Marinette as Adrien, like you were before."

Plagg belched, "and then some."

"Plagg! You’re disgusting!" Adrien got after his kwami, "we have a guest!"

"Tiks knows everything about me Kid." Plagg grinned at Tikki who looked away from him as he sappily grinned at her, "and she still loves me anyway."

"Not when you’re doing that!" She turned back as she scolded him and Plagg only laughed as he took another bite of his food.

Adrien cleared his throat, "not that I’m not enjoying our ‘chat’ guys,” Adrien smirked to himself, "but we need to leave in a few minutes."

I was just, wondering something though…

"Tikki, do you know why Marinette never entrusted me, Adrien me, with a Miraculous?"

Tikki smiled up at him, "oh Adrien, she had a hard time talking with you as your civilian self because of her crush on you, in either of her forms."

"So, you know about that, huh?" Adrien brushed the back of his neck nervously

"Of course." Tikki nodded, "plus she thought that you were quite busy enough already, which you are. Part of the selection of who can temporarily wield a miraculous is their availability and the ability to work with whoever is choosing it. You may be seeing one or two of the Miraculous from the Zodiac if we need reinforcements, but that’s only if it’s a tough akuma. I won’t be able to transform her for long. Besides, I think that Marinette didn’t try to give you a miraculous in the past…"

"Despite that you couldn’t take it without risking your identity or being her back up as Chat Noir Kid.” Plagg added grumpily, obviously not enjoying the topic as he took his last bite and chewed it dramatically.

"As I was saying… before now I think that Marinette didn’t think to give Adrien one because Ladybug needs to be able to focus during the battle, not keeping an eye on her crush in a skin tight suit.” She chuckled prettily as Adrien blushed before adding, "plus, she knows your schedule, you hardly have time to breathe as it is.”

Adrien blinked, "Wow, she liked me enough to learn my schedule huh? I don’t even know what it will be half of the time.” Adrien gulped, "do… do you think that she’ll be able to learn to trust me again, as Chat Noir after she finds out that I’m Adrien?” Adrien bit his lip with worry.

Tikki looked at him reassuringly before floating up and touching his cheek gently, “I’m sure that she will, eventually. That’s part of what you need to do, to regain her trust as Adrien.”

Adrien nodded, “I’m working on that. I need to help her balance her life by being there for her,” he counted the steps off on his hand with his fingers, “do that trust part, help expose Lila and hopefully have a reveal? To fix all of this I mean?”

“Yep.” Plagg answered with a nod, “I’m ready to go by the way.”
Adrien nodded back, “how about you Tikki?”

Tikki nodded, “I’m ready too Adrien.”

“Alright,” Adrien stood and posed, “then Plagg, claws out!”

“See you later Tiks!” Plagg blurted as he was sucked into Adrien’s ring and he transformed into Chat Noir.

“Come on Tikki.” Adrien gently scooped Tikki up in one gloved hand, “let’s take you back to My Princess.”

…

Chat Noir peaked over the rooftop that he was hiding behind as he tried to psych himself up into going over to see Marinette. Apparently, she was equally stressed out, since she was dressed in a new school uniform and was pacing back and forth up on her balcony.

Adrien was stunned.

She hadn’t even put up her hair in her signature pigtails yet. Adrien couldn’t help himself as he gazed at her, admiring the view from afar. It was like his dream girl had walked out of one his favorite anime shows.

She is so gorgeous, he thought, how did I never see my Marinette in my Lady? She’s the only girl more beautiful after all. He allowed himself to realize that fact, of course, she would be, the mask was hiding her true beauty.

Marinette’s uniform included a white blouse with blue piping along the collar and a light blue mid-thigh skirt, a matching scarf or bow tucked under the collar and white knee socks. He couldn’t see her shoes from where he was, but he couldn’t help but finally sigh loudly at the sight before him.

She turned in his direction, taking a quick breath of air and blushing slightly before she called out to him, “I heard you over there. Come over here Kitty! I’m lonely!”

I will be there whenever you call me Princess.

Chat Noir quickly obeyed and the next thing he knew, he was standing before his Marinette, her hair lightly kissed by the wind and his heart ached, encouraging him to kiss her himself right then and there.

Is it strange? I mean, to be jealous of the wind? He wondered.

Tikki floated down from his shoulder, amused by their stiff but awed gazes upon each other and landed on the nearby table, not that her chosen or Chat Noir watched, as they only had eyes for each other.

Chat Noir quickly knelt down before Marinette, deciding to attempt to focus only on her as he took her hand in his own, bowing his head to kiss it as he said, “At your service, my Purr-incess!”

Chapter End Notes
Sorry about the delay in posting, I'm crazy and I have 4 active stories right now and life has been quite busy outside of my writing. Thankfully my arm is better and I can write when I want to, I just need to find the time lol!

Thank you all for the kudos and support, this story has surpassed 1200 kudos now!

I'll try to update this story again in 7-10 days (or less if I'm lucky) since I've caught up to all that I've written so far.

Here are my other current stories...

**You Won't Know Me**
- some angst, but aged up Chat convinces and upset LB to let him reveal himself so she can cross his path and find her.

**University Style - Marichat May 2019**
Without the miraculous, reverse crush, Adrien has somehow made 3 identities for himself and Marinette likes the dorky & messy student side of him, which he is really confused about.

**A Working Vacation**
The third part to my Truce series, it's an AU and aged up where Adrien brings his friends on a working vacation, since Hawkmoth has called a Truce and somehow Adrien convinces Mari to practice date Adrien and date Chat Noir...
Chapter Summary

Tikki worries about and watches over her chosen, even when it comes to matters of the heart.
Obviously she would when you throw in hormones, love and pheromones. This chapter is a minefield ... of fluff.

All I can say is Tikki, you little shipper you...

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Adrien as Chat Noir quickly knelt down before Marinette on her balcony just before 6:00am. Taking her hand in his own, he bowed his head to kiss it as he told her resolutely, “At your service, my Purr-incess!”

Marinette chuckled, then blushed lightly and covered her mouth for a moment before asking, “does that make you my knight Kitty Cat?”

He stood before her and couldn’t help but to reply with a smirk, “as you wish, my lovely Princess Marinette.”

Her eyes widened, her smile grew and her blush deepened slightly, “be careful Chat Noir,” she warned as she tapped his bell flirtatiously, “I might hold you to that promise.”

She is out to kill me! A flustered Chat Noir thought as he blushed beneath his mask as he held her hand, his current and unstable link to his new reality.

There was a cute giggle and they both turned to see Tikki sitting on Marinette’s little table, and Marinette squealed, “Tikki!”

She held out her free hand and Tikki flew over and snuggled her chosen before landing in her hand. Marinette gave her a little peck on her little head and Adrien grinned.

They have such a sweet relationship!

“I’m glad to be back Marinette. Go ahead and put me back on the table.” Marinette followed her instructions as Tikki went on, “well, it was awfully nice of Chat Noir to bring me over this early. So thank you Chat Noir.” She told them as Marinette looked over at Chat Noir gratefully with an affirmative nod and he smiled back at her.

“You’re welcome.” He told them sincerely.

Tikki nodded, “yes, but you both have places to go, school to get ready for and I think we need to cover something important.”

“Oh?” Marinette replied.
“Well, I do have one question actually.” Adrien began, “would you happen to know why Ladybug didn’t give me another miraculous if ours can’t be used at the same time sweet Princess?”

Tikki giggled and looked at Marinette so she could answer, “well,” Marinette began hesitantly, “as I understand it, it’s not you per se.”

“It’s not me. That sounds like a break up line Marinette.” He looked at her sadly as he frowned with a raised eyebrow before he dramatically raised his wrist to his forehead, “oh dismissed before even given a chance! Whoa is me! My poor Kitty heart!”

“Oh no! It’d definitely not you silly cat!” She tapped him on his shoulder to get his attention, “It’s just, ugh, I’m just going to say this, but Tikki mentioned that Plagg doesn’t like to share his chosen that way.”

Adrien snorted, that sounded like Plagg actually and he was going to give his kwami a good talking to the next time he thought about this conversation.

“He can work with other kwami.” Tikki told them gently, “but he’s also very possessive and he REALLY doesn’t like sharing.” Then Tikki glanced down at their hands, which were still clasped together after his kiss to Marinette’s hand. “Not unlike other cats, or so I’ve heard.”

Following her line of sight, Chat Noir and Marinette trailed their individual gazes from their hands and up each other’s arms and then to each other’s eyes.

*How did I not realize that their eyes are the same?* Adrien wondered as he smirked slightly and blushed beneath his mask. *She’s so beautiful, it’s a shame she has to wear a mask at all.*

“Are you two paying attention?” Tikki giggled. “I mean, I know that you’re both a little distracted here, but I think you need to focus on well, focusing please.”

“Oh, right.” Marinette blushed and finally let go of Chat Noir’s hand.

“Oh, yeah, sorry Marinette.” Chat Noir swallowed, disappointed from the loss of her touch, “you look breath taking by the way.” He told Marinette, “you new outfit suits you.” He then frowned, “but does… does that mean that you’ve made the decision to change schools?”

Marinette shook her head, her hair still billowing out in the wind behind her. Her blue and white uniform suited her far better than he was capable of dealing with. The fact that she was wearing a skirt didn’t help either. She was truly a magical girl that had stepped out of one of his favorite animes. “No, I made the uniform last week, thinking that moving schools might be my last resort and so I would fit in when I went to check it out, but uh,” she tucked a strand of hair behind her ear, “I’m still not sure. The school I went to yesterday wasn’t so bad, I just really didn’t like the no phones rule.”

*Well, being that you're Ladybug, you’d need to get a notification about being needed of course. He thought ruefully.*

“Does that mean that your current school still has a chance?” He asked hopefully.

*Do I still have a chance?*

She took a breath and then bobbed her head from one shoulder to the other indecisively, “maybe. Adrien and Chloe are working to expose Lila and I’ve agreed to help. I’ve already texted Chloe, she’s assigned me to get in touch with Jagged since he’s been ignoring her calls. Thankfully I already know that he is in town, just not at her father’s hotel this time.” She giggled, “he wasn’t too
impressed with the fact that she pretended to be Ladybug that one time and sometimes he likes to take a break from being famous. This other hotel is a bit more… discreet.”

Chat Noir chuckled, he was sure that Chloe would be annoyed by that, but that was so Jagged. “He’ll probably go back though.” Marinette added.

“Oh?”

“Well, yeah, not many hotels are willing to cater to someone’s pet crocodile like the mayor does.” Marinette smiled up at him.

“That does make sense. Anything else happen since I last saw you my Purr-incess?”

Marinette bit her lip and gave him a small grin, “well…” she rolled the word off of her tongue and Adrien had to fight the urge to kiss her as she giggled just so. Wow… just WOW!

“Well, I’ve agreed to go to the Ball with Adrien tomorrow.”

Now she had his attention. “Are… Are you okay with that?” He asked worriedly as he caught his breath.

She bit her lip slightly again for a moment more before replying and Adrien did not know how to respond to that action, besides not breathe again until she said, “I’m okay with that. I’ve thought about it and I’ve forgiven him I think, it’s just, well, the trust part.” She tapped her fingers together nervously, “I told you that I had a huge crush on him once, right?”

Chat Noir looked out over the city and rubbed the back of his neck, “well…. It was kind of obvious too now that I think about it and I’m guessing recent events changed that?”

She took a moment to reply quietly, “I don’t know really, but I’ve decided to give him a chance.”

He turned to smile at her, “that’s wonderful Purr-incess! I’m sure that Adrien will appurr-eicate that, and if he does anything that bothers you, you let me know, I’ll straighten him out.”

To make his point he pounded one fist into his other hand and half a second later, Marinette laughed. Wiping a tear from her eye, Marinette told him, “thanks for that Kitty, but I think that I’ve got the whole Adrien thing handled.” Then she winked at him, “besides, it’s hardly fair to send a superhero after a random citizen.”

“He’d not random to you though, is he Purr-incess?” He leaned towards her with a mischievous smile on his face.

You can handle me however you want… wait, clean thoughts Adrien! Clean thoughts! Be a gentle-cat!

She batted him away, “keep your distance Kitty, I’m still having trouble with my pher- I mean my perfume! You’re lucky that I’m upwind from you here.”

He nodded, grateful about that, although I really don’t know how I could be more smitten than I already am.

Tikki cleared her little throat, “actually, about that,” Tikki began, “your scent is going to be very strong today Marinette.”
“I’ve used that other, um, perfume to cover it up though.” Marinette looked confused.

“Yes, and you’ll have to reapply every two hours or less in order to hope to be able keep the really weird and unwanted guys at bay.”

“Tikki, what do you mean exactly by unwanted?” Chat Noir asked for Marinette, who was thinking about the same thing as the wind shifted and Chat Noir caught Marinette’s scent.

It was faint, but it was powerful, he worked hard to keep his focus, but found himself sweating as he struggled to pay attention.

Tikki sighed having not noticed the stiffening of Chat Noir’s shoulders, “well, it’s meant to attract the best partners, so if you have an attraction to a guy,” Tikki glanced from Marinette to Chat Noir and figured out that his grip on the balcony rail was him trying to make himself behave. So, the little goddess cleared her throat, “well then, if Marinette has a slight attraction to a guy, well then, today the original perfume should be able to work past that other scent a bit, for that guy.”

“That’s… that’s a bit, unusual for a perfume. Huh?” Chat Noir managed to say.

Now that I think about it, it must have to do with her being Ladybug. I’ll have to talk to Tikki later, since I’m pretty sure Plagg won’t be willing to describe what is going on…

“Chat?” Marinette turned towards him and she was about to put her hand on his shoulder…

“Marinette!” Tikki cried out, “don’t touch him! He’s trying to behave himself if you haven’t noticed, now step away from the cat!”

Pouting, Marinette stepped away from him, obviously annoyed that she couldn’t be near him.

I miss you too, my Princess.

“Alright Tikki, you were saying? I mean, I can’t exactly stay home today, so, what are my options?” Marinette asked.

“Well, there are two things. First of all, you found out yesterday that having some guys looking after you was a good idea Marinette.” Chat Noir couldn’t help the small growl that came out of him at that suggestion.

Marinette blushed a little and grinned at him.

“That doesn’t mean that she’ll be dating them Chat Noir, she just needs a friend that is strong enough to respect her and keep other guys away from her.” Tikki explained. “To be her first line of defense I guess, do you know anyone at this school that could do that for you Marinette?”

Marinette looked thoughtful, “I’m not sure, but it’s not like I have trouble making friends these days.” She shrugged like it was no big deal.

It was a big deal to her Kitty though.

Adrien pouted and looked away, the sweat on his brow, on the sides of his face and neck glistened in the morning light. “I don’t like it, but whatever you need to do to be safe Princess. I mean, ah, you don’t need a bunch of guys fighting over you and attracting an akuma.”

Marinette nodded, worried about how she’d never seen her Kitty sweat like that before, “okay, well, I’ll keep that in mind, but you said that there was something else?”
“Welllllll,” Tikki let the word roll off of her tongue, “if Chat Noir wouldn’t mind, being Chat Noir, he has a powerful musk, a scent of his own that humans can’t detect very well without a miraculous exactly, but it would work to distract them from your ah, perfume…”

“but if uh, if Ladybug has to use her backup plan and give a guy a miraculous…” Marinette began.

“then having Chat’s scent on you would also help them be much less… distracted?” Tikki finished.

Marinette raised an eyebrow at her kwami, “you mean that if Chat scent marks me, then I’ll have less trouble from guys in general and especially if Ladybug entrusts a guy with a miraculous?”

*Did I hear that right? Or is that just wishful thinking? 😊*

Adrien blinked, wondering if he heard what he thought he heard as he turned to look at the kwami, not believing his luck as both she and Marinette seemed to be actually thinking about it. “You… you want me to scent mark My Princess?”

*I am SO not this lucky.*

“Well, I’d like you to rub that handkerchief in her pocket across your forehead.” Tikki suggested.

“If you don’t mind.” Marinette blushed a little as she handed the little fabric square from her breast pocket over.

*A, thanks Tikki, I was really getting my hopes up!* Adrien fought the urge to frown.

“Anything for my Princess.” He managed to answer as he took it and wiped it under his bangs, trying to not lose the focus that he had managed to maintain thus far.

It was at that moment that the wind shifted again and he couldn’t breath her perfume in as easily, but it allowed him to relax a little as he handed her back her handkerchief, his focus restored as Tikki giggled, completely aware of the wind change. Strangely enough, Marinette took a whiff of the piece a fabric that now smelled like him… she smiled to herself and blushed.

*Wow! That is just so… WOW!* He swallowed his tongue as Marinette then bashfully tucked it back away in her pocket, oblivious to his struggle to hug and nuzzle her.

“Do you have your phone Marinette?” Tikki then asked out of the blue and Marinette nodded as she pulled it out of her matching purse and dutifully placed it in front of Tikki, who unlocked it and pulled up a timer app.

*If I didn’t know that she was Ladybug, would I have noticed that Tikki knows way too much about Marinette? I mean that is kind of an obvious clue right there.* Adrien noted as Tikki navigated her chosen’s phone with ease.

Adrien was also pleased to see Marinette take an obvious Ladybug pose as she asked Tikki with a wary eye, “what are you up to Tikki?”

“The second half of my request.” The little kwami looked up at them suspiciously with the most adorable smirk as she glanced over at Marinette’s lounge chair and then back at them. “You both may want to sit down for this.”

Marinette and Chat Noir looked at each other and then blushed beet red.
Oh, boy. I think I love her kwami… 😄

“A-Are you asking w-what I think you’re asking Tikki?” Marinette asked shakily. 😊

Tikki nodded with a big grin with only a hint of deviousness that her other half would be proud of as she replied, “oh yes. Yes, I think I am…

Chapter End Notes

When my eldest explained the whole idea of shipping to me a while ago, before I was introduced to Miraculous Ladybug, I thought it was a strange thing to make ship names and plot the romantic relationships of people you hardly know... now here I am writing about a magical being that enjoys shipping her charge with the boy she likes, whether she knows it or not! (Good job Tikki!) 😊😊

Also had to throw in that Princess Bride reference that Adrien now understands! As you wish = I love you Princess! 😊
Now if only Marinette knew that he knew that! 😊

Anyhow, I ought to have the next chapter out in about a week, hopefully during the weekend.
Chapter Summary

Tikki’s a little shipper, so there’s lots of fluff here...

Oh, and Adrien falls off the roof laughing.

But warning, this chapter ends with a dash of angst.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

Marinette and Chat Noir had looked at each other and blushed beet red. “A-Are you asking w-what I think you’re asking Tikki?” Marinette asked her sweet and not so innocent apparently kwami.

Tikki nodded, “oh yes. Yes, I think am… you realize that it’s better for Chat to scent mark you than for a bunch of random guys to try and grab you all day. His scent will last longer than just the ah, other scent that covers up most of the ah, perfume, and it will help keep the creepy guys away better.”

Marinette and Chat looked at each other from the corner of their eyes.

Chat Noir shrugged and smiled, “I’d do anything to help you out Princess, it’s just… it’s just you need to remember that I… that I’m saving myself for Ladybug since…”

How can I say this? He quickly thought nervously. She is Ladybug! Will she let me… do that to her? Willingly?

“Since it would be too dangerous for a superhero to date a civilian.” Marinette raised her eyebrow at him, finishing his thought for him with the slightest smirk ever.

Yeah, especially since I want you to date my other self.

“It won’t mean anything.” Chat Noir waved his hands at her with a grin that said the opposite, “I mean, you can still date Adrien or whatever.”

Marinette blushed as she grinned and then shook her head and sauntered over to her lounge chair with the assurance of a true Ladybug. “If that’s what you want Kitty, I-I mean, don’t you want some of this?” She waved at herself as if it was no big deal to snuggle and rub your head all over someone.

Adrien knew that he was blushing enough that his mask was no longer hiding it as he shook his head yes then no, “I-I never said that Princess, it… it would just be claw-ful if I put you in danger? I-I mean, what was the question again?”

Even I don’t believe in that excuse. He thought as he rubbed the back of his head and neck nervously.

Marinette waved him over and he carefully sat down beside her. “So, ah, how are we going to do this?”
Tikki cleared her little throat again, “well, to start with, I’ll give you two a timer for five minutes. That should be more than enough time for you two to snuggle.” She giggled as the two teens blushed. “Now get closer you two.” Tikki ordered and Adrien swallowed as he scooted closer to Marinette and Marinette wrapped her arm around his waist, pulling him to her side.

“Is this okay Kitty? I know you were, ah, nervous about being close to me yesterday.” Marinette sweetly whispered.

He gulped, “I’m feline fine My La- uh My Marinette, if you are that is, I trust you.”

Adrien slowly took a shaky breath, since he was stiff with anticipation, until her scent over road his worries and he began to melt into Marinette’s side. His catlike instincts were urging him to possessively mark his territory to prove to the world that he belonged to her and she to him but he had to remind himself, she’s not mine! Not yet!

He gulped, oh how I want to really be HERS and for her to be MINE!

Adrien still fought the losing battle with his hormones as he tried to hold onto his thought processes, fully aware that Tikki was watching.

Marinette leaned over and whispered, “I trust you Chat Noir.”

Oh, my! WOW!

Clearing her throat again to get their attention, Tikki’s giggle chimed before she explained, “now, if Marinette isn’t down in her room within thirty seconds of this timer going off, I’m coming up to break you two apart.”

“You’re… you’re just going to leave us alone?” Adrien asked her with wide eyes, blinking past the haze that was Marinette’s scent that was sucking him in.

Then he saw the look in Marinette’s eyes.

I don’t know if that’s a wise idea…

“Well, I’ll start the timer and give you two some private time, I think that I can trust you to fight your instincts for that long Chat Noir. Marinette and I trust that you know not to do anything too inappropriate and to get away from her when you hear the timer go off.” Tikki told him then she looked at her chosen and added as she waved at her, “it’s Marinette that I’m worried about.”

“Tikki!” Marinette squealed as she covered her face, embarrassed at the truth of her words.

Adrien chuckled and hugged his Princess to his side, almost regretting the action because it was really hard not nuzzle Marinette. Apparently wanting to scent mark his Ladybug came with being Chat Noir, not that he was complaining… especially since that was what she needed apparently.

Anything you need My Princess, My Lady, My Marinette. He found himself thinking lovingly.

“Well, I am giving you blanket permission here to snuggle with a hot guy, who happens to be your type and who is wearing a very tight suit.” Tikki chuckled at Marinette’s whine of Chat’s discovery of that information.

“You don’t say…” Chat flirted.

“Tikki!” Marinette squealed.
Tikki laughed, “but in all seriousness, I trust you both and…” she looked down at the phone and tapped the app, “have fun you two! See you soon Marinette!” Then she phased threw Marinette’s skylight and the two blushing teens looked over at each other with the same thought in mind.

What did I just get myself into?

…

Five minutes isn’t a lot of time when it comes to… snuggling with someone you are heads over heels with.

Adrien realized that as he dove into Marinette’s neck and just followed his instincts and started to rub his head all over her neck and face. Holding her close and breathing into her hair as she giggled and even began to nuzzle his neck back!

“When, wait! I forgot to ask!” He gasped as he breathed in her scent and into her hair as he froze to ask her, “are you okay with this Marinette?!”

She nuzzled him back, her hands drifting up his back, “of course Kitty! Is it okay with y-you?!”

Her nose nudged his earlobe and he thought, oh, do that again!

“Yep! All gooood!” He whined. What is she doing to my hair?

Is this heaven or hell? Adrien wondered as he fought his teenage hormones to do more than to just hold her close as he nuzzled her, rubbing his cheek all over her neck as he fought the urge to kiss her.

It’s heaven because I’m here with her, and that this is okay, but we have to behave ourselves and we have a timer… oh my, WHAT is she doing now?! Oh, that feels SO good!

Marinette of course had run her hands under his arms and up into his hair and was stroking his hair lovingly as he nuzzled her neck.

Adrien couldn’t stop the purr that he let out if he tried.

He pulled back, embarrassed about the sound as his eyes went wide with surprise, “don’t be embarrassed.” She told him, “it only means that you’re happy and I… I kind of like it.” She gave him a Ladybug like smirk and he sighed, allowing himself to give into the purr as he went back to work scent marking the other side of her neck and face, with his hands safely secured around her and nearly frozen to her back. Adrien fought himself as he tried not to let his hands wander after all and he tried to keep them still on her back as she giggled prettily and her hands went to work rubbing behind his ears and up and down his back.

Oh, yes, right there!

I am in SO much trouble with this girl!

It seemed like less than a minute later that the timer went off and Adrien was having trouble disengaging from Marinette’s hold.

“Marinette!” He gasped and gave her a quick nuzzle, “we, ah, I think you’ll be okay now!”

Wow! We smell SOooo good together!

He absolutely adored their combined scents, it was like harmony for the nostrils!
“I want to be more than okay Kitty!” He could hear the smirk in Marinette’s voice as she trailed her hands up his back and into his hair again and he hissed with pleasure as he half-heartedly tried to wrench himself away. “Mari!” He gulped before he whispered into her ear as he hugged her, “please, I-I really like you… but... but we can’t be together like this! You KNOW that!”

Marinette actually whined at that as her kwami spoke behind them, “alright you two, he’s right, break it up!”

“I’m trying!” Adrien replied as he sat up and gently put his hands on her wrists to pull her off, almost unwillingly.

Luckily the wind had grown stronger and somehow was blowing her scent away from him, allowing him to focus even more.

*That pout is going to kill me someday.* He thought as he saw her flushed and gorgeous face as Marinette relented somewhat and let him move away a tiny bit.

“Tikki! Can’t you give us a few more minutes?” Marinette whined.

“I think that you’ve had quite enough of each other this morning.” Tikki told them.

“Hmph!” Marinette replied as Adrien chuckled and she released her hold a bit more.

“Hey,” Chat Noir scooted away from her and patted her knee as he sucked in the clean air that was now swirling around him, “remember Princess, as much as I hate to admit it, we can’t be.” He waved his hand from himself to her and then waved it away, “and besides, I think that you have a better option out there.”

She raised an eyebrow at him, “oh, and who might you think that is Kitty?” She grabbed his hand and gave it a squeeze playfully.

He measured his reply before answering her as he cleared his throat, “let’s just say that I think that you should really give that Adrien fellow another chance.”

“I am.” Marinette smirked at him, “although I’m not about to make it easy.”

He was finally able to escape her grasp, and saluted her as he prepared to leave, “I doubt that he’d want it any other way.” He replied with a light chuckle, “now have a good day Purr-incess. Till we meet again.” Then he jumped away, doing a triple barrel roll and landed on the roof opposite her balcony. He let himself sink down out of her view to let his head clear a bit as he overheard Tikki give her chosen a stern talking to.

“What were you thinking! I thought that you were in love with Adrien! Why are you trying to make out with Chat Noir!” Tikki scolded.

“You said that was scent marking! Not making out.” Marinette replied.

“They’re awfully close to each other Marinette and you have never told me that you thought that way about Chat Noir before all of this pheromone mess!”

“Tikki, you know that if it wasn’t for the ‘we can’t reveal our identities rule’ I would have given Chat a chance a long time ago and you know it! Well, I guess that I kept that part to myself since I was struggling to admit it, to myself I mean, I’d never hear the end of it if Ladybug admitted to crushing on her partner…”
Adrien could just picture Marinette waving her arms around dramatically exhibiting the frustration in her voice as she rambled.

“But why do we have to stick to that rule! I mean why would you say that Adrien was safer for me or do you think that Chat is a bad influence or something?!”

**Well, she has a point, she doesn’t know that we’re the same guy.**

“Marinette!” Tikki sighed, “it’s nothing like that… it’s just, your hormones aren’t exactly trustworthy right now and we know that you like Adrien and frankly, it would be safer for Marinette to date Adrien.”

Adrien heard Marinette groan with frustration as she opened her skylight to go back into her room, “but Tikki, dating Adrien probably wouldn’t be as fun as dating my CKB!”

Adrien fell off the roof laughing.

*I don’t know what’s better, that she wants to date me, either of me, or that she thinks her ‘Cute Kitten Butt’ partner would be more fun to date than the supermodel me!*

Thankfully he caught himself with his baton and quickly made it home before Nathalie noticed that he was missing.

…

Adrien was early to school again. Unfortunately, he had to get something out of his locker, so he peered into the locker room and let out a sigh of relief when he found that it was empty.

He quickly went over to his locker, practically emptied his book bag and then got out what he needed and quickly closed his locker. Then he turned around to leave, finding the last person that he wanted to run into.

Lila’s eyes wandered down his body and then back up again as Adrien pulled his bag in front of himself like a shield as she purred, “Hello, My Adrien…”

Chapter End Notes

Did I say a dash of angst? shrug ☺️

Hmm, hope to have the next chapter out in about a week.
Adrien was living that nightmare again; Lila Rossi was in front of him in the locker room waiting to pounce on her prey. She had been waiting for him with a scalding look of anger… or… or was that a wicked desire in her eyes?

Lila’s eyes wandered down his body and then back up again, Adrien pulled his bag in front of himself like a shield as he recognized how uncomfortable being alone with her made him feel as she purred. “Hello, My Adrien…”

Adrien gulped. *Not again!* He mentally screamed as he involuntarily shivered.

He briefly realized that what he’d done with Marinette in the last day or two wasn’t quite as much as what Lila had done to him, but it was FAR more welcome.

*My heart belongs to Marinette after all, even if she doesn’t know it.* Adrien sappily thought as he steadied himself, *and I will not let Lila mess with me anymore. Not again.*

“It sure took you long enough to get here…” Lila smirked to herself in her own possessive way as she sauntered closer to him, “So, MY Adrien, are you ready to be mine yet?” Lila purred again before leaning into his personal space, “I could fix your reputation after all, you’d just have to let Mari-brat suffer the consequences on her own, or are you ready for your own destruction?”

Adrien almost took a step back… almost.

“NO LILA!” He stood tall as he calmly and firmly told her with conviction, “I am NOT YOURS and I am NOT interested in you and I am NOT your plaything! I will NEVER be yours and I am DONE with your threats.” He waved his hand as if wiping the slate clean.

Lila merely smiled, amused as she chuckled, briefly holding one hand in front of her face, “and what
about your little plaything? Hmm? Do you really think that I am done with her?"

Adrien’s eyes went wide, confused for just a moment as she pushed aside his bag in his confusion.

**What else could she do to Marinette after all?**

Lila took the opportunity to quickly snake her hands up his chest as he automatically backed up, only for her to follow as she latched her hands behind his neck as she fiercely emphasized as she whispered, “what about your little girlfriend, or have you forgotten about Marinette? I haven’t.”

Adrien snapped out of it and let his bag hang at his side as he grabbed her shoulders forcefully enough to gently push her away from his body as he frowned, “I’m warning you Lila, I don’t appreciate it when people hurt those that I love, you need to clear things up and let people know that you’re lying before everything blows up in your face.”

“As if I’d ever get caught.” Lila snickered, twirling her top two fingers at the back of his neck in his hair as she held onto him, despite his attempts to dislodge her. “Everyone trusts me now Adrien. EVERYONE bows to me eventually. Marinette is a loser now and she is gone.” Lila chuckled, “just like I had planned, she is finished! That little sl-

“She’s coming back!” Adrien interrupted as he quickly insisted, “she is a hundred times the woman you’ll ever be! I would be honored if she would be my girlfriend! Unlike you, Lila, who would only drag me down, Marinette naturally lifts up those around her when they let her! I’d be a better man just being allowed to be by her side! Unlike you, Marinette is genuinely amazing that way!” He emphasized and squirmed under her grasp a little more, still coming to terms of possibly having to hurt a girl just to get away from her.

*I will not give into you again! I don’t want to hurt you, but I will NOT allow you to do this to me again!* He mentally swore to himself that he was strong enough to deal with her this time.

"Marinette is true and REAL! You are a LIAR and FAKE!" Adrien insisted.

Lila seemed amused and only smirked a little, as if she was dealing with a toddler not a young man with a mind of his own.

Adrien raised his voice, “NOW PLEASE! LET, ME GO!”

Lila merely chuckled, “whatever, it won’t be for long, that little floozie will get what’s coming for her. Now that her name is mud, all the jocks will be itching to take her out for a spin, they don’t care about the abortion after all, it’s just…” Lila pulled the hair at the back of his neck painfully as she pulled him closer as if she was going to kiss him as she whispered, “incentive.”

“NO Lila!” He tried to pull away from her more forcefully now, twisting his head away from her hands. “You don’t have permission to touch me like that and you will leave Marinette alone! You KNOW that Marinette and I have never been like that and she is not pregnant! She didn’t go to a doctor for an abortion because you can’t get pregnant if you’re not, well, like that!”

“You can’t even say it can you?” Lila mocked.

Adrien scowled and firmly stated, “I did not have sex with Marinette. I intend to wait until we’re old enough to make an informed decision about something like that because I LOVE her!”

Lila let one hand release her hold on him to pull it back quickly and slap him before he could react.

Adrien froze in shock for just a moment before one of his hands went to soothe his stinging cheek
without realizing that he could have gotten away, until her hands clasped behind his neck again. He scowled angrily, unfortunately he looked more like a kicked kitten than someone to be afraid of and Lila reacted accordingly.

“Pfft! Of course, I know that! I’m the one that started that little rumor after all.” Lila purred ignoring his angry expression as she mockingly added, “it’s just what everyone wanted to hear, that sweet little Marinette Dupain-Cheng wasn’t so pure or high and mighty. That she took the first opportunity she had to GET WITH YOU!”

Adrien huffed, “that is not true Lila! Marinette has far too much self-respect for herself and you know it! Just because you think that she’d want to do what you’d do if the opportunity presented itself does not mean that she would. She is a pure and good person deep down that respects herself and me. UNLIKE YOU! Now for the very LAST TIME! YOU need to come clean and apologize!”

“As if I would.” Lila cackled, “so please, stop being such a drama queen!” She told him as she pulled him closer, ignoring the look of disgust on his face as he tried to keep her away from his body, squirming again under her touch as her breath was a disgusting stench to him.

“Accept my offer of being my boyfriend MY Adrien, it comes with perks like this…” she tried to kiss his neck again and he pushed her further away by her shoulders as she chuckled, “you know that you like it.”

“Lila, LISTEN to me. I do NOT like it when you touch me! I am NOT your boyfriend! I never went out with you or have done…well, anything else with you. Not like I would.”

His eyes practically glowed as he added, “I have standards after all Lila.”

She growled as he finally pushed her hard enough to get her to release her grasp on him as she stumbled a little before she caught herself and glared at him as he finished, “and I’ll NEVER be your boyfriend either!”

Frankly he was surprised that no one had walked in on them already or overheard their conversation, even though they were in the back of the locker room. Then he realized that it had begun raining outside and the rain was pounding on the windows, muting their heated conversation somewhat, although he doubted it was enough to silence them completely.

Lila stood tall as she folded her arms as she sneered at him, her backpack hanging off of her shoulder now as she took a moment to weigh what she was about to say or do next. She obviously had not expected him to say no and her anger was visibly growing by the second.

“Look Lila, you may not have known this but I like Marinette, I may even love her so that part of your story is true, so THANK YOU for helping me to realize that.” Adrien told her resolutely. “Unfortunately, because I’m a blind jerk we have only been good friends so far, but I promise you that I intend to change that, so you had better just leave MY Marinette alone!”

“A bit possessive now, are we?” She raised an eyebrow at him and then lowered it as she looked at him with a disapproving frown on her face, “FINE. Then what you’re about to face is all on YOU.”

He tilted his head just so as he asked, “what?”

She smirked and then in a flash she started crying, wailing really as she pulled on her own jacket, ripping it and loudly screaming like a banshee. “OH, ADRIEN! Don’t hurt me! Don’t leave me! I thought that we could clear things up! I can forgive you! PLEASE! Please just say that you’ll take me back!”
Then Adrien heard a locker behind him squeak open. Adrien turned to see what or who it was and as he looked behind him, Adrien and Lila discovered that they had had an audience to their conversation all along…

Chapter End Notes

I would say that is a tie...
Adrien vrs. Lila round 4 results (the 1st of 3 semi finals)
Current score Adrien 4 and Lila 11
Semi finals are worth 8 points each... they split the points here.
............................
At a writer's diner... where we write up stories for you to digest.

Alright who ordered up that angst and that cliffhanger?

Is it... well done?
Lila's Other Attack

Chapter Summary

Adrien and Lila were arguing in the locker room, but someone appears... having witnessed all. ②
What will happen?

Chapter Notes

Warning a bit of violence will be in this chapter, just a heads up if you want to avoid that, I doubt it requires a rating change, but if you get upset easily... well, I'll mention what happens here in the next chapter.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Lila and Adrien had just been finishing a heated argument when Adrien heard a locker behind him squeak open. Which was hard to hear over the storm raging outside, but it was loud and clear to them both.

Looking behind him, Adrien and Lila discovered that they had had an audience to their fight all along.

…

“Excuse me, Adrien my friend,” a robotic voice intoned, “are you two having a lover’s quarrel?”

“M-Markov! Oh, am I SO glad to see you!” Adrien exclaimed as he waved his hands no, “and NO, we are NOT having a lover’s quarrel. Lila here has been pressuring me into dating her and has been threatening Marinette and I.”

“I have not!” Lila sneered.

“Yes, you have Lila.” Markov replied.
Lila was frozen and glared as they faced the friendly flying and socially inept robot.

“Why have you not reported such things?” Markov asked, “isn’t that the protocol for being bullied? Perhaps we should check my visual memory, I can help support your claims with my video file, I’m sure I can clear you my good friend Adrien.”

It was at that moment, where Adrien smirked and felt relieved that finally everything would be over when Lila screamed another banshee like yell, far louder than earlier as her book bag came crashing down on the helpless Markov, who had been focusing on Adrien.

The poor robot had not seen it coming and was smashed to the floor, his housing and screen cracked and broken.

Lila chuckled and smirked at Adrien as his eyes went wide.

“Lila what have you done?!” Adrien gasped as he bent over Markov to see his lights flicker.

“Written your obituary Agreste. If you won’t be mine, then you’re gone.” Lila gave a quick chuckle like a true villain but then screamed, “ADRIEN! STOP DON’T HURT ME! H-HOW COULD YOU!”

“A-Adrien… my friend…” Markov’s voice dwindled as it grew deeper and faded away.

“ADRIEN! WHAT HAVE YOU DONE!” Lila screamed at the top of her lungs and then chuckled briefly once more as they heard people come running.

Markov’s screen flickered in and out, his body twisted slightly on the floor as his casing was cracked and his claw hung at an awkward angle… twitching like he was dying.

Adrien looked on in shock, how could Lila do that to Max? He wondered but then he registered what she had yelled.

“What?! NO! Lila, this was all on you!” Adrien gasped.

“You and I both know that, but now you’ve lost your witness.” She sweetly whispered before yelling once more with a wail, “ADRIEN H-HOW COULD YOU!”

Then she began to cry her usual crocodile tears as the door finally opened and Max, Kim, Alix and Mr. Damocles came running in.

“Markov!” Max yelled as he fell to the ground to inspect his broken friend. “Who did this to you?!”

“La-la-Lila… A-Adriennnnn.” Markov’s voice processor sputtered just before his screen turned black and it looked like what was left of Markov lost all power.

“Oh, Max, I’m so sorry!” Adrien apologized. “He tried to…”

“No! I don’t want to hear it!” Max waved his arm at the model once before he lifted his glasses and wiped his eyes quickly before he gathered up what was left of Markov in his hands as he turned to Mr. Damocles. “Mr. Damocles, there is a 79% chance that this happened because of a disagreement between these two lovebirds.”

Adrien gasped and loudly objected with a wave of his hand, “we are NOT and have NEVER been l-like that! No matter what Lila says!” Gross!

Other students had begun to filter into the locker room, including Sabrina, Chloe, Mylene and Ivan.
Kim spoke up, “Dude, we’ve already heard what’s going on between you and the girls.” He looked at Lila’s torn jacket and pointed, horrified, “did Adrien do that to you Lila?”

Lila smirked as Adrien interrupted as he spoke up, “NO I DID NOT! She did it to herself—”

Lila loudly interrupted, “you are SO right Max! I was trying to talk to Adrien and when I was finally getting somewhere with him,” she sniffed, “he saw poor Markov innocently hovering nearby and, in a rage, he slammed your robot to the ground with his bag! Then he grabbed me and I think he was afraid that his secret love for me would go public with his recordings where Marinette would finally know the truth about us and then he wouldn’t get anymore…” She was very good at pretending to cry and ramble as she leaned into Sabrina, who had come to stand beside her.

Sabrina patted her back uncomfortably as she whispered, “there, there. We’re here for you now Lila.”

Mr. Damocles loudly cleared his throat to interrupt as Max frowned at Lila and then looked at her bag on the floor, with a heavy book and her computer spilling out of it and then he looked at Adrien, whose bag was still casually hanging off of his shoulder but looked practically empty.

Max wiped his eyes again with his free hand, the other still clutching Markov as he thought for half a second, shook his head before he swallowed and finally said, “the probability that someone is hiding something is 78%.”

Mr. Damocles scrunched his eyebrows and cleared his throat again before asking, “do you have anything to say about this accusation Mr. Agreste? Did Lila hit you? It looks like you’ve been slapped!”

“Yes Mr. Damocles, she slapped me!” Adrien replied, relieved that someone had noticed.

Everyone glanced at him, but it didn’t seem like anyone believed him.

Lila sniffed and cried a little, “I did not! He hit himself to accuse me of it so you’d all think that he wasn’t the rotten scoundrel and abuser that he is!”

“Lila that is ridiculous, utterly ridiculous!” Chloe spoke up.

“Good ole Clo.

“Adrien just isn’t that conniving!” Chloe added, “I should know! He doesn’t have the brains or the guts to stand up for himself. That’s why his father has him model for him, since he has no fashion sense of his own.”

“Hey!” Adrien objected.

“I’m just saying it like it is Adrikins.” Chloe emphasized her pet name for him and he scowled, “your father is using you for your looks while you have them.”

Thanks Clo, really helpful there.

“Well, he’s hidden his dark side pretty well, hasn’t he?” Lila sniffed and cried, really falling into the role of the innocent secret girlfriend tossed to the side etcetera as Sabrina continued to try to comfort her.

Of course, I have no proof that she’s not right and if Max can’t see that I’m falsely accused, then I’m sunk. Adrien realized.
Chloe blinked once, before she put on a straight face and then tossed her hair, “I’ve had enough of this nonsense, I’m going to class.”

“Please stay Chloe.” Adrien asked her pitifully.

“Fine, but only under duress.” Chloe stopped by the door as she rolled her eyes like this was a complete waste of her time, tapping her foot impatiently. “Well, go on people!”

Adrien sighed and looked sad as he then looked at the diminutive Max as he carefully worded his reply and ignored the weeping without real tears girl, “all that I can say is that I’m sorry Max. Markov was a true friend and I’m sorry that this happened, he didn’t deserve this. I wish he hadn’t been here because then he wouldn’t have been hurt. Will you… will you be able to fix him?” He asked hopefully.

“Oh yes? Will you?” Lila brightly added as one of her eyes twitched slightly.

Max looked from Adrien to Lila and then back to Adrien. Then he looked at what was left of Markov in his hands as he turned him over and inspected him further. “There is a 92.9% chance that I’ll be able to fix him, I think. The likelihood that his memory files are fully intact is 84% despite his, uh, let’s say, um,” he swallowed, “his f-forced shut down. I’ll be able to special order some parts and have him ready to do the transfer during, ah, lunch tomorrow.”

Lila’s eyes clouded over and Adrien looked relieved.

“That’s great news Max!” Adrien was the first one to rejoice.

“Yeah, that’s great.” Lila quickly added, as did several of their classmates.

It was Kim that added, “yeah, maybe Markov can tell us what really happened!”

Then Max looked up at Mr. Damocles, pushing his glasses up his nose thoughtfully, “In all probability, I should be able to recover his video files completely and give him the upgrade that he’s been afraid to do but wanted since it required a shut down like this while I’m at it.”

Adrien gave a small smile, “I guess that means that it’s a mixed blessing kind of thing. Can I help pay for the parts? I want to help fix him.”

Max and Mr. Damocles looked at him uncertainly while Lila looked disturbed for a moment but then smiled, “of course I’d like to help pay to fix poor Markov as well, will you tell us when you’re about to restart him?” Lila asked Max in her sugary sweet voice, “I want to apologize to him personally for my part in this.”

Max raised an eyebrow at her, “that would be very kind of you.”

Alya and Nino stumbled in at that moment and Adrien avoided looking at them, still hurt about their behavior of late.

“What happened?” Alya whispered to Alix.

“Lila and model-boy had a fight and one of them broke Markov.” Alix loudly whispered back.

“Dude.” Nino muttered.

“My money’s on Agreste.” Kim whispered.

“No deal,” Alix responded, “it’s hard to believe he did this, but after what he did to Lila and Mari…”
“Alix!” Adrien gasped, “I-I didn’t!”

With a loud cough, Mr. Damocles stated, “I’m afraid that someone should be punished for this, as technically Markov is personal property and his damage should require a three-day suspension, if not more.”

Max nodded sadly, “I understand Mr. Damocles,” he was accustomed to Markov being treated like property after all, “but I think that we should wait until Markov can give us his version of the story after lunch tomorrow. May I,” he swallowed as he nervously asked, “may I go home for the r-rest of the day and work in the computer lab tomorrow to fix him? Once the parts have arrived that is?”

Mr. Damocles nodded with a small grin, “of course you may, and until then I will withhold punishment for you two,” he looked helplessly at Adrien and then at Lila, “until we have seen Markov’s video.” He looked sternly at Lila and then at Adrien, hiding a wink to Adrien from the other students. “I would also like to make sure that nothing happens between you two again, so I will suggest that you both have escorts around campus.”

“Escorts?” Adrien looked shocked.

But what if I… oh yeah, Chat Noir is benched. Bummer.

“I’ll look after Lila!” Sabrina quickly volunteered.

Mr. Damocles looked around at the other students, “do we have any volunteers to escort Mr. Agreste?”

Adrien was saddened that no one spoke on his behalf… until…

“Fine. I’ll watch over him, again, under duress. I’m just amazing that way.” Chloe rolled her eyes, “I will be able to read him the best after all, having known him for so long, despite recent events.” She smirked and gave Adrien a look that said, ‘what would you do without me?’

Someone whispered, “sure, like you noticed him messing around with two girls and…”

“Very good Miss Bourgeois,” Mr. Damocles loudly interrupted, “your father would be proud of you for standing up for the underdog.”

“Whatever.” Chloe rolled her eyes and started to head to the door, “coming Adrien? Sabrina, hand him my bag, he ought to keep his hands busy doing something constructive after all.”

For once one of Chloe’s rude remarks was met with a chuckle from the class as if Adrien deserved to be punished by being Chloe’s servant for the day. Sabrina handed Adrien Chloe’s bag while wearing a smirk of her own.

“Come along Adrien, thankfully I only have to watch over you until lunch. I heard about that photo shoot today. Too bad…” Adrien tuned her out as he obediently followed her out of the locker room.

Oh, Chloe is SO going to enjoy this. Adrien thought as he tried not to smile but frown instead, knowing that Chloe was just putting on an act to help him out.

Once Max fixes Markov, the truth will finally get out… right?

Chapter End Notes
Hmm, everyone seems to forget Markov in the show and I feel bad about this chapter in a way, but it was the best way to show how evil Lila could be.

Unfortunately, I'm going to quit recording the score for the rounds of Adrien vrs. Lila, since the scores go up and there are at least 2 confrontations left after this. I don't want to give away the ending of the story if you know what I mean. 😊

Also, I tried to add a quick picture that I drew with Paint of Markov (that's why it's not perfect!), just to see if I could add illustrations to my stories. I get to learn how to use a drawing tablet this week hopefully!

Also I apologize for making Kim a bit of a jerk here, but he's one of the loudest side characters so, shrug. ♂

Anyhow, I hope to be posting another chapter next weekend. Thanks for reading!
Early Thursday Morning

Chapter Summary

Chloe gets to ‘escort’ Adrien around, meaning Adrien is taking Sabrina’s place for the day. The childhood friends text a lot and get on the same page. Chloe gets defensive of Adrien.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

Adrien was right, he spent the day being Sabrina’s replacement for Chloe. Carrying or doing things for Chloe, like taking her notes etc. Still, Adrien decided that it wasn’t too horrible of a fate.

Sabrina switched seats with him before class started, at Chloe’s almost polite request. “Sabrina, would you change seats for the day with Adrikins?”

“Sure Chloe!” Sabrina nodded happily at what sounded like a request, despite the lack of a ‘please.’

“Honestly, we can’t have them sit together, that would be ridiculous, utterly ridiculous!” Chloe pretended to scoff as she sat in her own seat and she pulled out her phone as she told Adrien loudly as he sat down, ‘now, you make sure that you do a good job of taking notes today Adrikins, we can’t have my grades falling and I have to order the pizza for today’s elections.”

“You go Chloe! Keep him busy so he can’t do any more damage!” Kim cheered as a cough was heard from Nathaniel’s direction.

Chloe glanced at Kim and rolled her eyes, “please,” she muttered as she caught the eye of Nathaniel who gave her a half nod and a smile. She blushed slightly and turned back to her phone.

Adrien shoulders hunched a little on purpose as he pulled out his notebook and finally answered, “sure Chloe. Anything else?”

“Well, before class starts, I suggest that you text Nathalie about these new developments.” Chloe waved her hand quickly before returning to her phone.

Taking out his own phone, Adrien was surprised to get a text from her.

The Queen: I’m upset with you CCB! You should have known better than being alone right now!

Adrien frowned and texted her back.

Adrien: Hey, I had no idea she was going to do that!

Adrien: Maybe Max will be able to fix Markov and recover the footage?

The Queen: Doubtful. Mrs. Lies-A-Lot is totally coming up with a plan to disrupt that idea.

Adrien: You think she’ll try something?

The Queen: Let’s see, cruel enough to try to destroy the reputation of the boy she claims to love, the
girl he likes, not caring that she can’t fulfill any of the promises she makes to make her flock follow her…

She waited a moment as he read that text and Adrien didn’t respond.

The Queen: I see, no arguments there huh?

Adrien bit his lip and nodded, finally typing…

Adrien: I-I know. My cat 😻 would say that I’m a blind idiot.

The Queen: ☹ - shrug - He wouldn’t be wrong.

Adrien: I’m working on fixing things though!

The Queen: Good, not that I’m complaining that I was called in just because I was more trustworthy, of course…

The Queen: but, what about the other two airheads?

Adrien: Huh?

The Queen: Have you figured out the others yet?

Adrien: I really don’t know what you’re asking Clo.

The Queen: Never mind. Nathaniel is being weird, what’s up with him?

Adrien: Oh, he overheard me asking Mari out to the ball as I begged her for her forgiveness and for her help in taking down Lila.

The Queen: Makes sense.

Adrien: So, he knows that Lila is a Liar and I talked to Mari about almost everything.

The Queen: Not about the locker thing?

Adrien: Please, I don’t want to talk about either attack.

The Queen: That little robot may come in handy but then did you admit to anything, did she touch you again?

Adrien: Not as much as the umm, other time.

The Queen: What’s on the tape Adrien? We need to prepare for that.

Adrien flushed before he typed out his response…

Adrien: After telling Lila NO, like a lot. I may have said that wanted to be by Mari’s side? And wait until we’re married to do… that.

Adrien: I also may have said that I love Marinette.

Adrien: And that Mari is 100 times better than Lila.

Chloe snorted as she read his texts.
The Queen: True.

Adrien: She did try to latch onto me again and we struggled, she tried to kiss my neck.

Adrien: I told her no, that I loved My Marinette, thanked her for helping me realize that and then she said I was possessive.

The Queen: You think?

Adrien: Maybe, but I really like her!

Adrien: Mari that is!

The Queen: Duhh, you’re lucky though ‘cause I think she likes you too.

Adrien: REALLY?

The Queen: The term Cute Kitten Butt remind you of anything?

Adrien: CHLOE!!!

Adrien leaned over his phone and tried to hide his blush. His red ears were quite telling though.

The Queen: 🙄 Lol, back to business. So, today’s possible video would show Lila trying to force herself on you, threatening MDC and you telling Lila of all people that you love MDC and want to do more than just hold her hand.

Adrien began to whine a bit and Chloe chuckled.

The Queen: Was that all?

Adrien thought for a moment…

Adrien: She admitted to lying and pretty much said she had everyone wrapped around her finger.

Adrien: she also admitted to starting the rumor that Mari and I were being um, intimate.

Chloe shook her head.

The Queen: Speaking of Mari, I got a text from her earlier.

Adrien: Wait… you’ve been in contact?

The Queen: Duhh. Bugs and Insect drama and all that.

The Queen: Why do you think I was there so quickly the other day when I stung that akuma?

Adrien: Oh yeah, that seems so long ago.

The Queen: You r catching up.

Adrien: Took me long enough.

The Queen: … no comment.

Adrien: Hey!
The Queen: Sometimes the truth hurts.

The Queen: Mari mentioned to Nathaniel that something will be happening but it’d look too weird if he was suddenly buddy buddy with us or her, so he’s just sidelined for now.

The Queen: Apparently, he wasn’t happy about it, but he promised he’d be there for her as her friend.

Adrien: I can deal with that.

The Queen: Honestly class is about to start and you totally have to text Nathalie still, give her a heads up about today and that we got it handled. I already contacted my peeps in charge of internet leaks.

Adrien: When did you do that?

The Queen: During our conversation, duh! I’m almost done ordering a dozen pizzas from that place that Kim seems to like.

Adrien: How would you know which one he likes?

The Queen: He’s asked me to join him there once or twice, but I turned him down obviously, plus it’s on his profile.

Adrien: Oh, I didn’t know you knew about everyone’s profiles online.

The Queen: A Queen can’t rule without knowing her subjects Adrikins, keep up.

Adrien: I’ll send a text to Nathalie.

The Queen: Remind her that the movie photos of you and MDC will arrive soon.

Adrien: You really going to do that?

The Queen: Duh, it’s like proof that you liked Mari way before Lila ‘got back.’

Adrien: She was just being a good friend.

The Queen: A good friend would have just taken you home and put regular clothes on, and hide. A great friend would take you to the movie a little late after changing.

The Queen: She subjected herself to being embarrassed for you.

The Queen: She liked you. Why else would she allow herself to be caught on camera in her pajamas?

Adrien was blushing again.

Chloe groaned, “hurry up with your phone Adrikins. Class is about to start.”

Adrien: They were cute pajamas.

Adrien: So, she really likes me huh?

Chloe: We’ll see, I think you’re on probation now.

Adrien: I can work with that.
Chloe: Ugh, just text Nathalie. I have to finish this pizza order.

Adrien: Get something with anchovies.

Chloe: Eww!

Adrien: Say you heard it was Lila’s favorite?

Chloe: Alright, not a bad idea, get texting Agreste!

…

Adrien texted Nathalie the basic details of what happened that morning and that they still were moving forward, in case Markov’s video falls through. Chloe was really against the idea of taking chances with the idea of waiting for it to do what they were planning on doing. So, Adrien told her about Chloe’s idea of Mari being his girlfriend reappearing in the media, including the photos of them being together at the movies.

Nathalie responded by helpfully sending Adrien a picture apparently taken by his bodyguard of him dancing with Marinette during the Despair Bear incident. She told him to help sell the idea of them dating, to have the photo with it’s time stamp ‘leak.’ It could be ‘new’ evidence after all.

Adrien thanked Nathalie and copied the photo to Chloe who grinned and sent it to her contacts so fast that Adrien could have sworn that there was smoke coming from her finger tips. Adrien even heard Chloe mutter, “game, set, match.”

Of course, Adrien saved a copy to his phone, as one of his backgrounds. *We really look good together*. Adrien thought as he would take far too much time admiring it throughout the day when no one but Chloe could see, earning a little teasing from Chloe.

Just before the bell was about to ring, Chloe turned and asked Alix and Kim if they thought that a dozen pizzas, ten orders of breadsticks and ten orders of chicken appetizers would be enough for their luncheon. Both of them looked surprised that she was following through and at the quantity, but Kim looked especially pleased.

“I knew you’d turn around Chloe, but I’m a taken man now.” He winked at Chloe, “Odine and I are kind of a thing.”

Adrien was proud of Chloe when she stopped herself from shaking with revulsion and chuckled as she tossed her hair and just went with it, “oh silly me, just a little too late for that train, I guess. Oh well, your loss.”

Kim of course looked pleased with himself, Alix just rolled her eyes and then asked her if there would be soda too.

Chloe scoffed, “of course! I couldn’t possibly drink from a can so the drinks are being catered.”

“Cool, I guess. Thanks Chloe?” Alix replied uncertainly, astounded that she had to even say that.

“Just doing my part.” Chloe then tapped her phone a few times, “it’ll all be delivered as lunch time begins.”

“Hey Chloe,” Kim asked randomly, “you’re being so nice and all, I’m just wondering if you know where Mari is? She’s got to be going through a hard time having to deal with that one.” Kim gestured at Adrien who was just trying to ignore them.
Chloe laughed, “well, she’s probably just hiding right? That was a lot to go through yesterday. Maybe that’s why that Ladyblogger and the DJ are gone too, they’re probably out trying to convince her to come today.”

“No, they’re not.” Rose announced, “they walked Max home with Mr. Damocles permission, they said that they’d be back soon. They wanted me to tell the teacher about it. Something about a project?”

Chloe eyed Adrien and then nodded her head, “well, wherever she is, I’m sure she’s fine. Dupain-Cheng is tougher than she looks.”

“Yeah, well, she still hasn’t been around to like, defend herself.” Juleka muttered.

“Marinette didn’t do anything.” Adrien quickly muttered back.

“Sure, thing, lover boy.” Kim teased before he groaned and threw himself dramatically over his desk, “still, I wish she was running for this election, her cakes are the best!”

But before Adrien could respond, their teacher walked in, clapped their hands and called the class to attention.

Chloe waved it off and whispered loudly to Adrien, “don’t worry, I’m sure that the truth will come out soon enough.”

“Time to focus now class!” The teacher reminded them, eyeing Chloe specifically. Chloe just rolled her eyes and focused on her phone.

“Take good notes now Adrikins.” Chloe whispered with a wave and then returned to her phone.

Adrien frowned at Chloe as he put his phone away and did his best not to say a thing. Sometimes not speaking up and waiting for the right time for things wasn’t easy.

…

Their first two classes and homeroom weren’t too bad. It was the breaks in between that were the problem.

Adrien received several underhanded comments, a few too vulgar to repeat, but there were a few that kept popping up.

“Two-Timer.”

“Playboy.”

“Use ‘em and Abuse ‘em.”

“How could he do that to Lila?”

“Rich model thinks he can get whatever and whoever he wants.”

Some of which Adrien couldn’t really argue with.

“Jerk.”

“Didn’t know what he had when he had it.”
The one that hurt the most, the phrase that he only heard once, but rang loudly to him, was from Marc of all people.

“How could anyone have done that to Mari?” Marc had muttered in passing.

Adrien knew he didn’t mean it like Adrien took it, but deep inside, he couldn’t help but to agree. Agreed. Adrien still felt awful about the mess that they were in. He had failed his Mari, his Lady.

Even Plagg scratched him lightly to remind him not to take the insults to heart when they happened and when Chloe managed to hear them, well, people quickly learned to mutter their thoughts out of her hearing range.

One did not mess with the Bee after all.

“Oh, you think that you’re so perfect huh? We don’t even have all the facts yet! I wonder what my Daddy can dig up on you and YOUR family huh? Wait, I don’t need Daddy for this. I CAN DO WORSE. Now will you repeat what you said in your own stupidity to my face and will I have to dig the skeletons out of YOUR closet when you do? Even IF someone has to put them in there for you?”

His Adrien side was kind of shocked.

His Chat side was chuckling inside as much as the kwami in his pocket did each time that it happened, knowing deep down that Chloe was not to be trifled with.

Which is why Adrien decided that Chloe really was a good friend, despite her not so veiled threats to others. Chloe did her best not to take sides for the sake of their plans as she made teenagers cry or nearly pee their pants on his behalf, and Adrien really appreciated that.

Chapter End Notes

Just a few reminders,
CCB = Cute Cat Butt, Queen Bee's nickname for Chat
CKB = Cute Kitten Butt, LB's nickname for Chat
Chloe is a Beast

Chapter Summary

There is another confrontation at school, luckily Adrien has his own built in hero.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

If it wasn’t enough for Chloe to defend Adrien from all the slanderous comments that she overheard, Adrien was really grateful for her presence during the last real trial of the school day, which was during the break between their second and third classes.

Oh, there were a few more of the unmentionable comments, but Chloe and Adrien both had to go to the bathroom and they obviously couldn’t use the same restroom.

“I’ll meet you back here in six minutes.” Chloe pointed at the floor in front of the boy’s restroom.

“Six minutes? It really takes you that long to go?” Adrien asked her with a raised eyebrow.

“Ugh, eww! TMI Adrikins! No, that’s including two minutes of necessary touch ups and hair care, which usually it takes me eight minutes, but I’m hurrying it up for you. My fabulous looks come second place to my good friend after all. Now we’re wasting time. Back in a flash!” She waved as she rushed off to the Ladies room.

Adrien shook his head, even when he had to do, umm, ‘both’ he was done in two minutes. Three if he had to reapply his makeup to hide his usual exhaustion from being a superhero.

“Sometimes I just don’t understand girls.” Adrien muttered as he went into the Men’s restroom, to umm, relieve himself.

Plagg gave him a light scratch and said just loudly enough for Adrien to catch on his way in, “you’re finally figuring that out? Geez Kid, sometimes I can’t believe you’re my chosen.”

“Not here.” Adrien whispered.

“I’m just saying it’s one of the mysteries of the universe and I’ll solve it for you. Girls are not meant TO BE understood. Each one is like an exploding star, no two are the same and downright dangerous when ignited.” Plagg whispered as he proudly added. “Like my Sugarcube.”

Adrien chuckled a little and got a funny look from the other boy in the bathroom who was washing his hands. The other boy muttered, “weirdo,” as he left Adrien to do, whatever he needed to do and finish up.

Less than two minutes later, Adrien was ready for his last class of the day as he exited the bathroom and stood right where Chloe ordered him to.

Only for three girls from two grades above him to come up to him to ‘talk.’
“Hey Adrien.” One of them purred as they stood a bit closer to him than he would usually be comfortable with, smiles wider and creepier than a regular smile. Adrien just couldn’t place why the looks on their faces bothered him. They reminded him of someone… that he didn’t want to be reminded of.

“Umm, hello ladies. Did you ah, need anything?” He raised an eyebrow quizzically as he looked from one to the other and then to the third older girl.

“It’s not what WE need, it’s what YOU need.” One of the girls smirked just so, “or should I say, what you want?”

The second girl creepily added, “how would you like for us to show you a good time?”

“We’re volunteering.” The third added with a tilt of her head, “you know, if you need a little ‘extra’ tutoring?”

That made Adrien think, _that… that doesn’t sound right._

Which Adrien was right to think as Plagg clawed him deeply, causing Adrien to startle a little.

_Yep, something is definitely wrong for Plagg to do THAT._

“Tell them NO Kid, you are DEFINITELY not interested!” Plagg whisper screamed so quietly, that only Adrien and his enhanced hearing could have heard him.

Adrien brushed one of his hands behind his neck nervously and backed away to a more comfortable distance from the girls. ‘I’m sorry ladies, but uh, I think I can handle that on my own. I have excellent grades and I don’t need any tutoring, thank you for offering though.”

The girls glanced at each other, giggled and then each one of them took a slip of paper and they took turns walking up to him and tucking their slip of paper into his jacket pocket.

The last girl patted his pocket, which thankfully wasn’t the one Plagg usually hid in, “just in case you change your mind.” She told him in a low voice with half lidded eyes.

Adrien blinked and swallowed, realizing that what they acting kind of like how Lila had, which made him seriously uncomfortable as the third girl smirked at him, blew him a kiss and then joined her friends nearby.

“GET OUT.” The loud and frightening voice of Chloe Bourgeois finally boomed hauntingly across the room.

All three of the girl’s eyes grew wide as they turned to face Adrien’s childhood friend who practically growled. “I leave him alone for FIVE minutes only to find him being hounded by wolves LIKE YOU!” Chloe pointed her finger at them sharply. Then she stalked past them and snatched the slips of paper out of Adrien’s pocket.

Then, as if flames were coming off of her, Chloe turned around and she scalded them with her flaming eyes, cutting the older girls down to size as she shredded the pieces of papers into little scraps.

“I will let you know ONE thing and that THIS BOY,” Chloe pointed at Adrien, “is CLAIMED. NO ONE is to hand him their number or make assumptions about his loyalty to HIS GIRL. Spread the word, CHLOE Bourgeois has declared him OFF LIMITS until this thing with Lila and Marinette is resolved. NOW BACK OFF BEFORE I END YOU!” Chloe’s anger radiated off of her as she
spoke with such conviction, that her loud voice sounded like the thunder before the storm.

The trio of girls squealed like pigs being roasted alive as they raced out of the room, pushing past one another, getting stuck in the door for a brief moment before they finally wiggled free and they finally left a shocked Adrien alone with Chloe and their kwami.

Pollen came out of Chloe’s pony tail and clapped her little hands, “that was an admirable demonstration of your power My Queen, bravo.”

Even Plagg flew out of Adrien’s jacket, “yeah, good work…” then he struggled to add as he offhandedly added, “thanks, I guess.”

“I was pretty awesome,” Chloe glowed from the praise, “wasn’t I?”

Adrien nodded, confused about what had happened. “I don’t know what to say because I don’t really know what happened there, but it felt weird, and uh, wrong. So, thanks for coming to my rescue Chloe.”

“Adrikins,” Chloe groaned, “I’ll tell you this once, I care about you as a friend of course, but you are still pretty innocent and next time a girl like that comes up and makes you uneasy, it’s okay to say NO immediately. You don’t have to wait to see what they might do, this isn’t a photoshoot where people will touch you randomly and it means nothing.” She waved it off, “just remember, THIS IS YOUR LIFE. Besides, a respectable girl will back off if you ask her to. Now, tell me, do you understand what was happening just now?”

Adrien blushed a little and he lowered his head, “no, not really.”

Chloe groaned before she explained as she held the bridge of her nose, “they were trying to pick you up.”

Adrien tilted his head like a cat, “well, I guess that they would need all of them to do that, none of them looked very strong on their own.”

Chloe took a moment to blink at him before she asked, “why am I plagued with incompetent friends?”

“Huh?”

“You’re telling me.” Plagg groaned, “I have to deal with this 24/7.”

“You poor cat.” Chloe gave Plagg a half understanding look.

“Huh?” Adrien asked.

“Look, I’m going to spell it out for you.” Chloe explained, “those girls were coming on to you Adrien, giving you their contact information expecting you to call them ‘for a good time.’ It implies they wanted to do…” Chloe cleared her throat, “to do scandalous things with you, probably just because you’re rich, handsome and that they think that you’re into one-night stands like that. They were probably hoping to get some publicity or at least to have your child.”

“What!?” Adrien exclaimed after a moment of frozen astonishment.

“They were social climbers Adrien, and you were only a rung on their ladder.”

“What?! No, no way?” Adrien looking less bewildered by the second, “you mean they want, what
Lila is accusing Marinette of? Really?"

“Now he gets it.” Plagg mutters.

“But… but I’m just a kid! I can’t even drive yet!” He waved at the door the older girls ran out of, “and they’re like two years or more older than me and I don’t even know them!”

Chloe gave him a small smile of understanding, “look, it’s over with.” Chloe pointed out and then kindly added, “are you okay now?”

Adrien swallowed and then rubbed one arm with his other hand to reassure himself. “Yeah, yeah I think so Chloe. Is all of this because of the rumors that Lila is spreading?”

“Most likely. Now come on, we’re late to class.” Chloe nodded towards the door, “and yeah, it probably has to do with those lies. You really don’t get how attractive or how rich you are, huh Adrikins?”

Adrien shrugged, “well, the whole supermodel thing kind of told me that, but I didn’t think girls would be like THAT. It’s kind of uncivil, isn’t it?”

“To say the least!” Chloe scoffed, “that’s why you should be allowed to have your bodyguard follow you around at school.”

“But… but school is supposed to be a safe place.” Adrien noted uneasily.

“Yep, it should be. But life isn’t always that easy Adrikins and it certainly isn’t fair.” Chloe gently patted him on the shoulder before they exited the room, “now are you sure that you can handle your last class today, that was pretty rough.”

Adrien smiled at her, “yeah, it was, but honestly, I’ll be alright. Thankfully I have a hero of a friend to protect me.” He nudged her with his elbow playfully.

Chloe rolled her eyes and nudged him back, “then come on, you need to take more notes for Moi.”

Adrien chuckled as their kwami returned to their hiding places before he opened the door for Chloe, “but of course, after you Queenie.”

“And don’t you forget it!” Chloe teased back as they both laughed at each other as they walked down the hall.

…

Adrien tried to put the flirtatious girls out of his mind for the rest of the day, he was so glad that Chloe was there to scare them off. He made a mental note to send her a pre-release of that new white bag his father was adding to his next collection that he knew she’d want.

Before Adrien left for his photoshoot, he double checked with Nathalie that there would be a few dresses for Mari to choose from at the office and he asked her to schedule a reservation at 6:00pm at a nice three-star restaurant. Nathalie, being the awesome assistant that she was, had a suggestion.

NS: Actually Adrien, your father will be out of town tonight for a business meeting in Milan.

NS: I suggest that you ask MDC to come home for dinner, I’m sure that the chefs would enjoy making you both something.

NS: Then if there is time, maybe you could ask her to hang out, play games or watch a movie. It
would be more personal and your father has already approved this idea so long as I am there, which I will be as I will be working late.

Adrien: Nathalie, you are the best!

NS: Thank you.

…

As their last class before lunch came to a close, Adrien and Chloe finished off their plans together and Adrien told her his plans with Marinette.

The Queen: You’re taking her to the Gabriel offices to try on dresses at 4:00pm?

Adrien: Yes? Is that a problem?

The Queen: Nope. I have to be back at my hotel to oversee the loans of the lesser gowns and tuxes to the rest of the peasants at 5:00pm. I can come and help you out!

Adrien: Chloe!

The Queen: It’ll be fine!

Adrien: She doesn’t know that I know, well, you know!

Chloe smirked at him and rolled her eyes, typing something on her phone and chuckling to herself. A minute later she sent him another text.

The Queen: I just got a text from the Ice Queen. We’ll meet you there!

Adrien: Ice Queen? What have you and Mari been talking about?!

Adrien: Oh my gosh, has she told you about that embarrassing date with Kagami?

Adrien: I was such an idiot! I’ll never live that down!

The Queen: That’s why we’re coming, to save you from yourself.

The Queen: Besides backup, you need fashion advice. The Ice Queen and I will help you with that.

Adrien: I’m a model I can handle it!

The Queen: You’re a male model, unless your father is having you expand into the women’s wear, you need us!

Adrien: Marinette has excellent taste! We’ll be fine!

The Queen: I’ve already got it down. 4:00pm. See you there!

Adrien: Chloe! No! You can’t come! I want to be alone with Mari!

Adrien: Chloe!

Adrien: Chloe, stop ignoring me!

Adrien looked Chloe’s way and he quickly noticed that she was ignoring her phone as she had already put it away in her bag, a bag that for once she was carrying and she was looking all smug
about ignoring her phone.

Apparently, they would be meeting together whether Adrien liked it or not.

Adrien pouted as the lunch bell rang and he took his bag, waiting for Chloe to escort him to his bodyguard.

Chloe glanced over Adrien’s shoulder and said, “Lahiffe can escort you to your car Adrikins, I have to go meet with the deliveryman and the caterer.”

Then she waltzed away and Adrien was left standing next to Nino, who looked up at Adrien with a sad look on his face. “Dude.” He breathed out.

Adrien stood up straight and shook his head, “I’m not ready to hear it right now Nino.” Then he started walked out of the classroom, with Nino on his heels.

“That’s okay Dude.” Nino answered as he caught up with him, “I’ll wait ‘til you’re ready. I’ll… I’ll just walk you to your ride.” He said quietly.

Adrien shrugged as they walked out to the front of the school, where they caught Chloe complaining to the three deliverymen that they were missing a pizza. Nino stood at the entrance to the school and waited until Adrien was in his limo.

Adrien looked at Nino and gave him one small courtesy wave goodbye. Nino tipped his hat and saluted his friend and then went inside to get some pizza as their class talked about the classroom elections that were about to be held.

Chapter End Notes

I really like the idea of Chloe and Kagami working together, whether or not Adrien likes the idea lol.
The Pirate and the Princess

Chapter Summary

Adrien goes to his photo shoot, sees Master Fu there and gets annoyed by Plagg. 🌟 Then Adrien gets jealous when he sees who is escorting Marinette home.

Just to let you know the approximate length, this chapter is about 2800+ words long.

Chapter Notes

Timeline
This chapter begins at lunchtime on Thursday. Around noon and ends near 3:00pm

Also, mild spoiler warning for the episode Weredad- there is a reference to it in this chapter.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Adrien’s photo shoot was one of the longer ones held at the park, but this time he had to change his outfit a few times. Not unusual for a photo shoot really, they just had to set up a changing tent and everything for that, but since there were multiple outfits it would make it last a bit longer than he would like and Adrien would miss the rest of school because of it and it wouldn’t give him much time until he finally got to see Marinette.

Still, Adrien was a professional and he got through with makeup, the first two outfits and most of the photo shoot without a problem. They were actually ahead of schedule by 1:30pm when it was time to take a break before changing into the last outfit for the shoot. Adrien was given a small smoothie for a late lunch to quickly drink as they made some changes to the set.

Adrien sat down on a nearby bench and was soon joined somehow by his Chinese Tutor… aka, Master Fu.

Adrien finished his smoothie quickly as he tried to remain nonchalant about the Master’s visit, “is… is everything o-okay Sir?” Adrien wasn’t sure how to address the Master as there were people nearby. Adrien easily tossed his empty smoothie cup into a distant trash can as he patiently waited for Master Fu to reply.

“Oh yes, I just needed to rest these old bones.” The older man gave Adrien a small smile and a raised eyebrow. “I thought that it would be prudent of me to stop by and see how things are coming along.”

“I’m fine.” Adrien said but he lowered his voice and whispered, “I’ve uh, been a bit distracted and some… not nice things have happened.” Not wanting to explain what he meant as the older man raised an eyebrow out of curiosity, Adrien went on, “overall though, things are going well, I think. Chloe is helping me by organizing the liar’s downfall, I’ve already apologized to um, to her, and I’m, uh, working on gaining my Lady’s trust. I’ve finally found her Master.” Adrien almost sighed as he fought his grin and failed miserably, “and I couldn’t be happier.”
Master Fu nodded, “that is good. Make sure that YOU are there for her.” He emphasized. “That is also important to restore the balance.”

“I will Sir.” Adrien nodded, “I’m not going to leave her on her own like that again, I mean…” Adrien cleared his throat, “I hardly feel worthy of her, she’s so remarkable even without well, you know,” Adrien quickly waved at his eyes, “it’s just, ah, she’s Marinette!” Adrien blushed. “She deserves the best, and I don’t know if I’m well, worthy of her after all of this…”

Master Fu chuckled, “I am sure that you will do your best for her and honestly young man, you really should let her decide who is ‘worthy’ of her.” Master Fu stood up with a wry grin and then stretched, “I must be going, my lunch break is almost over.”

Adrien nodded, “It was uh, good seeing you again Sir, thank you for stopping by.”

“Mr. Agreste!” The director of the shoot called Adrien, “time to change into the last outfit!”

Adrien turned towards the man and answered, “Coming!” Then he turned towards Master Fu, only to see that he had left already.

Adrien sighed and then shook his head and went to his changing tent to put on his last outfit.

About forty minutes before school let out, the director called out, “and that’s a wrap! Good job Mr. Agreste, why don’t you go and change and then you can take off early for once!”

Adrien nodded, “Thanks, I will!”

He practically raced to the changing tent to get changed.

Adrien had hurried through changing back into his usual clothes, glad that he had well over an hour until he was supposed to pick up Marinette to go find her a dress at the office. Nathalie had helped to arrange several dresses for her to choose from after all, all in pinks or reds.

Adrien didn’t know that Nathalie had called Marinette’s mother for her measurements and color preferences, but that was neither here nor there, Nathalie was just that good of an assistant.

Since there was no one nearby and Adrien was waiting for his bodyguard to go and get the car, he decided to stroll around the park, it was nice to take a break for once. Plagg flew out of his pocket and floated beside him to get some fresh air.

“I can’t believe I’m finally going to be going on a date with my,” Adrien gulped, “my Marinette.” He smiled to himself shyly.

“Don’t count your eggs before they’ve hatched Kid.” Plagg warned his chosen as he accepted a piece of bread that Adrien handed him that he had snuck from the snack table as he had left the shoot as everything was being broken down. “She’s only agreed to go out with you to the ball to take down Lila and she told you she was only available from what, 4:00pm to 8:00pm? That’s oddly specific and didn’t she say she wanted to talk about some things with you too?”

“Plagg, please try not to rain on my parade.” Adrien frowned, “sometimes I think you only listen to the negative stuff and since when are you so observant?”
“You try living off of bread when you’re craving Camembert but you know it’ll make you sick.” Plagg whined but then glanced across the park and shook his head before zipping into Adrien’s pocket. “Meanwhile I’ll be nice and suggest that you don’t look up Kid.”

Adrien of course couldn’t help but look up, only to see Marinette being escorted home by none other than Luka Couffaine himself.

... 

Adrien fought his instinct to run over and punch their mutual ‘friend.’

Marinette was of course still looking absolutely gorgeous and alluring in her new school uniform. Her skirt showed off her firm legs that she earned by all her hero work as Ladybug.

Luka was wearing the boys’ uniform since their outfits complimented each other.

Adrien’s jealously grew by leaps and bounds, _Luka must have spent the whole day with her! At least he didn’t get to see her with her hair down._

Adrien wasn’t sure he would have been able to hold himself back if Marinette hadn’t put up her hair, it was too enticing when it was down after all.

Adrien took the risk and imagined asking her what her relationship with Luka was and he was plagued by the idea that karma would come back to bite him when she would say what he used to say when people made comments about Marinette and himself.

‘Just friends’ my eye. I know what that means now! Adrien mentally growled. _In that context, you’re attracted to each other but haven’t done anything about it_!

“Calm down.” Plagg whispered as he gave Adrien a light scratch, “he’s probably just looking out for her remember?”

Adrien took a calming breath and released it. “Yeah, I know.” Adrien muttered as his heart ached as he saw the two interact. Luka had just made her laugh and Marinette’s face was gorgeous as usual. Thankfully they were downwind from him and he was reminded that thankfully she had put in her signature pigtails, _that would help her control her pheromones that Tikki mentioned, right?_

Adrien couldn’t help but scowl briefly as Luka was walking far too close to his Princess for comfort, well, for Adrien’s comfort that is.

_I wonder how much her ‘perfume’ affects Luka? I’m pretty sure he liked her already, before all of this happened, but one thing for sure is that I am NOT going to lose her to him._

Before Adrien knew what was happening, he had plastered on his model smile and was striding over to meet them. Adrien saw his bodyguard pull up nearby out of the corner of his eye, but before he could honk his horn, Adrien held up his hand to him to request that he wait for when he was ready to go. Adrien didn’t need to look to know that his bodyguard would nod and wait as long as Adrien requested it since they weren’t running late or anything.

“Hey guys!” Adrien called out as he put in a false sound of enthusiasm for Luka’s sake, “I’m surprised to see you here, has school even been let out yet?”

Marinette looked sheepish for a moment as she bit her lip and Luka glanced from Adrien to Marinette and then grinned slightly as he then drew closer to Marinette and gently draped his arm across her shoulders protectively, as he stood between her and Adrien.
“Hey Adrien,” Luka smiled at him easily, “I was just walking Mari home.”

Adrien managed to hide his jealousy and not clench his fists.

Marinette nodded, “yeah, his school lets out much earlier than Dupont and I uh, I went there today to see if I might be interested in going there?” Marinette sounded a bit unsure, but she was smiling about it for some reason as she glanced from Adrien to Luka and then to Adrien again.

Marinette blushed. Adrien’s model smile drifted downward slightly as Luka nodded and grinned, far more pleased with that information than Adrien was. “Yeah, maybe we’ll be classmates.” Luka offered but then looked down kindly at Marinette, “that is, if that’s what you want. I can’t see anyone not noticing you or turning you down Mari.”

Luka then glanced at Adrien with a small smirk. I see that look. Adrien mentally groused, and I finally see her you, you rock star you.

Adrien realized that he wasn’t very good about being threatening Luka in his own head.

Adrien pursed his lips for a moment and tried to ignore that comment as his eyes squinted slightly out of jealousy and the double meaning there that Luka wouldn’t ever turn her down… like Chat Noir did during the Were-dad incident. Not that he knew that. Adrien knew that he had so much to make up for once she knew who he was.

“Wha-what did you think of his school Marinette?” Adrien asked fearfully.

Marinette thought for a moment, “well, I did like the program and the rules aren’t as bad as the school I checked out yesterday.” Then she shook her head, still uncertain, and waved it off and began to ramble, “but I’m getting ahead of myself, they’ll let my parents know if they’ll let me t-transfer tomorrow and if I decide to go, well, I just have to show up there on Monday.”

“Oh.” Adrien’s heart ached as Luka smiled at Marinette, pleased again as he squeezed her shoulders, although that left Marinette a little bashful, since Luka had not so discreetly placed himself between Marinette and Adrien.

She probably asked him to do that, to ward off unwanted attention. The thought didn’t reassure Adrien at all though. To him, Luka was his biggest threat since HE was the one Marinette had asked out to join him on his date with Kagami.

Karma sucks. Adrien mentally groused. I only asked out Kagami because Marinette is too wonderful and reminded me too much of Ladybug, minus the stuttering that is.

“Nothing is set in stone yet.” Luka reassured Marinette happily though as he gave her another gentle squeeze, “but I’m sure that you will have to decide if you’re going to join my school, because any school would be a fool NOT to let you transfer.”

“Thank you, Luka.” Marinette replied with a slight blush.

Luka’s smile apparently was permanent as he nodded at her and gently said, “you’re welcome.” Luka then held his free hand over his chest as he told her sweetly, as if he was ignoring Adrien, “and if I may say, I’d love to be able to see you every day, your heart song is such an inspiration Marinette.”

Marinette blushed a little more, just as Adrien loudly cleared his throat.

“Well, if you’re headed home then LUKA, maybe I could give Marinette a ride home?” Adrien
offered her, hoping to get rid of Luka. “That way Luka won’t have to go out of his way and then MAYBE we could go do that thing we had planned to do together earlier?” Adrien shot Marinette a genuine smile, which seemed to startle Marinette at first, but then she smiled and nodded back.

Adrien swiftly shot a quick and smug victorious look at Luka who looked a bit surprised.

Luka chuckled and then removed his arm from Marinette’s shoulders as he rubbed the back of his neck almost nervously, well for Luka. He was always strangely calm. “Oh, did you two, um, have a date? I didn’t realize…”

“Not really?”

“Yes, maybe?”

Marinette and Adrien had answered at the same time.

Marinette gave Adrien a small smirk and Adrien shrugged with his own smug look, letting her know that she could call it whatever she wanted as long as she was spending her time with him since he was the one that had said ‘Yes.’

“Actually, Adrien offered to lend me a dress for tomorrow’s Ball that the Mayor is hosting.” Marinette explained. “We might grab dinner, but Adrien and I were planning on going to the Ball together tomorrow as just friends.” She enunciated as she looked at Adrien intensely to remind him of that fact. Adrien looked at the ground, sorry for all of his earlier sins of calling her ‘just a friend.’

“Oh, huh.” Luka nodded, coming to his own conclusion, he then leaned over and whispered something to Marinette, which of course Adrien caught, “gee, take it easy on him, we’ve made him jealous enough as it is.”

Adrien looked up, catching Luka’s smug look.

“So, you do have a date then, I guess some congratulations are in order?” Luka gave Marinette that gentle understanding smile of his while she looked surprised and almost embarrassed as she flushed a beautiful rosy color.

Adrien looked shocked as well as he realized, I know that I wouldn’t look that happy if I knew the girl I liked was going out with another guy. He… he must really love her.

Luka stepped closer and offered his hand to Adrien, Adrien reached out and they shook hands. “Congratulations,” Luka said and then he quickly drew Adrien closer as he shook his hand again and whispered, “but I warn you. If you hurt her, I’ll whisk her away from your fumbling hands and you’ll regret losing her for the rest of your life.”

Adrien swallowed as Luka leaned away from him with a knowing smile on his face. Adrien nodded and smiled back. Message received.

“I wouldn’t have it any other way.” Adrien replied with a wry grin as he blinked and let go of Luka, “thanks.”

Luka nodded and then stepped back as he leaned over and loudly whispered to Marinette. “Let me know how it goes and give me a call sometime. I’ve missed seeing you around Ma-Ma-Marinette.” Luka paused and seemed to think about kissing her on the cheek, but then without gracing her with a kiss, he gave her a gentle hug instead. “I’ll always be inspired by your Melody Mari, you’ll always be the first girl that inspired me to write a song of my own.”
Adrien clenched his hands, but he knew that he could be a gentle cat about this since Luka was being a gentleman. Adrien couldn’t fault him for realizing how wonderful Marinette was after all.

Luka then added loudly as he stepped away from a blushing Marinette, “take care of her Adrien.”

Adrien nodded, “I will.”

“Then I’ll see you two around.” Luka winked and waved at them both before he turned walked away.

Adrien smirked slightly as he walked over and stood beside Marinette and possessively put his arm over her shoulders like Luka had done, without saying anything.

Adrien didn’t watch Luka leave, he was too busy admiring Marinette.

Marinette looked up at him and rolled her eyes, “stop looking so smug,” she whispered as she blushed heavily and gently nudged him as she tapped him with her elbow.

“Who me?” Adrien chuckled as he squeezed her shoulder.

Adrien was about to lean in and kiss her on the cheek, since he was so grateful that she let him get this close in the first place and of course because Luka was gone. While Marinette seemed to be thinking about something and he thought that he might just be able to get away with it…

Of course, that was when they heard screams in the distance and the sky darkened, clouds building at an unnatural rate and the sound of thunder covered the screams of civilians running for cover.

Adrien looked at Marinette as they both practically groaned, “akuma!”

Chapter End Notes

I wonder if anyone thought that I'd forget Luka? With how long this story is, he had to make an appearance!

As a writer, I really like him as a character. The title is just a note about how Adrien feels about Luka being around Marinette all day. Let's just say, he doesn't like it.

Although it isn't really mentioned, its the first time in over a week where Marinette hasn't attracted an akuma during the day, being around Luka is soothing to her and knowing that Adrien is trying helps with that too.

It's also fun to think that Luka is protective of Mari and likes to tease Adrien as well now that he realizes that he likes her.

Also, maybe, just maybe, Nooroo and Hawkmoth needed a break after the near akumatization of Adrien/Chat the night before lol. They've had roughly fifteen hours give or take of a break. I'm sure Gabriel would think that's enough for Nooroo after all, especially since now he wants to make up for the failure of the evening before...

Other Timeline notes
The Mayor's Ball is Friday night.
(just to put things in perspective, the story began Monday night when Master Fu first visited Adrien)
😊 I hope to get the next chapter out in a week, but I'll admit that it may take longer since it is going to be an interesting akuma attack, it's another original one so I'll let it spill that it's not Stormy Weather about to show up.
New Heroes

Chapter Summary

Adrien has to ditch Marinette so she can go fight the akuma as another Miraculous holder besides Ladybug since Tikki is tired. He just can’t help following her though as she races to catch up with Luka for some reason and then they go on to join the battle…

Chapter Notes

Warning: this chapter is over 4300 words just to give you some warning about length, it’s a very intense akuma battle and I hope I’ve done it justice, there’s a few clues within, I will deny everything in the comments since I don’t want to spoil the next chapter, so pay attention everybody and enjoy!

Also, a mild reference to information within the episode Party Crasher, but it's nothing groundbreaking to that episode's storyline since I'm an English speaker and I saw the French version without subtitles (I am such a fan I know, my kid is rolling her eyes at me now). Anyhow, I just saw it before finishing this chapter and made a Miraculous holder's power the same as in the episode.

In the Timeline for this story, it is Thursday Afternoon at approximately 3:00pm.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Adrien knew that he had to find a way to get away from Marinette so that she could transform, she stepped towards the sounds of people screaming in the distance and away from Adrien.

“Sounds like it’s near the Louvre!” Adrien commented as he realized that Luka had gone in that direction as he caught Marinette’s hand and held it firmly, he was having a hard time knowing that sweet and wonderful Marinette was about to go into battle with a new Miraculous.

I know it’s insane, but… but I want to protect you! Adrien practically mentally screamed through the look on his face.

“Adrien! I uh, I have to go and tell Luka to get to safety!” Marinette quickly explained as she pulled him forward since he wouldn’t let go of her just yet. Trying to shake him probably, she added, “you need to get back to your bodyguard, right??”

Adrien nodded, hating that this would make him look like a coward, “I’ll only let you go if you promise to be careful Marinette, I-I worry about you.” She nodded and gave him a reassuring grin, “I’ll do my best!” She countered, “stay safe and I’ll see you later then?”

He asked her hopefully, unwilling to let go of her hand until she agreed to meet him too. “My bodyguard will want to take me home, I don’t want to miss us getting together though.” He explained with a frown and a single shoulder shrug.
Marinette nodded, “I’ll see you at four or after the akuma attack Adrien! I really have to go though…” Marinette gave him a worried look after glancing in the direction of the akuma.

Adrien nodded and painfully let go of her, “be careful please. For me?”

Marinette chuckled, “I will be! Bye!” They quickly waved goodbye to each other and then they took off in separate directions.

Or, that’s what it seemed like. Adrien darted away from her and hid behind a bush as she left to catch up with Luka, Adrien followed and saw her pull Luka into an ally.

“Kid, what are you doing?” Plagg peeked out of his jacket pocket, watching Adrien finish sending off a text to his bodyguard before he went on, telling him that he was fine and was hiding, obviously, even though he was actually planning on following Marinette.

“Plagg,” Adrien sighed and then whispered as he approached the alley, “I-I just can’t leave her, Tikki is sick and I want to make sure that she’s okay.”

Plagg was quick to answer in a low whisper, “I’m all for protecting our girls Kid, although I’m telling you now that if we get caught this is all YOUR idea.”

Adrien rolled his eyes, “Tikki will kill you if she thought for one second that you thought that she couldn’t handle herself, huh?”

“Pfft, no way.” Plagg waved off the likely idea, “now let’s see what they’re up to.”

Adrien peeked around the corner just in time to see Marinette, Luka and two unfamiliar kwami. Adrien didn’t quite catch what they said to transform, but a half a second later and there were two flashes of light. One light was green and the other was pink.

Adrien was able to overhear what they were saying, “well aren’t you just an adorable little mouse.” Luka smiled wearing his new green and black outfit with, wait was that a lyre in his hand? “I would say that we could make sweet music together, but that would be too forward of me.”

Then Luka actually winked at Mari. Adrien seethed.

“Well, thanks,” Marinette replied bashfully as she toed the ground with one foot, “you don’t make a bad looking snake yourself.” Marinette chuckled as she pulled what looked like a pink jump rope off of her hip.

Adrien had to admit though, Marinette was a gorgeous mouse in her pink, white and grey outfit, she looked good enough to eat.

“Meow!~” Adrien almost silently purred with a grin, distracted by her himself.

Plagg of course overheard and groaned, but then he whispered “focus Kid, geez…” just loud enough for Adrien to hear and Adrien blushed as he realized that he was caught checking out and commenting on Marinette’s new suit by his kwami.

“So, quick review, once we use our special powers, we only have five minutes before we are forced to transform back.” Marinette explained to Luka, “you can use your powers to turn back the clock to where you started the use of your power, and uh, you should be able to jump and fight well too with the aid of the Miraculous.”

Luka nodded at her with a grin, “so do all your skills come from the Miraculous?”
“No, Ladybug told me that,” Luka smirked slightly as she looked away from him as she said that, “well, that it enhances our natural abilities and the Snake Miraculous is best for someone who is musically inclined.”

Luka nodded at her, “got it. What about you?”

“The Mouse Miraculous is best for someone quick and inventive. My special ability is ‘Shrink’ and it comes with a single quick burst of speed, or so I’m told, I haven’t used it yet. My Miraculous will make me faster too.”

They heard a rumble in the distance, causing Luka and Marinette to look towards it, “looks like we need to get going.” Luka commented, but then he looked at her and blushed a little under his mask, “so uh, you said that Ladybug won’t be able to make it to this fight but I still don’t know what to call you when we’re dressed like this?” He waved at their suits.

“I think I’ll go with Multimouse.” Marinette happily replied as she inspected her jump rope. “You?”

“Viperion, my Melody.” Luka bowed half way as he used an almost seductive voice as he took her hand and kissed the back of it keeping his snakelike eyes on her as he ran his thumb across her knuckles.

Adrien eyes widened and almost growled as he instinctively took a step towards the alley, a scratch from Plagg reminded him to stay quiet and hold still.

Multimouse had a very Marinette like reaction to Luka’s very obvious flirting as she giggled and blushed.

“Well, nice to meet you V-Viperion, but we really should focus and get going.” She looked at the jump rope. “I just wish I knew how to use this thing.”

“May I make a suggestion?” Viperion asked and Multimouse nodded, he smiled and offered her his hand, she took it and the next thing she knew, Viperion was picking her up bridal style, “why don’t you let me lead the way?”

Multimouse giggled, rolled up her jump rope with a flick of her wrist and then nodded as Viperion looked towards the sounds of the akuma as he jumped and cleared the building across the street on the way to the Louvre.

Adrien had popped out of hiding and was clenching his fists with a scowl on his face as he exclaimed, “I thought that he was backing off of Marinette!”

Plagg hovered beside him, the darkness radiating off of him was dizzying actually as he said with a nonchalant shrug, “maybe he’s like Chat Noir when suited up.”

“What do you mean?” Adrien asked as Plagg zipped back in his pocket as he took off running towards the battle, “I’m not like that!”

“Yeah, sure. Flirts with the girl he likes and when he’s trying to impress her.” Plagg replied snarkily, “sound familiar?”

“Never mind that Plagg, I don’t know if we’re going to join in this battle, but we need to go and see if they need us!” Adrien ignored Plagg’s observation as he darted out of the alley, heading towards the Louvre on foot.

“Kid, I can’t promise if I can control myself like the other day.” Plagg warned regretfully as Adrien
crossed an empty street.

“Plagg, you leveled the school.” Adrien deadpanned.

“I know. I did good.” Plagg chuckled as Adrien shook his head and continued to run to the site of the battle outside of the Louve.

A few minutes later, Adrien arrived to hide behind a bench which provided both excellent cover and a view through the slants in the flimsy wood that it was made of for him to watch the battle discreetly. No one will see me here. He thought, and he was right.

Adrien had arrived just as Queen Bee was about to lead a small troop of new Miraculous holders against... a dozen or so copies of a woman dressed in various Greek style outfits, all with a different roman numeral somewhere on their toga or armor. The ladies were standing in front of the Louvre? It’s just, it was no longer the Louvre that they knew, it looked like a knock off Colosseum had grown underneath the pyramid which was now like a glass roof? It looked like an architectural nightmare really, not that akumas really cared about that.

“Am Queen Bee!” Chloe announced herself as Adrien rolled his eyes, “as the most fashionable Miraculous holder here...”

“You mean the oldest.” A Dragon themed girl in red wielding a sword interrupted. “Not the most qualified.”

“Quiet Tatsu! You’re ruining my speech!” Queen Bee scolded.

“As if a Bee would be able to sting all of the Gods!” The group of facially identical ladies, including one of whom who had a horrid scar crossing her face and carried a large hammer spoke together, “I am Olympus! I am ALL of the major Olympian Gods!” With a dramatic wave to the transformed museum behind them, they declared, “we will make them pay for saying that we don’t know our Roman History, but first give us your miraculous!”

“Not likely!” Queen Bee answered as Multimouse shook her head and covered her face with one hand slightly, behind Queen Bee, embarrassed by all the posturing and Queen Bee’s dramatic antics.

Adrien snorted, it’s not like she doesn’t do that herself, people just respect Ladybug enough to not interrupt.

Viperion patted Multimouse’s shoulder with an amused look on his face and then helped her to lower her hand before Queen Bee saw her reaction.

Queen Bee scowled at the group of women before them, who were apparently made from one akumatized woman as one of the ladies came forward, as they noticed that each one of them wore a Roman numeral somewhere on their person.

The woman wearing the I stepped forward, “are you ready to risk your lives for your Miraculous? I am Zeus and together we have you outnumbered two to one!” She held up her lightening shaped rod to the sky and the gathering clouds hit it with a bolt of lightning, which she then flung at the heroes.

The heroes jumped and scattered just in time.

Recharging the rod in a similar way and then tossing the power at the heroes, Zeus mocked them, “come now, you can’t dodge my lightening forever!” Zeus laughed.
“Come now Love, we shouldn’t play with our prey, but make them pay!” A woman with the numeral II on a very elaborate crown cackled as she spun a dagger happily behind Zeus.

“My darling Hera, we must not make this too easy for them.” Zeus replied as she stepped to the back of the group, taking Hera with her.

“Look at those cowards run away like mice!” One of the armor wearing women with the number IX on her breastplate yelled boastfully as she swung her spear, “I can defeat them myself!”

“Hold on Ares, we should spread love not war!” The most scantily clad woman of them all with an X on her petite but embellished crown who was wearing far too much makeup proclaimed as she pulled out a scatchel and she pulled out a handful of dust and blew it at most of the heroes who had now regrouped. “Love always wins after all.”

“Don’t let it touch you!” Multimouse cried out as she swung her jump rope, scattering the love dust with the wind that she created with it. Unfortunately, it hit Viperion, who had been looking at Multimouse at the time.

“Viperion!” Multimouse exclaimed, “are you okay?”

Viperion’s smile grew slightly, “I’ve never been better.” Then he winked at her and turned towards the group of Roman/Greek Goddesses, “I’m afraid your love dust doesn’t work on me Venus, you can’t make me love my Melody more!” Viperion answered using her proper Roman name.

Multimouse choked a little at Viperion’s bold statement.

Adrien was surprised, Luka was so sincere and hadn’t even blushed when he said that!

He must really like her. Adrien thought, but I love her more!

“It’s Aphrodite!” The woman with the X cried out in frustration at her weapon since it apparently was not working, as she stomped her foot like Chloe would when Daddy didn’t help her get her way.

“My turn.” Another woman stepped forward, pushing Aphrodite to the side. She wore the number XIII on her belt buckle. “I am Dionysus! Would you like a drink?” Then she pulled out a comically large water gun and aimed it at the group of super heroes.

“Don’t let it touch you!” The wielder of the Fox miraculous warned, “it’ll make you drunk or crazy!”

“Very clever Fox!” Dionysus replied, “you’ll be the first to suffer my madness!”

“It’s Renard actually.” The fox grinned, “or should I call you Baka?” He answered, mocking the Roman name of Bacchus with the Japanese term for stupid.

Tatsu smirked and Queen Bee chuckled, “I knew your nerdiness would come in handy.”

“Thanks?” Renard replied.

“Agh! You will see how effective my power is pest!” Dionysus yelled as she started pumping the water gun’s trigger, which only seemed to have a five-meter range and the ‘water’ just fell short of the heroes, “I just need to get closer!” Dionysus declared as she charged them, breaking away from the group of ‘goddesses’ towards the miraculous holders who again went in different directions.

Multimouse, Viperion and Queen Bee hid behind a car as Renard darted left and right as he led
Dionysus away.

“You’ll never catch me!” Renard teased and Dionysus screamed and kept trying to get him with her water gun.

“This isn’t working!” Queen Bee complained to Multimouse, “any suggestions would be appreciated!”

“We need reinforcements! There are too many of them!” Multimouse answered. Viperion nodded in agreement.

Adrien listened in thanks to his enhanced hearing and silently agreed with a nod.

“Psft! I’ve seen you do more with less! Now think Mouse!” Queen Bee insisted.

Meanwhile, Tatsu, the Dragon miraculous wielder had regained her balance from darting away from Dionysus and turned to the audience of the rest of the akuma? Not knowing how to think about them collectively, she swung her blade and cried out, “my mother did not teach me to run!” Then she charged the group of ‘gods’ only to be met by the grinning woman with the IX on her breastplate, who swung her spear and fought Tatsu, one on one.

“I don’t want you to run!” Ares told Tatsu, “I want your Miraculous!” She cackled as they continued to spar.

Meanwhile, Multimouse was freaking out a little, Viperion put his hand on her shoulder, “shush, focus. You’ve got this.” He told her reassuringly.

Multimouse took a breath and closed her eyes. “This is like any other akuma, we need to find the akumatized item so I can take it to Ladybug and get it cleansed. Now, we need to disable them and get that item!”

Queen Bee nodded distractedly, “get the item, break it and bring it to Ladybug. Got it!”

“There should be twelve of them.” Viperion observed, “it seems like every one of them has a weapon, so which one is the right item?”

“I’ve got this!” Queen Bee smirked as she turned and began to run towards the group of ‘goddesses.’

“Wait!” Multimouse squeaked! “We don’t know which is the right one!”

Viperion brushed his wrist and softly said, “Second Chance,” as they watched Queen Bee charge towards their enemy.

“Queen Bee, wait!” Multimouse cried out as Queen Bee jumped over the group of goddesses.

“Now this is what I’m talking about! Moving targets!” A woman with the VIII on her armor happily called out, “I am Artemis and I will win this hunt!” Pulling back her bow she aimed an arrow at Queen Bee, which she narrowly missed midair, but then Renard caught Artemis’s attention as he kept dodging Dionysus’s attacks.

Landing beside a woman with a trident and the number III on her crown, Queen Bee started spinning her top as a shield, “you can’t defeat Poseidon insect!” The woman declared as she stepped in front of Zeus as she lifted her trident and all the sewer lines exploded as water shot out of them. One of those lines unfortunately was right in front of Queen Bee and with a wave of her trident, the water bent in midair and shot Queen Bee back towards the car that Viperion and Multimouse were hiding
behind.

Seeing that Queen Bee was about to be knocked out, Viperion cried, “Second Chance!” This time it finished his special attack and they were all back where he had called it out the first time, just as Queen Bee was starting her charge. Viperion quickly launched himself at Queen Bee and knocked her off her feet, rolling until they landed beside each other on the ground.

“What was that for! You ruined my attack and my hair!”

Viperion quickly stood up and pulled a scowling Queen Bee to her feet and they both had to dart to the side to avoid an arrow from Artemis as Viperion explained, “my special ability gives us a second chance, your first attack was countered by Poseidon.”

Tatsu had just disarmed Ares, “your lack of focus makes you a poor warrior!” She declared as she broke Ares spear, causing Ares to vanish but leaving the remains of the spear behind.

“Come on! I think I know what we need to do!” Multimouse offered as Renard joined them.

Renard was breathing hard, but rejoined them as the red headed young man smiled, “I tricked Dionysus to somehow get herself soaked with her own water, she’s a little happy right now.” He pointed to where Dionysus was dancing and laughing, stumbling over her own feet as the other goddesses groaned at the sight.

“It looks like when we break their item, we defeat them!” Multimouse exclaimed.

“Well duh.” A woman with the number XII on her winged helmet appeared beside them, “Hermes is the name, and messages are my game. I’ll let my sisters over there know what you’re up to.” She winked and in a flash, she was gone.

Tatsu had caught her breath and was challenging the goddesses with her glare.

Olympus as a group laughed as they received the message from Hermes, “you cannot defeat us!”

“Let’s see how you do against a craftsman!” A woman wearing a leather apron with the number XI on it challenged as she waved a flaming hammer at Tatsu as she came forward. “I am Hephaestus! I understand weapons like no other!”

“We shall see.” Tatsu easily replied as she took a defensive stance.

Queen Bee insisted and stamped her foot, “I am the leader here and I say we get Zeus’s thunderbolt! They’re protecting it for a reason! Let’s go!” Queen Bee, Renard, Viperion and Tatsu swung their weapons and ran at the enemy.

Multimouse cried out, “wait!” But only Viperion slowed as he turned to look at her.

“Goddesses! I’ve had enough of this!” Zeus proclaimed from the other side, “let us go forward and get their Miraculous!” The other goddesses cheered.

Tatsu met Hephaestus and they fought sword against hammer, Hera joined the fight with a dagger and Tatsu was now fighting two on her own.

Queen Bee was met by a woman in black armor with the number IV on it, “I need no weapon to defeat you.” The sinister woman declared, “I am Hades and I will soon send you to my kingdom.” Using her bare hands, she defended and punched at Queen Bee, who fought back as well as she could.
Zeus was apparently staying in the back to avoid losing her weapon, smirking as she watched the other Goddesses attack.

Renard faced off against Poseidon, flute against trident as Aphrodite slowly sauntered over.

While Hermes practically jogged towards Multimouse, Viperion noticed that Artemis was aiming an arrow at Multimouse while she was distracted.

“I don’t think so.” Viperion muttered as he flung his lyre at the bow, breaking it and causing it to fall and Artemis yelped as she dissolved into nothing. Viperion’s lyre returned to him and he turned to see Multimouse preparing to engage Hermes.

Just as Hermes was about to pounce, Multimouse squeaked, “Shrink!” Multimouse shrunk and practically disappeared,

“What?” Hermes cried out as she looked around and then started giggling like she was being tickled.

In a flash, Multimouse appeared, looking like she was jumping off of Hermes shoulders, flipping in midair with her prize of Herme’s winged helmet in her hand.

Just as Viperion tossed his Lyre again, but this time at Poseidon’s trident.

“What? No!” Hermes cried out as Multimouse landed and broke the helmet over her knee, dropping the two pieces on the ground as Hermes disappeared.

Having not seen the flying lyre, Poseidon’s trident was broken in two and Poseidon evaporated as well, the pieces of her trident falling to the ground and Viperion’s lyre returning to his hand.

“Agh!” Renard cried out as he was hit with some of Aphrodite’s love dust, he turned and gazed at Queen Bee and swooned. “My Queen!” Renard stumbled and was hit over the head by the lady Hades.

“Never fall for a pretty face boy.” The lady Hades told him with a laugh as she shook her head at Renard as he fell to the ground.

“Renard!” Queen Bee called out and then she spun on Hades who had kicked him to the side, “I will finish this!” Queen Bee protectively growled as she weaved past Aphrodite, and jumped and kicked the lightening rod from Zeus’s hand towards Viperion.

Zeus laughed evilly, “you can’t stop us so easily!”

Viperion picked up the lightening shaped rod and tried to break it against the ground, leaving a small gouge in the ground, but the rod was still intact. Viperion dropped it, stomped on it and when that didn’t work he tried to hit it with his lyre, “I can’t break it!” He called out in frustration as Zeus continued to laugh.

“We’ve got to help them Plagg!” Adrien whispered to his kwami behind his protective bench.

Plagg had been watching the battle as well and nodded, “fine, but be careful, I won’t be able to hold your transformation for long, especially if you use your power!”

“Right, and watch what I’m going after, I remember.” Adrien replied, “Plagg, Claws Out!”
Joining the battle, Chat Noir launched himself from his hiding place behind the bench.

“Paw-don my tardiness, I’ve been feline a bit un-purr the weather.” Chat Noir landed beside Multimouse as her Miraculous beeped for the first time. “Why Hello my little Mousette.” Chat Noir took her hand and kissed the back of it seductively, causing Multimouse to blush a color that matched Ladybug’s suit. “I haven’t haven’t had the purr-leaseure.”

“I’m Multimouse.” Marinette explained softly as she took a finger and turned Chat Noir’s face towards the battle. “Now focus Kitty!”

Viperion practically glared and clenched his teeth at Chat Noir’s flirting with Marinette.

Having left Hephaestus to deal with Tatsu, Hera returned to Zeus’s side, as did Ares, and the lady Zeus having ensnared Queen Bee, tossed her to Ares, Queen Bee yelled, “let me go! You don’t know who you are dealing with!”

“Oh, we know.” Zeus whispered as she quickly grabbed Queen Bee’s spinning top and tossed it to Hera, who broke it in two with her hands.

“What are you waiting for Alley Cat! Destroy that Lightening bolt thing!” Queen Bee ordered.

“We didn’t need a weapon to defeat you!” Hades declared.

Why does that bother me? Chat Noir thought.

“Wait a minute Queen Bee!” Chat Noir held up one claw as he tried to put a paw on what was bothering him. “I have to leave as soon as I use my power!” He hissed, “and I think we’re missing something here.”

“That’s right, we need to think this through! Something isn’t right!” Multimouse backed him up. “How many of them did we start with?” She asked thoughtfully.

“About a dozen of them! That’s how many there should be!” Tatsu shouted with a gasp, obviously winded from fighting for so long, “just break that rod! I’m having trouble holding my own against Vulcan here!”

“The name is Hephaestus!” The goddess with the flaming hammer defended herself as she brought her hammer down on Tatsu’s sword continuing their fight.

“I’m in charge of this battle!” Queen Bee insisted. “We defeat Zeus we defeat them all! Just do it you stupid Cat!”

Viperion looked for Multimouse’s input, but she was distracted as she tried to puzzle this one out and at Queen Bee’s insistence, he finally threw the lightening shaped rod at Chat Noir.

“But?!” Chat Noir objected as he caught it, shaking his head as he thought, this is too easy.

“No butts CCB! Yours may be fine but we are not discussing it right now!” Queen Bee insisted as she struggled against her captor as she called out in frustration, “just pull up your big boy panties and DO it!”

Chat Noir blushed as he weakly called out, “cataclysm!”

Just as Multimouse called out again, “no, wait!”

It was too late however as instantly, the rod disintegrated, as did Zeus, but there was no butterfly.
“What!” Queen Bee gasped as Hera punched the Queen Bee herself out. Leaving Chat Noir, Multimouse, Viperion and Tatsu against Hera, Hephaestus and Hades. All three of them were grinning.

Chat Noir then realized, Hades never had a weapon to start with and having observed the battle… he remembered why that was a problem just like Multimouse had…

Chapter End Notes

Writer wipes forehead - Phew! Long chapter, sorry I was later than I'd like posting, but it doesn't seem like it was that long huh? Just had to leave another cliffhanger. My bad lol 😂

Just to keep track of the Miraculous holders etc…
Miraculous holders = Miraculous = Hero name = name of kwami = Power & item
Marinette = Mouse = Multimouse = Mullo = Shrink = can get super small & jump rope
Luka = Snake = Viperion = Sass = Second Chance (start and return to start) & lyre
Nathaniel = Fox = Renard = Trixx = Mirage (makes any illusion) & flute
(used Google translate to get name fox = French fox)
Chloe = Bee = Queen Bee = Pollen = Venom (paralyzes) & top
Kagami = Dragon = Tatsu = Longg = Flame (totally guessing on the power here, makes sword ignite and can cut through anything or evaporate water) & Sword
(name is from Random search for the name of a Japanese Dragon)

If you know your Greek Gods and who are the twelve most important Gods/Goddesses, congrats, I used the Greek God names, because the akuma is a really bad Roman ‘historian’. Mild searching of the internet and wikipedia helped to create these characters (the goddesses/ladies) which are meant to represent the Olympian Gods or Council since I don’t remember all of my Grecian history and frankly I had to cut out A LOT of the information on these characters because they’re all one akumatized person that represents them all and doesn’t know all the facts anyway. Kind of like Sapotis, but instead of identical kid like gremlins, they have identical faces, all are female with different outfits with their own possible akumatized items etc. I'll add a list of them in the next chapter's summary, because this is already a long summary and I'd like to finally post this chapter 😊.

Also wanted to note, because Luka is older, he's getting more than one use of his special power here and not detransforming yet. I also suspect that's the nature of his power, getting multiple uses out of it, but he only gets to use it twice in this story since he is nearly grown, just not there yet lol.

If you want to guess at what Multimouse and Chat Noir have figured out in the comments, just start that part of the comment with 'Spoiler?' Honestly I don't know if I made it too obvious about what is going to happen, but I think it's a fun thing for readers to figure out stuff too so shrug, ♂ Have fun!

Obviously this akuma attack in this chapter and continued in the next is influenced by The Percy Jackson & the Olympian series by Rick Riordan and I wanted to point that out and give Kudos to him and let everyone know that this chapter and the next is inspired by that series which I haven't read in years (my bad, but it's a good story).
Chapter Summary

Last chapter, Marinette met with Luka and they transformed into Multimouse and Viperion. They joined Queen Bee, Tatsu and Renard to fight the akuma, Olympus, a woman who is not a good historian who has become all of the major ‘Roman’ Gods and Goddesses at once, using their Grecian names. Chat Noir joined them when his power seemed necessary to destroy the akumatized item.

The battle was nearly over and still no akuma had been found, Chat Noir needs to leave to recharge soon, which left Multimouse, down to four minutes until she detransforms, Viperion and Tatsu against Hera, Hephaestus and Hades. All three of the Goddesses were grinning as Queen Bee’s plan had failed and she had been taken out of the action, just like Renard the Fox Miraculous holder had been.

This is the rest of the akuma attack by Olympus. (and may we never, ever see her again! So I hope they win!) 😊

Chapter Notes

Length warning, about 4100+ words, I just couldn't let the akuma attack last longer than two chapters.

Also, several quotes from the Princess Bride thrown in for fun... so once again, referencing that fact and it's a fun movie so why not?

Enjoy! 😿

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Adrien had finally realized, Hades never had a weapon and having observed the battle… he remembered why that was a problem just like Multimouse had. It was something all of the female akumas had in common, besides their face, they all had something in connection to their ‘Roman’ god like powers or history. Like Poseidon with the Trident, or Zeus with the lightening shaped rod… Hades had a well-known object of his own and Adrien realized that it just wasn’t there.

That’s when three other goddesses with identical faces appeared out of thin air.

The goddess wearing battle armor with the number VI on it removed a helmet from her head with one hand, with her hand on her sword with the other. The other two Goddesses seemed to remove their hands from her shoulders, having gone along for the ride apparently using Hades well known weapon, his, well no, in this case her helm of invisibility.

“I am Athena. I represent the strategy and wisdom of war.” The Goddess announced herself. “These are my sister goddesses,” she declared using her hand with the helmet, she motioned towards the one with a V on her belt buckle who carried a large dried, sunflower? “This is Demeter.” Then Athena
waved at the other woman beside her who carried her own lyre, a smirk on her face and the numeral VII on her brooch, “and this is Apollo.”

Chat Noir’s ring rang incessantly, he looked at the others and Multimouse scolded him, “Go! We’ve got this!” She gave him a wide-eyed look and added, “Contact Ladybug, see if she can’t send us some reinforcements!”

Getting the message, Chat Noir saluted, “will do! I’ll see you later Princess!”

Athena cackled as he left, “three against six, I like the odds.”

He could hear Viperion mumble, “Princess?”

…

Chat Noir launched himself to the roof of a nearby building and once he was out of sight, he jumped down in the alley next to it, and then he de-transformed.

Plagg was breathing hard, and weakly cried out, “camembert!”

“We can’t Plagg, it’ll make you sick!” Adrien explained as he put him in his pocket.

“I’m already sick Kid!” Plagg’s looked awful, with the shadows bleeding around him as if he was creating his own mist of it.

“We need you to get strong enough to transform, not to get sicker! Now I’ll find you something.” Looking around, Adrien saw Andre’s abandoned ice cream cart. Nodding his head, Adrien ran up to it and pulled a twenty Euro note out of his wallet, Plagg groaned.

“I do NOT want ice cream, blech! What are you trying to do Kid, kill me with sweetness?” Plagg scowled at the thought. “I’m not THAT sick!”

“Ladybug needs us Plagg, her timer is running out.”

“Shush! Declare it to the world why don’tcha?!” Plagg shook his head dramatically.

“What about one of the sugar cups Andre serves the ice cream with? It’s bland, not too sweet and food Plagg. You need to regain your energy.” Adrien found one and left the money for Andre as he pulled it out and held it out to his kwami.

“Fine.” Plagg growled as he floated over to it and landed in the cup and began to take small bites from the rim of it.

“Eat faster Plagg.” Adrien ordered as he pulled out his phone and sent a text to Master Fu, telling him that ‘he’ needed a little extra help with his ‘next assignment’ with one hand. Implying that he needed help with Chinese or that they basically needed more help on the battlefield.

“I’m going as fast as I can, it’s really dry!” Plagg muttered before as he returned to eating, err, nibbling.

Adrien shook his head and looked out of the alley to watch the battle once more.

“Plagg, do sunflowers grow on vines?” Adrien asked almost randomly.

“Even I know that one Kid!” Plagg took another bite as Adrien held him out to see the battle before them as he ate. “They don’t.”
“I doubt anyone told the akuma.” Adrien sighed as vines were growing rapidly across the ground in the middle of the battlefield, trying to ensnare the heroes.

“Where is Master Fu!?” Adrien grumbled a minute later, “obviously I know Ladybug can’t make it and she wanted me to contact him!”

“Well, it’s not like you can fight as you Kid!” Plagg mumbled between bites, but then he saw Adrien eyeing a red helmet on a nearby scooter. “That wasn’t a suggestion!”

“I was just thinking about it!” Adrien replied as he turned back to watch the battle.

Athena, Demeter and Apollo were now left to actively fight Viperion, Tatsu and Multimouse, but Hades and Hera were now gone.

Hephaestus was wrapped up in Multimouse’s jump rope and Tatsu had just sliced through Demeter’s dried sunflower, causing it to fall and for Demeter to disappear.

That left Viperion and Multimouse fighting Athena together and Apollo, well, she was just standing by… tuning her lyre?

“That can’t be right.” Adrien whispered.

“Believe it Kid, musicians are fussy about their instruments.” Plagg said between bites.

Tatsu’s chest was heaving, she was an intense fighter and reminded Adrien of Kagami, and in that moment he realized, “that’s Kagami!” He whisper shouted to Plagg.

“Yeah, yeah, after figuring out Pigtails and knowing three other wielders, let’s just say it’s easier to see past the magic.” Plagg grumbled as he continued to nibble his food.

“Apollo!” Tatsu yelled, “do you yield?!”

Adrien snorted, of course Kagami wouldn’t want to attack someone that seemed to be unarmed.

“No, but I think I will play a melody…” Apollo grinned as she strummed her lyre and a wave of magic went out from it.

Viperion was about to swipe his wrist to use his power again, but he was tackled by Athena, preventing him from doing so.

“Plagg, why don’t they seem worried?” Adrien asked referring to the last of the Olympians.

Plagg shrugged as he continued to eat slowly. “Probably because Apollo was a God of many things, music, archery and medicine…”

“Oh no.” Adrien groaned as he came to yet another realization.

…

Queen Bee looked around, startled to find that it seemed like they were at the start of the battle again when she woke up, but the group they were fighting seemed bigger.

“I think I missed something.” Queen Bee muttered.

“I never knew that Bee’s napped on the job.” Tatsu teased Queen Bee.
“That’s enough out of you.” Queen Bee ordered as she saw Zeus recharging, “Fall Back!”

Tatsu frowned, but followed Queen Bee, as did the other heroes.

Adrien wasn’t really shocked at all as the Olympians reappeared as their weapons mended after Apollo’s wave of power went through the battle field after she strummed her lyre. Queen Bee and Renard woke up, refreshed and healed as well. Tatsu, aka Kagami, seemed to gain a second wind and even Multimouse’s Miraculous stopped chiming, which was really convenient. Everyone’s weapon was repaired and at their side as well.

“Shall we try this again?” Zeus announced herself wickedly as she waved her now whole lightening rod to the sky to soak up some more lightening.

“Fall Back!” Queen Bee had cried out as the heroes followed her to regroup on a nearby rooftop, causing the Olympians to laugh at their cowardice as Zeus’s lightening missed them as they retreated.

Regrouping on a nearby roof, Queen Bee began, “they’ve got us outnumbered and I’m missing some important information here.” Then she turned towards Multimouse and nodded to herself, “I think Multimouse should take point.”

“Why her?” Tatsu asked, her calm demeanor showing that she was almost offended. “I’m just as capable.”

“Unlike you, she has style.” Queen Bee answered with a quick flip of her hair as she turned to keep an eye on the akumatized group of want-to-be Goddesses and then added, “plus the Mouse knows more than she lets on.”

“Thanks Queen Bee.” Multimouse replied as she looked at the group of akumatized women who were also making plans of their own. “There are more of them now, but at least we know how to stop them, I just hope our cat sent our message. We can’t defeat them when they outnumber us like this, we should be getting reinforcements soon.”

“Should we wait for Chat Noir?” Viperion asked.

“He’s a great fighter, but I wouldn’t count on it.” Multimouse looked thoughtful knowing about his kwami’s sickness and how he shouldn’t be returning to battle since Ladybug needs to ‘show up’ and she wasn’t supposed to be transformed until absolutely necessary now.

“Hmm, what we need to do is to get Apollo’s instrument first, so they can’t reset things again. It’s like they’ve got their own Miraculous Ladybug. We’ve got to stop them from being able to use it!” Multimouse explained.

“How are we going to do that?” Tatsu asked as she counted the enemy’s numbers, “there are thirteen of them now, they outnumber us over two to one!”

“Wait… thirteen?” Renard held up his hand. “That’s not right.” He turned and started to count them as he named them, “Zeus, Hera, Poseidon, Hades, Demeter, Athena, Apollo, Artemis, Ares, Aphrodite, Hephaestus, Hermes and Dionysius. That makes thirteen. Huh.”

“Right, and we’ve checked most of the weapons for the akuma.” Viperion points out, “except for the hammer, the lyre, the watergun and the sword.”
“Do any of those make sense?” Multimouse quickly asks as she notices Zeus recharging her lightening shaped rod to shoot at them again. “Usually the akuma is in something obvious or special to the akuma.”

... 

Back at the alley, Adrien swiftly asked his kwami, “Plagg, how many Greek Gods were considered the Olympians?” He seemed to count something out on his hand using his fingers. “I thought there were twelve but I count thirteen.”

Plagg rolled his eyes, “the number was always up for grabs, since only eleven of them are well known, now.”

“How many Plagg?” Adrien tried again.

Plagg took another bite, chewed it slowly and answered helpfully for once, showing how sick he felt, “last I knew there was fourteen, duhh.”

... 

“Well, usually there is...” Renard begins to explain to the others, but was cut off by Queen Bee.

“Jump!” Queen Bee called out as a lightning bolt was thrown their way, blowing up the building they were on, apparently the akuma was tired of waiting. “Ugh! My hair!”

The heroes landed between Adrien’s alley and Olympus.

“Queen Bee! We need to round them up to reduce damages.” Multimouse called out as she pulls out her jump rope discreetly as ran to Queen Bee’s side as she told her quietly. “You get Hermes!”

“The flower delivery girl, right!” Queen Bee answered with a smug grin. (author’s note, FTD’s mascot is based off of Hermes, hence the reference.)

That was when they were joined by three new Miraculous holders.

Which was announced by a familiar phrase in a familiar voice, to Chat Noir anyway.

“Are there rocks ahead?!” The voice of Mr. Flirty called out.

“If there are, they’ll all be dead!” Giant Boy answered.

Oh no, not these guys again! Adrien mentally cringed.

Then the first of them boldly landed in front of the heroes.

He was a small guy, dressed as a rooster themed hero, and called out to the goddess themed akuma, “Yeah! Caw’s the name and I would like to say that your belief that you will win is most certainly inconceivable.”

Yep, that’s Shorty. Adrien was sure of it.

Then Caw, aka Shorty, glanced over his shoulder as he was joined by the two other new miraculous holders, who were obviously Giant Boy and Mr. Flirty. Giant Boy had landed in front of Tatsu and Queen Bee.

“No more rhymes now, I mean it!” Caw pointed at Giant Boy, whose outfit reminded you of an Ox,
with horns on his helmet and all.

“Anybody want a Peanut?” The Ox replied happily as he waved his hand that wasn’t holding his shield defensively.

“Gah!” Caw exclaimed and then he laughed with his two comrades before adding. “It totally makes sense that you’d choose the name Oxymoron you punster you!”

The goddesses were perplexed, as were most of the Miraculous holders.

“Who are you?” Queen Bee managed to ask, as the third Miraculous holder had arrived and had landed beside Multimouse and who was obviously checking the blushing Mouse out.

“That is all fine and good.” Mr. Flirty, who was dressed in a Dog themed outfit, wearing brown leather, dog ears, a tail and a boomerang hung at his side. “I am Woof.” He announced as he leaned into Multimouse’s space as he ‘suavely’ added, “because obviously, Woof.”

Viperion quickly pushed Woof away from Multimouse with a scowl on his face, “have a little respect mutt!”

*You tell him Snake!* Adrien internally cheered, *wait, am I really cheering on Luka?*

“Of course, I wish no harm on our little Lady.” Woof winked at Multimouse, who looked away, a little flustered, “I mean, after all, there is a shortage of perfect breasts in this world,” he told her, “and it would be a shame to damage yours.”

Nearly everyone gasped at the moive quote. Viperion hissed as he took a defensive position and Multimouse turned as she glared at Woof, briefly.

“Hold on Kid! You’re not suited up!” Plagg flew into Adrien’s face when he was about to bolt into the battlefield to strangle Woof himself.

Caw was the first to respond as he jumped and flipped in the air, landing beside the dog themed hero as he hit him over the head with his trumpet. “Stop flirting Woof! You really are a dog!” Then he turned towards the scandalized group of goddesses, “but first things first. To the death!”

Woof dramatically added, “no! To the pain!”

Multimouse groaned, “guys, this is not the time for movie quotes.”

“What?” Queen Bee asked.

“Are you serious?” Tatsu.

Renard laughed, “they sure are.” He turned towards the group and held out his flute like a weapon, “my name is Inigo Montoya.” He loudly proclaimed, “you killed my Father. Prepare to die!”

“Hey, that’s my line!” Woof objected before he smirked and addressed Renard. “Well, you seem a decent fellow, I’d hate to kill you.”

Adrien blinked and realized that was Nathaniel out there as the Fox.

“You seem like a decent fellow.” Renard grinned, “I’d hate to die.”

“Hey the more of us, the merrier.” Caw shrugged.
“True.” Tatsu smiled, “our odds have improved.”

“Get back witch!” Caw then held out his trumpet defensively towards his Dragon teammate and Tatsu looked insulted.

“I’m going to regret this…” Multimouse began and dramatically joined in the distraction, “I’m not a witch! I’m you’re wife! But after what you said I’m not sure that I want to be that anymore!”

Renard laughed and tried to make a funny nasal voice as he said, “Marwage is what bwings us Togethar Two Day.” He had everyone’s full attention. “Marwage what wessed awangement, what dweam witin a dweam…”

Multimouse waved at Queen Bee and pointed towards the perplexed goddesses during Renard’s imitation of the clergyman from the Princess Bride. Queen Bee nodded and slipped off to attack Hermes from behind. Multimouse pointed at Viperion and then at Apollo’s bow, he nodded and quickly slipped off to attack when they got the signal.

“Would that mean that it’s time to storm the castle?” A new wielder whispered to Multimouse as he appeared behind her. He was wearing the Turtle miraculous, he was larger than Oxymoron, which was pretty ironic despite the fact that the new Turtle was obviously a full-grown man. He leaned over, “the name’s Luth. Sorry I’m late, I had to get the baguettes out of the oven.”

Adrien rolled his eyes, did Master Fu really recruit Marinette’s father?

“I suppose you think you’re brave, don’t you?” Caw asked Renard as they continued to distract the godess akumas.

Renard grinned as he answered loudly and sincerely, “only compared to some.”

Multimouse looked happy to see Luth, as if her plan had come together. “Get ready Luth, we’ll need you to contain them once we’ve got them all together.” Luth nodded in understanding.

“Think it’ll work?” Multimouse asked Woof loudly as she returned to quoting the movie as she mimed putting things together and then hugging them.

Woof grinned and answered, “it would take a Miracle.”

“It’s a good thing that we’re Miraculous.” She replied and then yelled, “NOW!”

Viperion threw his lyre, breaking Apollo’s lyre and then Apollo disappeared as Queen Bee called out, “Venom!”

Viperion swiped at his wrist and called out “second chance.” Then he caught his lyre as it returned to him.

Queen Bee hit Hermes with her weapon, causing her to freeze and fall over, which let her helmet fall off. Queen Bee did a flying leap and landed on the helmet, causing it to break and for Hermes to disappear.

“No!” The goddesses called out together as Zeus recharged her lightening rod and the rest of them charged.

Caw called out, “Crow!” As he swung his trumpet at the charging goddesses and all but Athena had been thrown back by the sonic blast.
Tatsu met Athena with her sword and they parried a few strikes, but Tatsu was able to push her back with the others.

Renard played a note on his flute and then called out “Mirage!” Which caused multiple copies of all the miraculous heroes to surround the goddesses, confusing them.

The mirages started to stalk towards them and the goddesses stepped closer together to try to guard themselves against an attack.

Viperion had retrieved his lyre and tossed it just in time to knock Zeus’s lightening rod out of her hand. However, it was charged and went off when it landed, hitting Multimouse.

“No!” Viperion and in the distance Adrien called out at the same time as Multimouse fell to the ground, dropping her jump rope.

*Marrinette…. Move.* Adrien prayed, but Multimouse didn’t move.

Viperion looked close to tears as he swiped at his wrist and repeated his special phrase, “second chance!”

Everything rewound and Queen Bee had just called out “Venom!”

Viperion caught his lyre again as it returned to him after defeating Apollo.

“Woof!” Viperion called out to the Dog themed hero, feeling silly as he called his team mate’s name and he glanced at Zeus, who had just finished charging her lightening rod.

Woof smirked and threw his boomerang as quickly as possible. Thankfully it hit Zeus’s arm and she dropped the weapon, causing it to misfire and hit Hephaestus’s Hammer, causing it and its owner to disintegrate.

Meanwhile, Queen Bee hit Hermes with her weapon again, causing her to freeze and fall over, allowing her helmet to fall off. Queen Bee did a flying leap and landed on the helmet, causing it to break and for Hermes to disappear.

“No!” The goddesses called out together as Zeus lost her lightening rod and the rest of them charged.

Caw again called out, “Crow!” As he swung his trumpet at the charging goddesses and all but Athena had been thrown back by the sonic blast.

Tatsu met Athena with her sword and they parried a few strikes, but Tatsu was able to push her back with the others as this time she called out, “Flame!” Which ignited her sword. Then with one swoop, she cut through Athena’s sword. Causing Athena to disappear and for the pieces of her sword to fall on the ground.

While Tatsu dealt with Athena, Renard played a note on his flute and called out “Mirage!” Which caused multiple copies of all the miraculous heroes to surround the goddesses, confusing them.

Viperion, worried that they might still miss something, called out his power for the second time, “second chance.”

The mirages created by Renard started to stalk towards their enemy and the goddesses stepped closer together into one group as they tried to defend themselves.

Multimouse threw one end of her jump rope to Oxymoron and the Giant of a boy helped her stretch
it out as they ran around the group of Goddesses, tying them up. “Time to tie up some loose ends!”

Once they were all tied up, Queen Bee, Caw and Tatsu quickly raced over and reached into the group and began to disarm the so-called Goddesses, tossing aside their weapons as they struggled against the jump rope. Unfortunately, they left Hera for next to last and she used her dagger to cut though the jump rope.

Viperion shook his head and swiped at his wrist again, calling out “second chance.”

He was back when Tatsu had just disarmed Athena and Renard was creating his Mirage.

Once again Multimouse and Oxymoron tied up the goddesses with the jump rope, but this time Viperion raced forward as well, taking the last two weapons, Hera’s dagger and Ares’s Spear.

Everyone’s miraculous began to chime as Multimouse looked at Luth and nodded. Luth called out “Shelter,” which he used to contain the goddesses.

The protective green bubble appeared as Multimouse picked up the water gun, but then they heard a ‘crack’ and Luth fell to his knees and then to the ground, his transformation falling to expose Tom Dupain-Cheng as a woman wearing a very Romanesque toga and the numeral XIV grinned wickedly behind him.

She had picked up Poseidon’s trident apparently and had used it to knock out Luth as she stole his miraculous. “The name is Hestia, I represent the hope of the hearth, the home and Rome!”

She waved her hand that was holding the Turtle Miraculous, and you could just see a little lighter in it as well that was lit. She held it in front of her face and was about to blow the flame at the heroes, as if to turn it into some sort of flamethrower, but she didn’t get the chance.

“Oh!” She cried out as she was tackled by a red helmeted guy, who wore clothes that only Multimouse would recognize, as the designer that she was, as what Adrien Agreste was wearing earlier.

“That’s not happening!” Their savior announced as he took away the lighter, looked up at Multimouse and lifted up his visor, so only she could see his face. Then he tossed the lighter to Multimouse. “You should get that to Ladybug,” Adrien smiled at Marinette smugly and then shut the visor on the helmet, keeping his identity secret.

Oxymoron came over and picked up Hestia, holding her tight as she and the other goddesses growled, “I would have won! I’m Olympus!”

“Oh, Buzz off!” Queen Bee rolled her eyes at the dramatic woman.

Multimouse smiled and nodded appreciatively at the Red helmeted guy as he stood and handed the Turtle miraculous back to Tom Dupain-Cheng as his other hand rubbed his neck nervously. “You should return this too.”

“I will son, thank you.” Tom nodded gratefully.

As multiple Miraculous began to chime, Adrien turned towards Multimouse. “Chat Noir said that he’d send the message and he asked me to stay out of the way, it was easier to stop her than to tell you about her, so sorry for stepping on anyone’s toes.”

“You should be.” Queen Bee commented but then grinned slightly, “still, thanks.”
Multimouse nodded in agreement, “Chat Noir said he’d meet you after the battle if he didn’t get back in time at the usual place?” Adrien tried to sound like it was a question since it was a little early to tell her who he was.

Multimouse nodded having regained her faculties, “thank you for helping, but you shouldn’t have gotten involved, this was a heroes battle, you could have gotten hurt!”

“I’ve had enough of letting things happen.” Adrien replied, “besides, I couldn’t let you down.” He waved at the heroes, who nodded at him gratefully, even Viperion.

Maybe the snake recognized him? Nah!

“I actually have to go somewhere, thanks for all your work everyone! See ya!” Adrien turned and ran back to the alley, to pick up a finally full and irritated Plagg.

“That was risky Kid!” Plagg told him immediately.

“I saw Hestia attack, I couldn’t let them get hurt because I was afraid to act Plagg.” Adrien told his kwami as he returned the helmet and put Plagg in his pocket.

Plagg only chuckled, “I’m glad that you finally figured that out Adrien, I’m proud of you.”

Adrien smiled at him. “Thanks Plagg, ready to go meet my Princess?” Adrien playfully smirked. “She’s going to need another cuddle~.”

Plagg groaned as Adrien called out his transformation phrase as he was sucked into the ring, “ugh, not more mushy stuff!”

Chapter End Notes

Miraculous holders = Miraculous = Hero name = name of kwami = Power & item

Marinette = Mouse = Multimouse = Mullo = Shrink = can get super small & jump rope

Luka = Snake = Viperion = Sass = Second Chance = start and return to start & lyre

Nathaniel = Fox = Renard = Trixx = Mirage (makes any illusion) & flute
(used Google translate to get name fox = French fox)

Chloe = Bee = Queen Bee = Pollen = Venom (paralyzes) & top

Kagami = Dragon = Tatsu = Longg = Flame (totally guessing on the power here, makes sword ignite and can cut through anything or evaporate water) & Sword
(name is from Random search for the name of a Japanese Dragon)

Shorty = Rooster = Caw (cause that’s what roosters do, boastful for small size) = Orikko = Crow (totally guessing on the power here, sound wave blast) & trumpet

Giant Boy = Ox = Oxymoron (My kid comes up with great suggestions) = Stompp = Quake (totally guessing on the power here, makes the ground shake with a hit from weapon) & Shield
Mr. Flirty = Dog = Woof (cause he’s Mr. Flirty) = Barkk = Boomerang = Return (totally guessing on the power here, makes target go backwards in time by 10 seconds, like Viperion’s power (or Backwarder) but only affects 1 person and has a limit)

Tom Dupain = Turtle = Luth (another name for leatherback turtles, it’s because of his size) = Wayzz = Shield = Shell-ter

I used the Greek God names, because the akuma is a really bad Roman ‘historian’. Mild searching of the internet and wikipedia helped to create these characters which are to represent the Olympian Gods or Council since I don’t remember all of my Greecian history and frankly I had to cut out A LOT of the information on these characters because they’re all one akumatized person. Kind of like Sapotis, but instead of identical kids like gremlins, they have identical faces, all are female with different outfits, possible akumatized items etc. Obviously this akuma attack is influenced by The Percy Jackson & the Olympian series by Rick Riordan.

I Zeus = God of the Sky, can control the weather = Lightening shaped rod that he zaps people with and control the weather etc.

II Hera = Jealous Wife of Zeus = Depicted here as she’ll go after anyone that comes near Zeus, wears a crown = dagger

III Poseidon = God of the Sea = Trident

IV Hades = God of death (technically underworld) wears black armor, good fighter = Helmet that makes the wearer invisible (has been known to be used by Athena and Hermes) *

V Demeter = Goddess of the harvest = A dried sunflower, uses the seeds to grow things

VI Athena = Goddess of victorious war, wears armor = sword

VII Apollo = Music to heal/restore the others = lyre

VIII Artemis = Goddess of the Hunt = bow and arrow

IX Ares = Aggressive war god, wears armor = spear

X Aphrodite = Love, uses a love dust from a satchel to cause people to fall in love = satchel

XI Hephaestus = God of Fire = Uses a flaming Hammer

XII Hermes = Messenger to Gods, fast = winged cap

XIII Dionysus = God of wine = Water Gun, wets people and they get drunk *

XIV Hestia = Goddess of the Hearth and Home (guardian of hope) = Torch with a flame *

* Not always considered one of the 12 Olympians

Hopefully I'll have the next normal length chapter out in a week, it might be two weeks but we'll see.

I doubt I'll ever write such a complicated akuma battle if I can help it again!

Thanks so much for reading, comments and kudos are appreciated. 😊
The Cat's Visit

Chapter Summary

Chat Noir cuddles Mari quickly to spread his scent on her after the akuma attack staring the akuma Olympus. He leaves, returns as Adrien and takes her down to the Gabriel offices to meet Chloe and Kagami to pick out a dress for Marinette.

Chapter Notes

Warning: A longer chapter at over 3100 words!

Beware, there be fluff ahead! (maybe too much…)

Timeline : About 3:40pm on Thursday

Remembering that his bodyguard would be wondering where Adrien was, Chat Noir sent him a quick text through his baton that he was safe and would be meeting him back at the park, probably in ten or fifteen minutes. He wanted to make sure that the area was clear before he left his ‘hiding place’ after all. Adrien shrugged mentally, wondering if Marinette had had time to help collect all of the Miraculous that had been lent out before she transformed into Ladybug and used her Miraculous Cure, even though he was fairly certain that Master Fu had a hand in distributing them this time.

*She’ll be home soon after she transforms into Ladybug and calls upon her special power.* Adrien reminded himself.

Sure enough, just as he had thought about it, a wave of her Miraculous Ladybugs flew by him, headed to cleanse the battlefield.

*She’s quick.* Adrien thought wistfully, impressed by his Ladylove and hence, Marinette.

He sighed, *she’s just amazing that way.*

Adrien couldn’t help his lovesick grin as he pole-vaulted towards Marinette’s balcony, making sure that he wasn’t seen by any passerby.

*Can’t have anyone think there’s anything between Chat Noir and Marinette. After all, that would make it hard for Adrien to purr-sue her.* Adrien grinned at his internal pun as he landed beside her balcony skylight, which was closed.

*Alright Adrien, don’t give into your instincts… you can control yourself, you did it this morning.* Adrien finished his internal personal pep talk and exhaled as he barely had time to brace himself as the skylight whipped open and Marinette grabbed his bell and pulled him inside.

…
Chat Noir face was about to break since he was grinning so broadly.

“We can’t have you seen Kitty.” Marinette explained as she let go of his bell as he landed on her bed beside her.

“Why Purr-incess, patience!” He managed to get out before he took a breath and he felt himself get dizzy as his instincts took over and he turned and tackled Marinette. Marinette squealed happily.

“Five minutes!” Tikki squeaked out from somewhere in the room as Chat began to rub his cheeks and forehead into Marinette’s neck and head.

“S-Spoilsport!” Marinette laughed as they heard a beep, the start of Tikki’s timer apparently as their cuddle time began once again.

Adrien could have sworn he heard a muffled sweet little giggle whose voice added, “someone has to be.”

Marinette giggled herself as she trailed a hand up into Adrien’s hair from his back as he continued to spread his scent all over her neck and head, with one hand on her waist and one on her back. He was doing his best to keep his hands steady and respectful, but he couldn’t help the fact that he began to purr, which he was a bit too happy at the moment to care or get embarrassed about.

“You looked mew-velous in the battle my little mouse.” Chat Noir praised between purrs.

Marinette chuckled as she ran her fingers through his hair and behind his cat ears, causing his purr to get louder. Adrien knew he didn’t get much love in his personal life, but this was like being thrown into a pool after not drinking anything for days, and he loved it!

“Th-Thank you!” She gushed, “you were amazing too.”

He rubbed his nose up the side of her throat and was tempted to kiss her, not yet! He chastised himself as she squealed. That’s for Adrien, I mean, the other me, I hope...

But that was when he remembered something and he had to ask…“Purr-incess, I, uh, is there something you need to tell me about th-the Snake guy? H-He seemed to be, ah!”

Oh, she’s marking me now! WOW! Adrien blushed hopefully beneath his mask as he felt her rub her face into his neck, or is she embarrassed?

“Viperion likes me more than I like him.” Marinette admitted quietly, “ah, he’s ah, a great guy…but not one of my t-top two g-guys.” Then she snuggled up to him again.

Adrien hugged her close, pleased with her response as he sat them up and tried to steady himself as he breathed into her hair as she played with his cat ears.

Please say that they’re me!

Chat Noir’s purr reverberated around her room loudly.

“Y-you have a t-top two?” He managed as their mixed scents began to cool his ardor and he was able to control himself better, his cat side pleased that she was marked with his scent.

“Uh-huh.” Marinette managed as she nuzzled his neck a little more and Adrien almost died right there as she whispered, “I thought that was obvious.”

“R-really?” Adrien gasped as she hit a nerve and he almost melted right there, a puddle of purr made
just for her.

“Two minutes!” Tikki called out.

“Oh, we’d better do s-something about that.” Marinette smirked at him and Adrien gulped as she tackled him back into her pillows.

“M-Marinette!” He exclaimed, “I-I don’t w-want to t-take a-advantage of you!” He couldn’t help his eyes rolling back into his head as she did something to him just beneath his human ear with her nose as she leaned into him and then tickled him under his chin like he was a real cat with one of her hands.

*Oh, that feels SO good!*

“I think I’m the one taking advantage here Kitty.” Marinette said in her Ladybug voice and Adrien gulped as she brushed her nose across his forehead and then dove into the other side of his neck and now, they were both actively trying to spread their scents on each other.

“I hope that’s o-kay…” she whispered.

“One minute!”

“Oh, I-I’m not c-complaining!” He gasped, overwhelmed by all that was happening but very happy that it was, his loud purr was evidence of that. Or maybe the fact that his tail had tangled itself around her calf and he could feel it flicking against her leg in the most… unusual way. It was a move of possession, as he knew he was claiming her somehow, but she didn’t seem to mind at all.

Marinette chuckled and gave him a peck on his cheek, shocking Adrien, “Purr-ince! I, uh… I’ve got t-to te-

She cut him off by rolling him until he was almost on top of her, “want to make out Kitty?”

*What was that?!!*

Adrien’s eyes went wide, as his tail let go of her as he was shocked that she had even suggested it, his purr stopping immediately as he drew back and held himself above her, gasping as his brain began to fight his instincts and hormones, which were telling him, *yep, let’s do this!*

Which was why his gentle-cat side was thankful by the interruption of her kwami, “Time!*

Chat Noir was jolted by the reality of the situation and the kwami’s sweet giggles, as they both pulled back from each other. He couldn’t help but feel like they had gone a bit too far and he could bet that he was just as flushed as Marinette was.

Marinette was on one side of the bed, looking unapologetic as she merely smiled and blinked at him alluringly. Adrien, as Chat Noir, was on the other side and he couldn’t help slow blinking back at her. It took him a minute until he swallowed, “I uh, I’m sorry that went so far Purr-ince.” He apologized.

Marinette shrugged, “I’m not.” Then she looked at him suggestively and raised an eyebrow, “we should do it again.”

He gulped. *Wow! Really?*

Then he looked away from her as he unwillingly gathered his gentle-cat reserves and let one of his
gloved hands run to his neck as he nervously answered her. “I uh, I don’t mind sharing my scent to protect you.” He told her as he nervously suggested, “but uh, maybe we should cut it down to three minutes next time?”

He heard Tikki agree from somewhere else in the room as he added, “I mean, w-we can’t date.” He gulped as Marinette began to pout, “and I thought that you were g-going to give Adrien a c-chance?”

“Oh, I am.” She smirked at him and shrugged one shoulder, “he’s the other guy honestly, but while I’m giving him a chance, he’s still got to prove himself and well, I like my Kitty’s visits too.”

Chat Noir sheepishly grinned at her and then rubbed his neck again, “w-well, I uh, that’s enlightening. But, umm, I’ve gotta go. He glanced up at her skylight and then back at her. “Will you be okay Purr-incess?”

“I will, now. Thank you, Chat Noir.” He backed up a little as she leaned forward and gave him a light peck on the cheek, then leaned back and tilted her head at him as she asked, “will I see you tonight?”

Resisting the urge to tackle her right then and there, Chat Noir timidly nodded at her.

*Oh, WOW Princess, uh, I’ll see you sooner than you think Princess,* he glanced at her clock, *in about ten minutes actually.*

“Good, I t-told Adrien that um, I have to be home by 8:00pm. Is that too early?”

Chat Noir’s eyes went wide, “I, um, I have a few tiny scratches that need healing, but umm…”

*I’ve got to get her to like Adrien more than the cat…* but then he remembered that Adrien didn’t get to scent mark her. *Maybe we should compromise?*

“I can be back around 10:00pm?” He suggested as he waved his hands, “just for a quick healing.”

“Aww, no cuddles?” She pouted and gave him Kitty eyes.

*She actually pouted! Wow!*

He cleared his throat and then held up his hands in a placating manner, “when you need it, I can scent mark you, but only while you need it.” He tried to sound firm when he said it, but he knew that he’d share his scent with her whenever she asked. He may be a gentlemcat, but he was also a boy with cat tendencies and not stupid either, no matter how long it took him to figure out her other identity.

Then he had a thought, *it wouldn’t hurt to give her a suggestion though…*

“You know, if you need cuddles, I’m sure that you could ask Adrien.”

Marinette looked surprised for a moment, but then bit her lip… *please don’t do that, I’m trying to be good!* Adrien mentally whined.

Marinette winked at Chat Noir, “I’ll think about that.”

Chat Noir whined just a little bit as he bit his own lip, “well, uh, I ought to get going Princess. Important things to do and all.”

“I thought I was important.” She winked at him again and he coughed.

*Nope! Get your mind out of the gutter Adrien!* He mentally chastised himself as he cleared his throat,
realizing that he wouldn’t have time to get cleaned up before their semi-date.

“You are extremely important Princess.” He told her earnestly as he nodded towards her, as if bowing towards her before opening her hatch and letting himself out on the roof. Then he bent down and saluted her goodbye, “I’ll see you later Princess.”

She sighed and said, “see you later Kitty.”

He nodded once more and launched himself away from her roof, to find an alley to de-transform in near his bodyguard’s car.

…. 

After he de-transformed, he jogged towards his bodyguard’s car, Plagg flying beside him, vibrating as his mist like shadows that he was giving off drifted behind him.

Plagg was snickering, “cutting it close huh Casanova?”

Adrien exhaled, “I can’t help it when I’m near her, you know that Plagg!”

“I know, but now you’ve got to try to win her over as YOU, from YOU!” Plagg guffawed at the irony.

“I know, I know! I love her Plagg and I’m going to do whatever she needs me to.”

“Fine, just don’t forget to feed the kwami.” Plagg whined as he whisked into Adrien’s pocket to hide.

“Like I’d ever do that to you.” Adrien was almost to the car after all, “now be quiet Plagg. I need to prepare myself for this.”

“You mean calm down.” Plagg whispered and Adrien blushed, realizing that he hadn’t felt this strongly about Ladybug, but now, now he felt even more drawn to Marinette. The beautiful and talented girl who just so happened to BE Ladybug and he was overwhelmed in a way by, well, by everything about her.

“I get it, you’re a teenager in love, just, take it easy and remember to respect her kid, Tikki and I will be chaperoning all night, okay Kid?” Plagg gently and amazingly reminded him.

Adrien paused before he opened his own door as he whispered, “I know Plagg and I appreciate it, it’s just, I feel so much more for her now, because she’s more amazing as Marinette who happens to be, well, you know who. I hardly feel worthy of her.”

“Let her be the judge of that Kid, you just do your best and be you.” Plagg patted his chest reassuringly.

Adrien nodded as he opened the door to the car, “sorry I’m late.” He told his driver, “we can go straight to Marinette’s.”

His bodyguard nodded back and a few minutes later he was getting out of the car, not waiting for his bodyguard to open the door for him because he was so eager to see Marinette.

He turned and saw Marinette exiting the building.

“I’m in trouble, aren’t I Plagg?” Adrien whispered as he gulped and gazed at Marinette, who had changed into a lovely red skater dress with white accents and somehow quickly brushed her hair,
leaving it mostly down with one side tied back with an adorable white barrette on one side.

*WOW, is she trying to kill me?* He wondered.

Marinette smiled sweetly at him as she approached, as if she knew what she was doing to him, and for once, she didn’t fall, until she was right in front of him.

Adrien caught her of course, smiling as he punted, “ah, falling for me already?”

Marinette blushed a little as he helped her up, “maybe, you’ll just have to wait and see H-Handsome.”

Adrien blushed a little more as he realized that Marinette, his Marinette, the only girl that was good enough to be Ladybug, had just flirted with him!

Which was why he was struck dumb with the thought that seemed to plague him lately, *WOW!*

Marinette giggled and he was able to loosen up a little, remembering where he was as he reluctantly let go of one of her arms to open the car door for her. “After you my, uh, my Lady.”

He swallowed, afraid that she might figure him out from that statement, but she nodded and blinked at him as she finally asked after she got in, waiting for him to come out of his stupor, “shall we?”

Adrien grinned shakily, “y-yeah, let’s.” He scooted in beside her and closed the door behind him.

He swallowed and was surprised when she buckled herself into the middle seat, so they were literally sitting side by side.

*Heaven help me.* Adrien mentally pleaded as he wanted to flirt with her, but wasn’t quite sure how, as Adrien that is.

Marinette primly kept her hands on her lap and waited for a minute as Adrien sighed and gave her a half grin in a love-struck haze.

Eventually Marinette giggled, “Adrien, are you going to buckle yourself in?”

Alarmed, Adrien looked at his bodyguard who had a small knowing smirk on his face as Adrien blushed and buckled himself in, “yeah, um, let’s go.”

His guard’s face was unreadable besides the twinkle in his eye as for once he put up the privacy glass, leaving Adrien alone with Marinette.

Marinette chuckled, “you’re funny Adrien. I like that.”

“I-I like you too.” Adrien stumbled over his words and then covered his face with one hand, embarrassed that she hadn’t really said that exactly but he had, “but you know that.”

“Oh Adrien,” she practically sighed, “I know.” Then she winked at him, confusing him even more as she leaned over a tad bit and he was able to pick up just a hint of their combined scent that was wafting off of her, which caused him to relax for some reason. Then she whispered something that shocked him, “if you hadn’t said anything the other day, I would have thought that you only liked me because I look good in magical spandex.”

Adrien’s blush was bright as he could only think about how good she looked all of a sudden as Multimouse, and as Ladybug of course somewhere in the back of his mind. “Oh, you don’t look good…” he began, causing her to lean back with a small pout, “you look unbelievably stunning
Marinette!” He finally finished, causing her to smile at him softly. “Gorgeous even!”

She chuckled at his fumbled save.

“By the way,” Marinette told him as she shocked him as she patted his knee. Taking the opportunity, Adrien caught her hand and held it in his own as she went on, unbothered by his grasp as she whispered, “thank you for the save.”

“You’re welcome.” Adrien told her with a loving tone, but then he cleared his throat, realizing that he had to explain how he knew it was her. “I s-should apologize though, I followed you to keep an eye out for you and then I accidentally saw you and Luka transform into Multimouse and Viperion. I couldn’t help but watch the battle after that, I was worried about you.”

“It’s not safe to fight an akuma as a civilian.” She warned him with a small smirk.

Adrien shrugged and looked briefly away, “there was no time and Chat Noir wasn’t uh, there.” Then he looked at her and placed his other hand on their clasped hands, “I couldn’t let you get hurt Marinette, not again. You mean too much to me.”

She gazed at him softly and his heart throbbed in a breath taking way as he was lost in her gorgeous bluebell eyes. She swallowed before she told him, “y-you were really brave.”

He nodded as he whispered, “thanks, anything for you Marinette.”

The car came to a stop as Adrien leaned over towards her and she towards him, “Ma-Marinette?” Adrien stuttered.

“Yeah?” She answered as they drew closer to one another.

Adrien began to say as they entered each other’s personal space, just a few centimeter’s away from each other, “m-may I, uh…” as the door was then opened for them, with Chloe standing on the other side.

“Finally!” Chloe exclaimed, “you’re late.”

Both of the teens inside the vehicle rolled their eyes as they groaned in chorus, “Chlo-e!”

Chapter End Notes

Sorry about the long break there, I needed it since life has been busy and I was hit by the ‘I gotta write that’ stick to write another ongoing story, To Cry. (it's kind a of Lukanette or I guess Vipernette story? But it's more angsty I think than this story)
The Right Dress

Chapter Summary

After a steamy scent-marking session between Chat Noir and Marinette, Marinette is picked up by Adrien to go look at dresses for the Mayors Ball the next day. In the car Adrien was leaning in and asking a willing Marinette if he may give her a kiss, when Chloe opened the limo’s door and interrupted them.

In this chapter: Someone takes a few picts, Marinette and Adrien talk, Marinette tries on a couple of dresses etc.

Length, about 3000 words.

Timeline: Begins about 4:10pm on Thursday

Chloe clapped her hands, “come along you two, no time to dawdle! I have to leave in forty minutes and you NEED my input!” Then she flicked her hair over her shoulder as she added, “besides, making my expert wait is ridiculous, utterly ridiculous! She’s busy too you know!”

Adrien got out of the car, then with a light blush on his face he turned to help Marinette. He was used to Chloe’s bursts of enthusiasm when shopping already so he helped Marinette out of the vehicle as she stuttered, “e-expert? You really sh-shouldn’t have!”

“Oh, she’s happy to help.” Chloe waved it off and then walked up the stairs to the Gabriel Fashion headquarters. “Well come along. No, wait, Adrien, hold back a moment while I talk to Mari here.” She waved at Marinette with a flick of her hand.

“M-Mari?” Marinette stuttered as she began to walk up the steps to meet Chloe leaving a stunned Adrien at the base of the stairs, “since when have you been so nice to me?”

Chloe shrugged as she smirked, folding her arms as she happily rolled her eyes, “oh, you know, since you started dating Adrikins of course, oh and Mari…”

At that moment, Marinette slipped on the next to last top step and she fell backwards, right into Adrien’s waiting arms. Somehow, he stepped forward to catch her and he twisted to slow her momentum, making it look like he was dipping her as if they had been dancing. They both blushed a little as he slowly pulled her up out of the dip safely, holding her close.

“Are you okay Marinette?” Adrien asked sweetly as he brought her up half way.

Click.

They both turned towards the sound, to see a photographer with a wide grin on his face.

Click, click, Click.

The man lowered the camera and saluted Chloe, “Gratzie Ms. Bourgeois, these and the kiss in the car will be perfecto!” Then he blew Chloe a kiss.
Adrien’s and Marinette’s eyes grew as wide as dinner plates at his comment. Adrien still held Marinette’s arm while his other hand was at her waist to balance her.

Marinette really blushed and tucked herself into Adrien’s shoulder, embarrassed at the man’s implication as Adrien’s hand that was on her arm moved to hold her head against him protectively.

Click.

“Gratzie yourself, will you have enough time to get them in tomorrow’s paper?” Chloe responded haughtily.

“Of course, the afternoon edition as requested.” The man replied with a final picture before he waved. “Arrivederci!” Then he took off at a run.

Adrien composed himself first. “Chloe!” He scolded, “you set us up!”

“Well of course I did, we needed to sell the fact that you two are together now and have always been together. Now that there is evidence of that, it weakens Lila’s argument that you’ve been two timing her. If anything, it will look like she’s trying to steal you away from Mari.” Chloe shrugged, “it’s not like it’s a big deal.”

“But… but, I’ve never kissed Marinette!” Adrien objected as he waved the hand that had been protecting Marinette’s head, “he said that we kissed!”

“Tabloids.” Chloe waved her hand and scoffed, “they never get the real story, just what looks good.” Then she looked at the stunned Marinette who was coming out of Adrien’s embrace slowly yet surely, “is it a problem if they now have ‘evidence’ that you’ve kissed Marinette?”

Marinette pursed her lips for a moment as she seemed to seriously consider the idea, causing Adrien to have an internal melt down, but not enough to take his hand away from her waist.

*She’s so adorable!* His mind reminded him as he grinned at her, *no wait, pay attention to what she says!*

Marinette glanced over at Adrien and blushed slightly as she noticed the smile on his face before she turned back to Chloe and finally answered, “I’m okay with it if Adrien’s okay with it.”

Adrien blushed, “I’m more than okay with it. It’s just, I uh,” he looked at Chloe who huffed as he looked at the entrance, hinting that she should go in without them.

“Fine. I’ll meet you inside, just hurry up. We don’t have much time.” Chloe reminded them as she spun around and waltzed inside.

Adrien cleared his throat as he began to gently lead Marinette inside, “I’m sorry about that if it makes you uncomfortable.”

“No, it doesn’t.” Marinette replied, “I know there are hazards to ‘dating’ a celebrity.” She rolled her eyes as she made quotes with her fingers, “but what bothered me is that it seemed like something there bothered you.” She pointed out to him as they kept moving and she whispered, “why don’t you want people to think that we’ve kissed?”

Adrien was a little bashful as he admitted quietly, “that’s not the issue here, it’s ah,” he rubbed the back of his neck with his free hand, using the other to guide Marinette as they walked side by side into the building, the double doors opening automatically for them. “It’s just, I kind of wish that um, you’re going to think this is silly.” He bit his lip and she blushed.
“Adrien, I won’t think that it’s silly. I promise.” She told him honestly as she quietly replied. “It’s really important to me to know how you really feel.”

Adrien gave her a tender look before he led her down a hall, away from the prying eyes of receptionist and a few others in the lobby. A minute later, Adrien looked into her eyes as they stopped at the last door in the hall where he finally confessed in a hushed tone, “it’s not that I mind people thinking that we’ve kissed or that we’re going out, it’s just, ah, I wish it was true.”

Marinette looked a little surprised but then she smiled, “well, we may not be officially together, but we are going out tomorrow. So, I guess it’s kind of how you see things and besides, we have all night.” She winked at him and Adrien blushed as she leaned up and gave him a quick peck on the cheek. “That’s just a teaser.”

Adrien gulped and then whispered “wow,” as he couldn’t help that he felt warm all over.

“Now come on, you promised to find me a dress.” She teased him and he smiled at her.

Adrien then nodded, opening the door for her, “after you my, uh, Lady.” Adrien stuttered, not that Marinette seemed to notice.

“Maman?” Marinette asked as she instantly saw her mother sitting on a couch, holding a cup of tea next to a small table with Kagami sitting on the other side in another couch.

“So, you’ve met my expert.” Chloe called from the other side of the room by a rack of dresses.

Marinette laughed easily for the first time in what seemed like forever. “Of course, I have met my own Maman!”

Then she glanced at a slightly smiling Kagami and a beaming Chloe. “Still, thank you ladies for coming. I appreciate it.” Marinette told them earnestly, before turning to Adrien, “and thank you too Adrien.”

“You’re welcome.” Chloe replied for them all, with her no-nonsense voice with a wave of her hand, “now, Nathalie and I have come up with about eight choices here, come and look Marinette, we only have half an hour now and you should only try on your favorites.”

Marinette swallowed and grinned as she left Adrien’s side. Adrien sighed and sat down on the couch beside Sabine, where he turned towards her and Kagami. “Thank you both for coming, I’m sure that Marinette appreciates it.”

Marinette then squealed as she looked at all the dresses and took the first one that Chloe handed her. “Try this one on first. I insist.” Chloe told the giddy Marinette who took it and went to try it on.

Sabine laughed, “no thank you Adrien, I’ve always enjoyed shopping with my daughter, but now that she’s older she makes most of her clothes and we just don’t have the opportunity anymore.”

Kagami nodded, “and I wanted to be supportive of you both, I want to be good friends with both of you Adrien.” Then she glanced at Chloe, “Chloe’s interesting too.”

“I heard that and I’m amazing!” Chloe responded as she prepared the second dress.

Adrien smiled at his fencing friend, “thank you. I appreciate it.”
“So do I!” Marinette exclaimed as she came bouncing out from behind a dressing curtain, in a yellow and gold gown and as she slowly spun around and posed for them she giggled. “What do you think?”

Chloe eyed her and shrugged, “it looked better on the hanger, it would look good on me maybe, but I don’t think we’ll ever be able to wear each other’s favorite colors.”

“It’s very…nice.” Her mother began, “I mean it’s gorgeous, but yellow just doesn’t go with your skin tone sweetheart.”

“I think you make the dress look amazing.” Adrien flirted with Marinette who looked away and blushed.

“Ugh Adrien, no more comments from you. You get too sappy.” Chloe groaned.

“I agree.” Kagami commented, “I mean, about the dress, I think something red would fit her better.”

Sabine grinned and Marinette looked a little mortified. Chloe tutted, “no way. She can’t wear a red dress with Adrikins… for now.” She said in a meaningful tone, causing Marinette to blush as Chloe and Sabine looked at a confused Adrien with a knowing smirk. “That’s why we don’t have any here.”

Then Kagami remembered why, “ah, I remember now. No red. Next dress!”

Marinette nodded and took the next dress from Chloe.

“I don’t get it.” Adrien stated, “Marinette looks beautiful in red, the dress she wore here was red.”

“Yes, ah, but in a traditional sense, going to a very public gathering, well…” Kagami attempted to shrug as everyone tried to read the look on her face.

Sabine took pity on the girl, “Adrien, what we’re trying to say is that traditionally for a Chinese woman, wearing red is the color to wear for a bride.”

Adrien’s face went impossibly red at that, and then his face relaxed into a wide grin at the idea as he asked quietly, “really?”

Chloe tapped her phone, “and that’s a keeper. I’m sending that video to Marinette herself!”

Marinette called from behind the curtain, “thanks Chloe!”

“Chloe!” Adrien scolded her in disbelief.

Chloe walked over to Adrien, leaned over and whispered, “I just wanted to capture the moment when you thought about marrying the girl.” Adrien choked at that as Sabine and Kagami chuckled.

Marinette came out in a black dress with light green slashes coming from her shoulder diagonally to her hip.

“Hmm, not bad, but not great either.” Chloe mused.

“It does look nice, but it seems… too uptight for you.” Kagami added to the shock of the others. “I just mean that Marinette is a very bubbly and bright person. While it does look better than the first dress, this one is a bit too…”

“Mature possibly?” Sabine added thoughtfully, “it makes you look older dear but not like in a date
“Actually, while I like the colors,” Adrien admitted, “and you look gorgeous no matter what you wear, I think we should try another dress Marinette. That one just doesn’t seem to suit you.”

Marinette nodded and ran back to come back with a wide grin on her face. The dress she was wearing now was a dark blue at the base with crystal’s scattered like stars in the sky at the base and whole dress lightened up to a bluebell color at the bust.

As Marinette came out and showed off the blue gradient dress, everyone gasped.

“WOW!” Adrien gushed, “you look… you look amazing Marinette!”

Marinette grinned as her mother nodded, “you do look lovely my dear.”

“I insisted on this one because I knew it would look good on you.” Chloe proclaimed.

“It does go well with your eyes.” Kagami admitted.

“Th-Thank you.” Marinette sputtered, “I really like it, and I think this is the one,” everyone nodded in approval, “I just don’t remember this one from any of Gabriel’s collections though.”

Nathalie appeared from somewhere. “That is a prototype for one of the next line’s dresses. They have decided to go with another fabric as that fabric cannot be mass produced and the neckline will be getting a slight change too, but still, Mr. Agreste agreed that it would be prudent for you to possibly wear something entirely original.”

Marinette’s eyes went wide, and swallowed, “he… he did?”

“Mr. Agreste cares deeply about Adrien and his image. Since Adrien intends to date you, Mr. Agreste cares about what you wear too and was happy to give you this dress if you like it.”

Adrien looked shocked, knowing that his father normally destroyed or stored the prototypes, especially for the next line which was due to come out in only two weeks. Which is why Adrien asked what Marinette was thinking, “really?”

Nathalie nodded, “I also have authorization to help you accessorize it too if you so desire Ms. Dupain-Cheng.”

Marinette swallowed, “Marinette is fine Nathalie, and I… I appreciate it. I think I’ll take you up on that as well,” she looked over at Adrien who nodded at her encouragingly, “I mean, on Mr. Agreste’s offer that is.” Then she stood up straight, as if she almost reconsidered the idea. “I wouldn’t want to make Adrien look bad after all.”

Adrien was standing to protest in less than half a second, “oh Marinette, you could never do that!”

Nathalie smiled slightly, “then I will have a few choices sent up. Please excuse me.”

She was about to leave when Marinette called to her, “Nathalie?”

Nathalie turned around, “yes?”

“I, I just wanted to say thank you, for all of your hard work and to please tell Mr. Agreste thank you for me too, I really appreciate his generosity.”

Nathalie truly smiled and nodded, “I will let him know, and you’re welcome.” Then she left.
Marinette took a deep breath and squealed as she rushed to Adrien and gave him a hug, “I cannot believe I get to wear a new design by Gabriel Agreste!”

Everyone laughed and they enjoyed the rest of her fitting as a selection of shoes, jewelry and hair accessories arrived.

Thankfully, it was decided that Marinette’s favorite earrings matched the dress as it was decided that she’d wear a loose bun with crystals in her hair along with a crystal butterfly pin for the Gabriel logo. She would also get a modest diamond necklace to borrow and a matching diamond tennis bracelet as well. She didn’t know it, but Adrien would be insisting that she keep everything she would be wearing to the ball.

Chloe, Kagami and Sabine said their goodbyes at 4:45pm. Kagami having offered to give Sabine a ride back to the bakery to get back in time to help Tom close up.

Kagami had been pleased to meet Sabine and her warm attitude really impressed the girl, and she wanted to spend as much time as she could with the kind motherly woman.

Everyone had had fun after all.

Chloe was the last to leave, “I know we just got everything settled and you’re entirely broken hearted about my having to leave.” Chloe told them with a flip of her hair, “but I have to go dress those peasants that worship the Liar’s feet so that they don’t embarrass anyone.”

“Chloe.” Marinette lightly scolded, “just because they’ve been mean to us that doesn’t mean that we should be mean back.”

“Ugh, whatever. I’m a big believer in karma and that girl has it coming,” Chloe waved her hand, “we have yet to see about the rest of the peasants.”

Marinette bit her lip, “I-I don’t know what to think of Alya or… or Nino either.”

Adrien nodded, “yeah, it, it wasn’t so great when they weren’t there for me. I don’t know how you’ve held up so long Marinette.” He took her hand, “you’re really amazing.”

Chloe rolled her eyes, “ugh, well, I’m not big into the whole forgiving and forgetting, well, thing, but I know you’re into the whole forgiving business and even I’ve noticed that they just might be starting to see the light.”

“Oh?” Adrien asked, “they have? Since when?”

“I don’t know. They were off today, not that I care, but I think some of their brain cells are trying to resuscitate themselves somehow.”

Adrien chuckled as Marinette grinned at that.

“No really, I wouldn’t be surprised if those two are acting strange tomorrow.”

“Everyone is going to be acting strange tomorrow.” Marinette admitted with a slight frown. “They must think so little of both of us to believe Lila.”

“I know, but now I’ll be there for you, for real this time.” Adrien reassured her, squeezing her hand as he leaned closer to her with a wry grin. “Their opinions don’t really matter, especially when we
know it’s based on lies and in just over twenty-four hours, we’ll be going to the ball together where the truth will come out and Lila won’t know what hit her.”

“Here here.” Chloe clapped, “now, that’s enough sweetness for me, besides, I’ve got to get going.” Chloe waved at them, “behave yourselves!”

Then she thought for a moment, “no wait, I can’t go yet, what kind of friend am I?” She scoffed at herself before she pulled Adrien to the side and loudly told him, “now when you go to kiss her, you tilt your head, press your lips together and then MOVE them together for like five seconds at least! No wussy kisses Adrikins!”

Shocked, Adrien whisper shrieked, “Chloe!”

“I heard you in the hallway earlier,” she shrugged, “just trying to help,” then she laughed and waved again, “byeee!!’

Adrien blushed furiously as he turned to take a look at Marinette, whose blush just barely beat hid own. “W-Well, shall we go to my house? We can eat and play some video games? M-maybe watch a movie?”

Marinette chuckled, “I’d like that Adrien.”
Adrien sighed to himself as Marinette sat by his side again as they were being transported to the Agreste mansion by his bodyguard in his limo.

At first, he had reached for her hand when they sat down in the car, but then he paused momentarily, long enough for her to notice and take his hand with her own, causing them both to blush. Now after buckling in, which wasn’t easy because of the hand holding, they were just enjoying the ride. It was as if they were watching Paris from the top of the Eiffel tower as they sometimes did together, not that she knew that.

It gave Adrien some time to think about how he wanted to proceed, but his thoughts were of the beautiful girl beside him for the most part.

After a few minutes, Adrien managed to break the silence, “so, are you looking forward to getting ready for the ball with Chloe and Kagami?"

Marinette giggled, “you know, if you had asked me that a week ago, I would have wondered when an akuma managed to possess you and give you such a crazy idea.”

Adrien rubbed the back of his neck nervously, “well yeah, a lot has happened lately, huh?”

“Yes.” Marinette agreed, “I’m supposed to go to Chloe’s directly after school tomorrow, well, but the problem is that I can’t go with her…” Marinette waved her hands around as she tended to do when she was overwhelmed a bit, “because if we did that then it would show everyone that she is on our side and we can’t have that yet, so I have to figure out another way to get over there.” Marinette looked thoughtful as she tapped her chin adorably with one finger, until Adrien squeezed her other hand to get her attention.

“Hey, why don’t I just give you a ride tomorrow after school, my father shouldn’t be back yet so I’m sure that it wouldn’t be a problem and… and I’d really like to spend some time with you.” Adrien told her as he grinned and thought of something else, “hey, I’m sure that I could just have my stylist and my stuff sent over to Chloe’s too and we could just make an afternoon of it!”

“You mean, like we should all get ready together?” Marinette almost looked shocked.

Adrien grinned, “well yeah, there’s no rule that guys and girls can’t get ready together. We’ll be getting dressed separately after all. I mean, it’s not like we’re getting ready for our wedding or
something.” His eyes grew half a size and an almost dreamy look appeared on his face before he blinked, and blushed at having thought about that possibility as he rubbed the back of his neck again as he began to stammer, “I mean, ah, th-that I-I, umm…”

Marinette blushed bashfully too, but she decided to tease him anyway as her Ladybug side bled through again, giving Adrien a bit of whiplash as she said brazenly, “why aren’t you the planner? Should I warn Maman to start printing up announcements? I mean, I have always wanted a spring wedding after all.”

“Next year or the year after?” Adrien quickly answered cheekily with a Chat Noir worthy smirk, “although I think it’ll take me a little time to convince Father…”

“Adrien!” Marinette squealed and batted at his arm, “we are not having this conversation! I was kidding!”

“Hey, I didn’t start it!” He chuckled as he added with a whisper under her laughter, “and I’d never say that I’m kidding about that with you Princess.”

She looked surprised for a moment, “wait, w-what did you say?”

“N-nothing…” Adrien blushed as he stuttered and waved his hands, “b-besides I didn’t b-bring that up, the w-whole us getting married bit, yeah.”

“Yes, you did. First with the red dress and then you mentioned ‘our’ wedding.” Marinette tallied up his slips of the tongue, “as well as the ‘whole us getting married’ part.” She chuckled as they both blushed about it.

“Well now, you can’t really blame me about the first one. I mean, I really didn’t know about the red dress thing and now you’re the one calling it OUR marriage.” He told her smugly.

Marinette snickered sweetly, “you’re still the one dwelling on it.”

“Hmm,” Adrien was now a little thoughtful, “and yet neither of us are denying the possibility…” his voice drifted off as Marinette blushed bright red and covered her face with her hands.

“Hey now.” Adrien chided as he gently pulled her hands away from her face, “don’t hide your beauty from me Marinette, I’ll wither away and die without the radiance of your glory! Whoa is me! What an awful way to go! Denied the radiance of your smile!” He held one hand to his forehead and pretended to faint, which caused Marinette to laugh and snort.

Adrien guffawed, “I didn’t even know that a girl could snort! That was adorable!”

“I did not snort!” Marinette demanded, before bashfully adding, “I uh, I cutely giggled, yeah.”

Adrien threw his arm across her shoulders and hugged her from the side after another laugh, “whatever you say Marinette, whatever you say.”

…

They arrived at the mansion shortly after their hug and Adrien asked Marinette if she’d like to have dinner at the dining room table or in his room where they could play Ultimate Mega Strike IV while they waited.

Marinette chose the latter, much to Adrien’s pleasure, and after ordering a literal feast from Adrien’s highly proficient and rarely seen butler to deliver to his even more invisible chef, they made their
way to Adrien’s room. Adrien was pumped, he didn’t get many visitors and it was awesome that Marinette was here at all.

Adrien managed to beat Marinette twice at UMS, out of nine games that is, when their food was brought in and Adrien had to put the game away as the butler set up tv trays. Then at Adrien’s request, his butler left the trolley behind after setting up their meals and cutlery. Which left the bread and several desserts on the trolley so that they could serve themselves. Marinette hadn’t known what to order and Adrien didn’t know either, so he had requested that the chef make them one of his specialties, which turned out to be something delicious that Adrien really couldn’t remember the name of as their main course.

“What would you like to watch while we eat Marinette?” Adrien asked her randomly after they had everything set up with them sitting side by side in front of his couch, “we have enough time to watch a movie.”

“Actually, I don’t have to get home until 9:30pm, so we have a bit more time than that.” Marinette told him a little shyly with a shrug, “that’s what my Maman said anyway.”

“I knew I liked her.” Adrien grinned at her as he elbowed her just a tad and gave her a wink. “Now I have the pleasure of your company for even longer than I thought.”

“Stop.” Marinette almost whined with a light blush before giving him a light shove in retaliation.

“Flirting with you? Never.” Adrien winked at her again as he cued up a recently released movie. Marinette blushed again before settling down and taking a long drink from her glass.

“I’m sorry, I didn’t know that you were so thirsty.~” Adrien almost sang and Marinette sputtered in response, almost spitting her drink out in the process.

“Adrien! You are a menace!” She chastised, which only caused him to laugh.

Marinette soon joined him and they chortled together for about a minute before they settled down and finally began to eat their dinner before it grew cold.

Half way through the meal, they decided to talk briefly how tomorrow would go. Chloe had mentioned that those pictures would be coming out in the afternoon edition earlier, claiming that they would prove they had been dating secretly all this time or at least that Adrien was interested in her instead of Lila.

“How should we explain that?” Adrien asked Marinette. He cleared his throat softly, “I mean, it will look like we’ve been dating, but we’ve just uh, started?” He wasn’t sure what to call their relationship right now after all.

Marinette looked thoughtful as she twiddled her fingers, “well, I guess we would have to say how long we’ve been dating. Which could be a problem,” she sighed and added shyly, “the girls totally won’t believe it if it comes from me because I would have told someone about it, if it was for months or… or even weeks.”

“Hmm, I can see what you mean. I’m the one that people wouldn’t really know about since I try to hide how I feel about, well, the prettiest girl at school.” He nudged her playfully.

“Oh, you don’t mean that.” Marinette looked down at her plate sadly.
He placed his hand on her shoulder and earnestly told her, “Marinette, I mean it. You’re the most beautiful girl at school.”

She shook her head, “I’m not that pretty, I know I’m a little more than average, but it’s not like I’m not a model or anything…”

“Marinette.” Adrien cut her off, “I know what I’m talking about. You are gorgeous both inside and out. The inside is the most important part, but I don’t know how you don’t know this, but if you wanted to be, you could literally BE a model like me, but honestly, I don’t recommend it. It’s not as fun as it sounds.” He looked a little sad himself before clearing his throat and focused on her, “but I don’t want to hear you not believing how beautiful you are. I’ll tell you every day if I have to.” He squeezed her shoulder and began to smirk a little as he asked, “should I just call you Beautiful? Like as a nickname?”

Marinette couldn’t help but sniff as she rolled her eyes, “only if I can call you Handsome.” She teased before adding, “but only, if you ah, insist.”

Adrien nodded eagerly, “I can totally agree to that and I do insist.”

“T-Thank you.” Marinette muttered.

“Not a problem, B-Beautiful.” Adrien swallowed and let go of her shoulder as he chanced reaching out and tucking a stray hair behind her ear as he glanced at her miraculous, before he returned to gazing into her eyes.

_She is so Beautiful._ Adrien thought wistfully, _a true Princess._

Marinette blushed and looked away as she clarified as she twiddled her fingers, “you do know that those are nicknames that two people who are going out, like as boyfriend and girlfriend would call each other? Right A-Adrien?”

Adrien’s face lit up a little as he bashfully admitted, “I know, and honestly, I-I thought that we were going out.”

“Well, one date doesn’t make a couple.” Marinette bit her lip as she admitted. “We haven’t really had that talk, unless this is, uh, it.”

Adrien chuckled, “well, we’re talking now and we do have our second date tomorrow night.”

Marinette looked surprised before she looked away bashfully, “you… you think that tonight is a d-date? I didn’t even get dressed up really…”

Adrien nodded as he looked nervous too, _did I read things wrong again?_ Adrien decided to clear his throat and tell her honestly, “well, I thought that tonight could be a kind of low-key kind of date for us. I thought it might be more relaxing than going out somewhere fancy. Is, is that alright?”

Marinette finally looked up at him, a touch of adoration in her eyes, “you were thinking about me?”

Adrien nodded, “of course. Honestly, at first I thought that we should go to a really nice restaurant, but Nathalie gave us the option to stay at the mansion and stay in while Father is away and she’d be around to check in on us. After thinking about it, I thought it might be more relaxing for both of us and I figured, it would be nice to hang out and be able to talk without any publicity issues, you know?”
“Well, that explains the open door…” Marinette noted as she looked behind them at his open bedroom door briefly.

“Yeah, so is it okay if we tell everyone that we’re dating now?” Adrien asked hopefully.

Marinette made him nervous as she seemed to think about it, “well, I do like the sound of that, but…”

“But?”

“I still think that our classmates will wonder why the sudden change.” She waved her hands nervously, “not that I’m trying to not be your girlfriend or date you, I really like the idea honestly, it’s just, well, fast.”

Adrien grinned excitedly, “you like the idea too?”

“Well, yeah.” Marinette admitted uncertainly, “but…but, why? What do we tell them?”

Adrien tried to think about it. “Huh, well, I guess since I would have asked you out pretty soon anyway, maybe I should say something to that effect? I mean, I’ll admit that I’ve been pretty fond of you for a while now and that’s the truth.” Adrien shrugged as they both blushed again. “Not that I care what people think, it’s just, we’re trying to control the media and the news about everything and it gets pretty confusing sometimes and maybe we should really discuss some things first?”

“Yeah, especially since that tabloid of Chloe’s will be saying that we’ve been secretly dating for months, but our classmates and Nino and Al…” Marinette looked sad as she bit her lip as her eyes grew wet.

“Hey now, no tears, we’re going to clear everything up.” Adrien carefully reached out and cupped her cheek momentarily, brushing a single tear away with his thumb. “I mean it Marinette. We’re going to ought Lila and we’ll be there for each other tomorrow. If anyone asks if we’re going out, I can honestly say that I’ve been wanting to be more than friends with you for a while now, ever since I met you, I just didn’t know it yet.”

Which is totally the truth. Besides the fact that I’ve been attracted to Marinette despite claiming to be ‘in love with’ Ladybug ever since we met, she’s the same girl after all and now, knowing all of her, ah, I am SO in love! More than ever! How can I tell her that?

“Really?” Marinette asked hesitantly.

“Really. I can also say that Father finally gave me the approval to start dating too, you specifically I mean.” Adrien grinned back at her and Marinette smiled back at him fondly with a slight blush on her cheeks. Then Adrien thought back, “ah, yeah, and if it helps, I can even say that I’ve been trying to impress you but I wasn’t very good at it. I mean uh, remember when I came over to help you translate with your Uncle? I think that was one of my early attempts…”

Marinette nodded and she blushed as she apparently remembered how he had bowed to her when she opened the door for him and she almost spazzed out completely when she realized that it was Adrien at her door.

“Well, I bowed like that not only because I was there to help you but to try to impress you as well.” Adrien told her honestly, “which if you think about it, it makes sense. I mean, I found a way to get out of my usual Chinese lesson and rescheduled my piano practice so I could help you. I’ve never managed to do that to hang out with Nino before that after all, but I found a way to move things around for you.”
Marinette blushed, “I never knew that you did that.”

Adrien nodded at her, “well at the time, I’ll admit that I thought of you as at best a really good friend because I didn’t think we were allowed to be, well, more.” He admitted shyly, “it’s been awhile since then, so maybe time has helped to soften up Father, but still…”

Adrien reached out and he took her hand, “I’m glad we’re here, and I know it’s kind of a formality now, but I do want you to know that even without, well, ‘her,’ I’d be wanting to ask you this.” Adrien swallowed as he turned to face her, “Marinette Dupain-Cheng, will…will you do me the honor of being my girlfriend? Please?”

Marinette couldn’t speak.

“Marinette?” Adrien waved his hand in front of her face. “Marinette?~” He sang before he chuckled and went on as he held one hand over his heart briefly, “I meant it you know. Will you be my girlfriend, please?”

Still no response besides a single blink.

Adrien thought for a moment before he smirked, “if you don’t answer me, I’m going to take that as a yes and then just lean over there and just kiss you silly.”

Marinette blushed as red as her Ladybug suit and blinked with a wild grin on her face, “s-silly? R-Really?”

“Is that a yes Beautiful?” Adrien managed to purr as he waggled his eyebrows at her, “will you be my girl ‘without a space’ friend, please?”

Marinette giggled, “only if you’ll be my boy ‘without a space’ friend Mr. Hot Stuff.”

Adrien snorted and laughed his authentic straight from his belly laugh at that, “you’re going to have to keep that one for when we’re not in public, I’ll never be able to keep a straight face with that nickname.” Then he winked at her, “but coming from you I like it.”

…

After eating their dinner and some playful banter, Adrien was up and moving their tv trays out of the way once they were finished. He insisted on doing it himself because he was the host and, “remember that you are my girlfriend now. I want to do things like this for you.”

Marinette blushed as she covered her mouth with her hands for a moment and internally squealed.

“Besides, we wouldn’t want our view to be blocked by our leftovers.” Adrien told her, as he was thinking, maybe without the trays in the way we can sit beside each other and cuddle during the movie too!

“Yeah,” Marinette sighed wistfully, “we wouldn’t want the trays to get in the way of some cuddles Handsome.”

“C-cuddles?” Adrien sputtered with a wry grin. How did she read my mind?

They both blushed as Adrien took a remote and clicked a button that blackened out his windows a bit, to make a more theater like experience when he was watching tv, and then he looked over at his bedroom door, just to make sure that it was still propped open.
Marinette saw where he was looking and teased, “don’t worry, I think you can trust me with you. It’s not like I’m planning on anything um, inappropriate.”

“N-neither am I.” Adrien gulped, besides, it’s not the planning that I’m worried about, you still smell really good, even if it’s muted right now and you’ve never really implied that we were going to uh, cuddle before. I’m not sure if I can control myself... but I’ll try, for you Princess.

“Hey, what’s with the worried look?” Marinette asked him as she patted the spot on the couch next to her. “Is this about, uh, what you mentioned the other day?”

She gave him a worried and truly concerned look, like she was worried about invading his personal space and Adrien really began to wonder if she’d pieced his identity together from what happened to him and to Chat Noir.

I really hoped that wouldn’t come up. I just wanted to focus on you.

Adrien sat down next to her and took her hand, “actually, I don’t want to talk about Lila or any of that.” Adrien swallowed before letting go of her hand and scooting back into the sofa beside her and hesitantly put one arm behind her shoulders on the couch. “I-just want us to enjoy tonight and focus on you.”

Marinette nodded in agreement, giving him a small smile as Adrien glanced at his arm and then back to her as he asked, “is this okay?”

Marinette smiled slyly and shook her head. Confused, Adrien was about to pull his arm back, but she leaned into his shoulder, grabbing his hand connected to his arm that was behind her and pulled it around her, pulling herself closer to him. Adrien grinned wistfully as she echoed, “is this okay?”

Adrien surprised himself with how quickly he nodded and how comfortable he felt with her beside him, not that it was a surprise. What was a surprise was when she lightly bopped him on the nose with one finger, “I thought it’d be nice to cuddle, you know?”

Adrien quickly agreed and hugged her to his side as he started the movie.

…

Somehow, they started watching the anime Ouran High School after an Iron man movie. What was even more amazing, was that after the second episode, Adrien was lying on the couch with his head on Marinette’s lap in utter bliss as she ran her fingers through his hair.

Adrien blamed the rumbling sound that they sometimes heard on a shoddy connection as he tried to hide his very quiet purr from Marinette, who only seemed to grin and accept it as she was distracted by playing with his soft locks and the show itself.

Unfortunately, their time together ran out and as the fourth episode finished, Nathalie was at the door, clearing her throat. “Adrien, it’s 9:15pm.”

Adrien groaned as he sat up, missing Marinette, her warm cuddles and sweet pets already.

“Yes Nathalie, we’ll be down in a minute.” Adrien replied. “Thank you for the reminder.”

Not really though. He thought wryly, can’t I just keep her?

Nathalie nodded her head and left.
Adrien stood up and held out his hand to Marinette to help her stand up. “I kind of wish you didn’t have to go home.” He admitted with a light blush, “it’s so much nicer when you’re around and… and I really had fun tonight.”

Marinette smiled at him, “thank you, I had fun too.”

“Lots of fun.” Adrien told her and he took her hands, “well, since Nathalie will be riding with us in the car, I was wondering…” he bit his lip as he gave her a somewhat coy look.

“Yes.” She encouraged him, “you were wondering…”

“I was wondering if I could kiss you goodnight here?” He quickly rushed out.

She looked confused as she looked up at him, “huh?”

Adrien swallowed and tried again, “I was wondering if I could kiss you goodnight here? With your permission I mean.”

Marinette blushed and nodded.

Blushing like his life depended on it, Adrien slowly leaned in and at the last second as she closed her eyes, he turned his head just so, missing her lips as he gave her a sweet almost lingering peck on the cheek.

Marinette blushed and giggled as he stepped back, “I thought that you were asking me, uh, for us to kiss here?” Marinette pointed to her lips and then to his.

“I’d like that, but I thought about it and…” Adrien bit his lip and then nodded to himself, “I thought that I’d like to prove to you that I’m here for you first Marinette. I don’t want to rush things, there is no need to since uh, well, we’re together now and well, you’re too important to me to rush things.” He took her hand and began to lead her out of his room, “so maybe if it’s okay, we can think about doing that for real on umm, on a special occasion?”

Marinette gave him a meaningful look as she smiled and nodded with a grateful blush before she shocked him as she walked past him and out the door as she teased him, “I can do that, just don’t make me wait too long Handsome.”

…

It was 9:24pm, and Adrien was helping Marinette out of the limo. Nathalie typing away on her tablet inside the limo as their chaperone, not that she was paying much attention.

Adrien walked her up to her door and Marinette turned to him, “I had a good time Adrien. I-I know that this has been a bit unusual but, I’m happy that you want to give us try.”

Adrien put one hand on her elbow and drew her closer to him as he told her softly, “Marinette, I don’t want to just give us a try.” He gave her a meaningful look full of adoration, “you are the most beautiful and wonderful girl that I’ve ever met and I want you to know that I’m happy to call you my girlfriend. Never doubt that. Please remember that I would have asked you out eventually if none of this ever happened. I-I just had to grow up a bit and discover that my Father would let me.” He chuckled and she giggled back at him a little bit.

“Well then, boyfriend.” Marinette teased him as he blushed and grinned at his new title, “thank you for a fun evening.” She stood up on her tippy toes and gave him a quick peck on the cheek.
Adrien blushed as she opened her door and they waved goodbye to each other as Adrien stepped backwards and almost tripped, but caught himself, in an almost Marinette like fashion. Then he waved to her again as he carefully made it back to the limo. Marinette giggled and waved once more before closing her door behind her.

Chapter End Notes

I took a bit more time with this chapter because I had trouble finding a good stopping point and I was struggling with Marinette's nicknames for Adrien. (and other stuff, but I'll explain that later). Hot Stuff came from the show, but I wasn't sure about the Handsome, but after thinking about it, Adrien wouldn't mind it coming from her so I just went with it and posted it since I didn't want to leave my readers waiting unnecessarily.

I also wanted to put it out there that there may be some delay in my next few postings, there is a lot going on in my personal life, but I'll do my best to post every 2 weeks or so, but I can't make any promises. I tend to bounce from one story to another right now. I have less time to write and I'm going to let myself work on what story is calling me at the moment. This was the last chapter I had mostly written already and it just needed editing for the Liar Breaks the Balance. I prefer to post weekly for this story, I just may not have the time or the right frame of mind to write on specific stories and I'm not sure which story will win my attention I guess, since a family member is dying and we're having to make arrangements. It's not unexpected, just a lot to deal with if that makes sense, to process and get done, and I'm having to figure it out a lot of the arrangements myself. So it may be a little while until I'm back to weekly postings.

Still, with that aside, some good news...

As of this chapter this story has more than 1500 kudos ☺, putting it solidly into the top 2% of the Miraculous Ladybug Fan fictions on this site as of this posting.

I appreciate all the kudos and great comments that I've received for this story, thank you so much for all of your support!
Good Night

Chapter Summary

Summary: Chat Noir visit’s his Princess and hears some disappointing news.
Timeline: Chapter begins at 10:00pm. Thursday night. There is now less than 24 hours until the Mayor’s ball!

Chapter Notes

What, a new chapter? Can you believe that? 😎 😊

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Adrien of course was back at Marinette’s house at 10:00pm on the dot as Chat Noir. Thankfully, she was waiting for him up on her balcony, downwind from him so her scent would still be somewhat muted and she wouldn’t drive the cat hero crazy, in theory.

It probably didn’t help that when he arrived, he launched himself onto her balcony, tackling her immediately. They landed on her lawn chair and then he proceeded to scent-mark her without delay.


“Chat! Ha ha ha!” Marinette gasped as she giggled and he purred like a lawnmower as he rubbed his face into her hair and neck.

Their almost cuddle slash scent marking fest was over almost as soon as it began as Tikki, ever the party pooper, cleared her throat. “Ahem!”

Purr… Purr… nuzzle… nuzzle went the cat themed hero. 😎

“Hee, hee, hee!” Giggled the pajama clad and freshly showered girl.

“AHEM!” Tikki loudly interrupted from the little table on the balcony, loudly enough to be heard but not so loud as to disturb the neighbors (or Marinette’s parents), “will you two CUT IT OUT!” 😵

Ignored once again, Tikki decided to let out a whistle that would have made a soccer referee jealous before pulling out her final threat, aka the reminder to Marinette that she now had a boyfriend who as far as she knew, was not a cat themed hero.

Chat Noir and Marinette finally reacted though, thankfully, from the ear-splitting whistle given by Tikki as they blushed and finally pulled apart.

“Hello Purr-incess.” Adrien purr-ed between pants, a little winded from both his run over and from their brief almost wrestle slash scent marking fest, “any news?”

Marinette beamed as she blushed further, “yes Kitty, Adrien and I have decided to start dating.” 😊
“Well con-cat-ulations, it couldn’t have happened to two more wonderful people.” Chat Noir grinned ☺️ that wide and self-satisfied grin of his as if he was praising himself, which he pondered whether or not that he was, not that she knows that.

“Thank you.” Marinette told him softly, “ah, I know you can’t tell because of the wind, but uh, I think my sc- I mean my perfume is getting a little stronger.” She looked hesitant as she told him the news. Then she gave the almost dark pink Tikki sitting nearby a bit of a glare before adding, “the person that gave it to me warned that this could happen.”

Chat Noir tilted his head, “well, that’s not very good. Was this,” he waved from himself back to her, “was this session enough to cover it up?”

Tikki answered him, “it will be enough for now. She’ll need another dose in the morning if at all possible.”

Marinette looked a little embarrassed as she looked away. “I, I just don’t know if it’s okay…”

He shook himself out of it, he wasn’t Adrien at the moment after all. “Why Purr-incess! You make it sound like we were doing something unnatural! I’m a cat, and it is quite natural for me to scent mark uh, someone that I like, I mean as a friend. Yeah. Anyhow, I come by it honestly.” He shrugged at his weak reasoning.

“I-I know Adrien and I were kind of pushed together over this Lila business…”

*Oh, please don’t say that you regret us being together Princess!* Chat Noir’s face wilted at the thought.

“It’s not that!” Marinette went on as if she could read his mind, “I just, well, I want to respect Adrien’s and my relationship now, I, well, I know we just got carried away just now, but still, while I know I’m still figuring things out between Adrien and I, well…” she rambled.

He hadn’t thought about it earlier as he wondered, *maybe I should have told my girlfriend that it was okay to cuddle random alley cats that show up on her balcony? Is her scent really doing so much worse? She’s got it because she’s unconsciously calling other guys to be her partner, right? Shouldn’t that be going away? Unless… unless she’s not sure about me yet.*

He nodded to himself as he came to a conclusion. *I still have to be there for her and prove that I can be trusted. Fix our civilian relationship without a doubt.*

So, Chat Noir cleared his throat and interrupted her, “if it will make you feel better Marinette, I will go to Adrien tonight, explain the situation and I’ll ask him to text you how he feels about the scent marking. It’s not like we’re making out, kissing or letting our hands roam around or whatever.” *Which I would totally be down for, when the time is right, but it would be better as Adrien for so many reasons, lack of gloves for one.* ☺️

Chat Noir cleared his throat, “the scent marking is really just to protect you from all these unwanted suitors isn’t it?”

Marinette shrugged, “well, yeah, but I don’t know how to explain it to him, to Adrien that is.” She grinned and then waved from him to her and then waved her hand away with a smile, “about the scent marking that is. I don’t want Adrien to think I’m cheating on him with you after all, right?”

Chat Noir smirked as he took her hands and told her earnestly, “I purr-omise that I’ll handle it Marinette. I know Adrien, he’ll be fine with me helping you out like this.”
Of course, I would, I’m him!

Or maybe since this seems to bother her so much, we could have her wear Camembert as a deterrent instead? No, that might be enough to work on me too, although I highly doubt that.

Marinette looked a little shy and gave a secretive grin as she nodded and held a handkerchief out to him. “Well, alright, but until we know for sure, Tikki thinks that if you just wipe your neck and forehead really well, I could it this to transfer your scent next time? Please? For the morning I mean,” she rolled her eyes slightly as she emphasized, “I mean, I don’t want to do anything that Adrien doesn’t know about after all.”

Adrien grinned, she’s such a wonderful girlfriend.

“Don’t worry Marinette. I’m not trying to take advantage of you and I’ll talk to Adrien about it, I’ll have him text you later, I purr-omise!”

“I was just worried about what Adrien might think, you know? I didn’t say that you were, umm, taking advantage, it’s just that I’m hoping that it won’t be necessary for much longer? The scent marking directly that is,” Marinette clarified, “Tikki thinks that I’ll be much better by this time tomorrow night.”

Chat Noir nodded, realizing that she was talking about how everything was coming together and Lila will have been outed, as Adrien he’ll have been there for her and their true friends will have been there to support her. The balance between them should be restored.

Then… then I can think about telling her who I am, and… and I can hardly wait. 🕊

“Don’t worry Purr-incess. I know what you mean.” He grinned as he took the handkerchief and wiped his fore head and neck for her before handing it back.

Adrien’s brain woke up from being lost in her eyes as he realized that he had an early fencing practice scheduled before school the next morning. So, he told her, “I’ll bring one of my own in the morning with a fresh coat of ‘scent of the cat,’ and I’ll leave it up here on the balcony for you when I bring Tikki back.”

“Oh, thanks.” Marinette gulped before asking, “soooooo, do… do you have any more scratches than need, ah, healing?”

“Y-yes, a few. If you’re still offering that is.” He told her, blushing behind his mask.

“As long as we stay up here.” She told him with a wry smile, “I don’t want to be inviting a boy into my bedroom late at night who isn’t my boyfriend after all, umm, I mean at all, ha ha. Don’t tell my parents that.” 😁

Adrien chuckled at the idea as she directed him to sit on her lawn chair, as he thought, if only she knew…

…

After a quick, chilly healing session and both Marinette and Chat Noir were blushing like idiots on her balcony after she had healed the few scratches that he had with his suit zipped open under the watchful eye of a surprisingly awake kwami, Tikki suggested that Chat should take her back to his place as soon as he was zipped up.

“Already Tikki?” Marinette asked.
“Yes, it’s getting late.” Tikki responded.

“Aww, but we’d like to hang out a little,” Chat purred as he looked up at Marinette, who was rolling her eyes as she handed him Tikki after kissing her goodnight, “right Purr-incess?”

“I think you need to get home so that I can get some rest Chat Noir, there might be another akuma tomorrow night and you might want to get some rest too.” Tikki told him pointedly.

Marinette chuckled, “yeah, and I don’t know about you, but I have a big day tomorrow. Not only is it the Mayor’s Ball where we hope to expose Lila, it may be my last day at Françoise Dupont High School.”

“Really?” Chat Noir looked at her sadly.

“Oh Kitty, it’s just it may not the best place for me anymore. We’ll see how tomorrow goes really, I just…” Marinette looked away as she twiddled her fingers, “while I miss my friends, I miss feeling safe.”

“You’ll have Adrien with you tomorrow though, won’t you?”

Marinette looked away, “he said he’ll be there but I-I don’t know. I mean, he can’t follow me everywhere and well, we, we don’t have the best history at school right now. With our reputations and the other students that is.”

Chat snorted, “hiss-tory. Right.”

She pouted at him as she said, “what I was trying to say is that we’ll just have to see what happens I guess.”

Chat Noir reached out and gave her hand a squeeze, “hey, I know he hasn’t been there like you’d like him to be before, but I’m sure he’s going to do what he can to fix all that. Adrien does try to do his best at whatever he puts his mind to, just like you, our Everyday Ladybug.”

Marinette raised her eyebrow at him, before accepting the compliment with, “thanks Kitty. I-I really have to get ready for bed.”

Chat Noir nodded as he stood up and she went to her skylight as she opened it and climbed in, only to look back at him as she called out, “Goodnight Chat Noir.”

With a two-finger salute, he answered her with a simple, “goodnight Princess.”

…

Ten minutes after Chat Noir left, Marinette received a few texts from Adrien while she was in the bathroom.

Adrien : Hey Girlfriend, a stray cat just came by to talk to me. 🐱

Adrien : He explained the whole scent marking thing, and if it’s something you need, I’m okay with it.

Adrien : Maybe we could cuddle some together after the ball tomorrow night? 😊

Adrien : Chloe is offering to have a sleepover at her place.

This is the point that Marinette picked up her phone and was shocked at his suggestion.
Marinette <3: Chloe’s father would be okay with all of us staying in the same room? 😊

Adrien : Hello Beautiful!

Adrien : umm, no? Whenever I stayed there overnight, I got my own room. I still have to get my father’s permission; I’ll ask Nathalie in the morning.

Adrien : I imagine Chloe will have the girls sleep in her room either on the couch or on rolling spare beds. She does that with Sabrina.

Marinette <3 : Won’t you be lonely though?

Adrien : Chloe said that she was going to invite a couple of other guys? I don’t know the details.

Adrien : I’m just focusing on finally being able to dance with my Beautiful girlfriend!

Adrien : All Night Long!

Marinette <3 : Adrien, I’m blushing! 😊

Adrien : Then I’m doing something right 😊

Marinette <3 : The Ball isn’t until 7:00pm though & you’ll have to share.

Adrien : What?!

Adrien : Why? 😕

Marinette <3 : We should dance at least a couple of dances with other people. Kagami and Chloe would both like to dance with you I’m sure.

Adrien : You’re so thoughtful, but what will you do?

Marinette : I’m sure I’ll be able to coax Nathaniel into a dance.

Adrien <3 : I’ll only dance once with everyone else, I want you to myself as much as possible Marinette, you’re a wonderful dancer.

Marinette <3 : Aww, I feel the same.

Marinette <3 : Just as long as I don’t have to share you with HER

Adrien: Thank you. I would love that. I don’t want to be anywhere near her

Marinette <3 : Done. We’ll stick together like glue.

Adrien : Oooo Kinky, a dream of mine come true.

Marinette <3 : Adrien! 😊

Adrien: JK 😕 Beautiful, I would never want to do or say anything that would hurt you in any way. 😊

Marinette <3 : You’re forgiven.

Adrien : Ah, my life is worth living. 😊
Marinette <3 : lol, you’re so silly. I love that.

Adrien: That or me? 😊

Marinette <3 : Hmm, I’ll think about it.

Adrien : 😧 😊

Marinette : Do you have anything that you have to do after school tomorrow, Fencing?

Adrien : Chloe thought about that, she’s really good at organizing.

Marinette <3 : Oh, I know. What did she do now?

Adrien : She invited my Fencing instructor because there will be a famous Italian fencer at the Ball and she thought they should meet.

Adrien : Fencing after school was moved to before school because of it.

Marinette <3 : Go Chloe. I really should bake her some cookies or something.

Adrien <3 : She likes Honey-lemon on just about anything.

Marinette : Good to know, we really should get to bed though. Big day tomorrow.

Adrien <3 : That it is, I get to show off my gorgeous and amazing girlfriend!

Marinette <3 : lol

Marinette <3 : I meant that we have to face school tomorrow and we’re taking down Lila.

Marinette <3 : Finally!

Adrien paused, remembering his early morning fencing class.

Tikki called out to him from her cuddle with Plagg, “you shouldn’t leave her alone at all tomorrow Adrien, her pheromones will be attracting boys left and right! No matter if they’d be good Chat Noirs!”

“I’ll keep watch Tikki, I’ll even skip my shower after fencing if I have to.”

“That’s… not a great idea.” Tikki frowned at him.

“Why? Won’t my scent be stronger that way?” Adrien asked as Marinette texted him again.

Marinette <3 : Plus I get to show off my Handsome boyfriend. 😊

Tikki looked exasperated as she explained, “Well, yeah, but sweaty boy and Camembert…”

Plagg laughed, “he’ll smell just like me!”

Adrien made a face. “I see what you mean Tikki.”

“Hey!” Plagg objected.

“You should warn Marinette though and don’t forget to tell her goodnight Adrien.” Tikki muttered as she cuddled back up with an annoyed Plagg, who quickly forgave her of course.
“Sure Tikki!” Adrien answered before he went back to his phone.

Adrien: Oh no! 😊 I forgot that I can’t walk you to school, Fencing was rescheduled to the morning.

Marinette <3 : I’ll be fine. I’ve survived this long.

Marinette <3 : What’s the worst that can happen?

Adrien thought about it, and he really didn’t know what to type because to him, the possibilities of something going wrong was endless, so before he could think of something, she texted him again.

Marinette <3 : Good night Handsome.

So, Adrien wrote the only thing he could think of…

Adrien : Good Night Beautiful.

Chapter End Notes

I don’t know when my next posting will be, still dealing with the death in my family and that’ll be going on for a couple of months most likely. However, I enjoy writing (and using emoji’s apparently) so I’ll continue to write a chapter when I can with all my stories when time and inspiration permits. Thanks for reading everyone!
Chapter Summary

Summary: What happens before school, from another perspective...

Timeline: Chapter begins around 7:00am. Friday Morning.

There is now less than 13 hours until the Mayor’s Ball!

Chapter Notes

Wow, it's been almost a month since I last posted, sorry about that but this chapter was hard to write for me being so caught up with real world issues (family drama, death in the family and paperwork, ugh!) so I was hit with the writer's block stick until I realized that this would be a good way to jump into the school day, since what would have happened elsewhere or during the morning was hinted at already in the story...

Fair warning this is one of the longer chapters at 3200+ words

Can't say when I'll be able to post again, but sooner I hope than a month next time.

Hope you enjoy it!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Nathaniel yawned, he hated being dropped off at school so early, but unless he wanted to walk twenty minutes and risk taking the metro, which he somehow usually missed making him late for school, he had to wake up early for his Mom to give him a ride and put up with the indignity of being so early to school. At least it would give him a chance to sit on the steps and sketch until Marc could meet him to work on their latest project.

His mind wandered to yesterday as he sat in the back of his Mom’s car, when his class showed up at Chloe’s place to be loaned fancy tuxes and dresses and stuff.

It was really strange. He thought, Chloe was almost, nice, in her own weird bossy way.

Not only that, but Chloe had invited a few people outside of their class to join them to pick out their own outfits, thinking that they would like to join their friends for the party.

Normally Chloe isn’t that considerate, he realized, since when did she even know that the three extra people outside of their class were important to her classmates and their lives? What did she do, hire someone to research her classmates or something?

Then he remembered how she actually seemed like she cared… somewhat. I’m still not sure what her butler’s name is…

Chloe had been barking orders and telling people which rack to go to as soon as they came in. All
she had to do was give a person a once over, announce their measurements after demanding most people to stand up straight, since she wasn’t ‘a miracle worker’ and would then say something along the lines of ‘what we have should work, for you,’ which is practically a Chloe compliment.

Nathaniel snickered as he remembered how she told Lila she had the hardest time finding something ‘worthy’ of her and then she gave her a choice of five awful dresses and then she said that, “I trust that with everyone and everything that you know that you have enough experience picking out something worthy of you from this small collection from the best designers out there straight from the runway. They were just clamoring for someone like you to wear one of these to my Father’s Ball, although you’ll only be able to choose one to have that honor, Lila.”

Chloe had a small smirk as she usually did and she was probably right, after all, how could Lila go wrong since they all were ‘by the best designers out there, straight from the runway?’ Lila of course had beamed at the false praise, but it was hard to tell if she was convinced by the obvious.

Nathaniel was pretty sure that Chloe had said all of that because she didn’t want to be blamed for any of those dresses showing up at the ball after all. Especially since she gave Lila the choice to wear them and they looked more like the kind of dresses that a designer made for a more, what would Marinette say to be nice, in a more ‘couture’ runway? Meaning just for the shock value to get their name out there.

In fact, he mused, I bet those were the dresses that a designer intended to never again see the light of day.

Lila’s dresses were just to make a statement, not really for retail sales or for actual events, unless seeing one of them being worn was the event. Nathaniel wasn’t the fashion prodigy of the class, but at least he had taste.

One dress was made of a nearly sheer material, with cut outs that made it look like it went through a shredder the wrong way, showing far too much skin for their age in his opinion. Another had a gaudy floral design probably from the 1940’s, but the skirt was calf length but seemed to have been attacked by rabid dogs. The third was awful, it was a lace color that was just a few shades lighter than Lila’s skin, floor length with a large black bow in front plastered across her…

Umm, I don’t want to go there. Nathaniel thought as he looked away from the horrid selections, one of which looked like part of it was an actual dead animal. Kind of wish I could have gotten some pictures of her wearing those though for Marinette. They'd be good for a dart board.

Although I’ve got to admit, Chloe is very good at her word play, I didn’t even need Marc to point that one out. Nathaniel thought happily, Marinette will be thrilled with whatever dress Lila picks, they were all awful artistically! Practically designed by Hawkmoth on one of his Bubbler days...

Seeing that Chloe had invited his good friend and comic book partner Marc as well, it had put him at ease too. Although Marc really needed someone’s help picking out what to wear, and in a way, Nathaniel was grateful that Chloe was there to tell him that plaid was just not in when he reached for a tuxedo that was on Max’s rack to try on.

“Then why does he get one to try on?” Marc had asked the heiress of Max with disappointment in his voice.

Chloe had almost sputtered before pointing out, “Max is a nerd, and that outfit has the suspenders he likes and while I hate to admit it, it suits his complexion and would match his pocket protector. Also, it would make you look ridiculous, utterly ridiculous! So, no plaid for you writer boy.”
Marc, the softie that he was, took it as a complement and returned to his own rack of clothes after he had only smiled at her and commented over his shoulder at her, “writer boy, I like it. Thanks Chloe.”

Chloe tossed her hair and scoffed as she brushed off the thanks, “well, that’s at least one fashion disaster averted. Alright, who’s next?!”

Then she was back to barking orders and giving her input on everything that everyone tried on.

Of course, the still slightly distraught Max eventually arrived, tried the awful plaid tux on first, said it would be acceptable and that was that. Then he left in a hurry without hearing Chloe’s opinion on it.

I’ve got to admit though, Chloe was right, it worked for Max. It would have clashed with Marc’s skin tone.

*It was really sweet of Chloe to find a little bow-tie for Markov too, if he can make it.*

Then Nathaniel added mentally, *I hope Max can fix him in time.*

*Obviously, Lila was the one that broke him and blamed Adrien, but who would believe anyone but her around here?*

Nathaniel frowned as he thought about the rest of the affair.

After all their classmates had arrived, they had been shocked when a suspiciously familiar model like young man had come out of the changing rooms, confidently strutting his stuff, and he wasn’t the blond model from their class either! It took a minute for everyone to recognize him, apparently Chloe had her team attack his hair and tamed it as everyone else arrived.

No one had recognized Luka until he spoke.

Nathaniel had to admit it, the Couffaines were lookers and obviously Juleka wasn’t the only one shocked to see her brother Luka there looking like he had just stepped off of a runway. He was calm yet seemed a little nervous without his guitar as he picked at his cuffs every so often, but dressed to the nines like he was, he was the only one that a quick approval from Chloe without having to try on anything else.

Nathaniel discovered later that Sabrina had arrived early to help and had told Luka that Chloe insisted Luka try on that outfit first when he was the first to arrive and to take advantage of the hair stylists advice, or orders as it were.

Unfortunately, Nathaniel was given a similar treatment after Chloe finally decided on what he was wearing.

Nathaniel shook his head, jealous that Luka had had it so easy. Then he frowned as he briefly thought about the two missing people from their class.

*I would have bet money that Luka would be winning Marinette’s heart by the end of the school year, but now? After I saw Adrien begging Marinette for forgiveness? Well, knowing Marinette, she’ll forgive him and he’ll be escorting her to this dance for sure. If he’s smart, he really will ask her out after all of this, if he hasn’t already.*

Nathaniel had been surprised that both he and Luka had about seven tuxedos to try on, on their racks anyway, and he was extremely jealous that Luka got out of trying on all of his because the guy literally rocked everything he wore.
Every other guy there had about three, except Marc, he had five, and Chloe insisted that they try them all on, except for Max and Luka of course. Luka just changed back into his regular clothes and helped hand things out to people as they dealt with Chloe’s appraisals or more likely what sounded like criticisms of their outfits.

*I could almost swear that she’s trying to make everyone look decent, but in a bad way somehow. Marinette would be able to figure it out, because I just can’t put my finger on what she’s thinking. No one looks awful, besides Lila after all. Hmm.*

Nathaniel still didn’t know what to think, while all the outfits were nice, he was certain that his, Marc’s and Luka’s were a better quality and fit better than the ones that Kim, Max and Nino got to choose from. He didn’t know what to think of Alya’s or Alix’s outfits, although Alix wound up in a dress suit with slacks somehow.

*At least Chloe was thinking of what everyone wanted, somewhat.*

*Still, I can’t believe Chloe had me try on the last tuxedo we settled on three times! The pants are so tight! I don’t know why I let Chloe talk me into wearing it tonight.*

Nathaniel just shook his head, *if I didn’t know better, Chloe was checking ME out!*

Nathaniel rolled his eyes at the very thought, *now I’m sounding utterly ridiculous as she would way. Although it was nice seeing her nicer side last night when she finally said that I made it look nice, I could have sworn she was smiling once I agreed to it.*

They did have a late comer join them mid changing, but Kim was ecstatic that Ondine was invited at all and she hadn’t told him she was coming. Chloe had arranged for her to try on four dresses. All of which were nice, but not over the top.

*It was really thoughtful of Chloe to invite all of Kitty Section, Marc and Ondine too.*

Nathaniel remembered one of his favorite parts of the evening was when Chloe almost choked to death when Marc joked about mixing a jacket from one tuxedo with another with contrasting colors that were more along the line of his usual favorite colors. Nathaniel was still shaking his head at the memory, *the guy can write, but he can’t pick out a good color palette to save his life.*

Chloe almost shoved poor Marc into a dressing room and tossed him a nice suit, *“I expect you to not embarrass me writer boy! That tuxedo ought to do, but I want to see it!”*

Marc snickered and answered with a laugh, *“yes Ma’am!”*

*“You’d better believe it!”* Chloe had called back with a huff, *“now who’s next?”*

Nathaniel sighed, *it’s really nice to see Marc come out of his shell, he’s just not as shy as he used to be since we started collaborating together, which is really nice.*

*…*

*“Nathaniel sweetheart, we’re here!”* Nathaniel’s Mom broke him out of his thoughts as they arrived at the front of the school, *“have fun working on that project with Marc!”*

*“Thanks for the ride Mom.”* Nathaniel answered as he got out of the car with his back pack.

*“Have a good day Honey!”* His mother loudly called out.
“Mom!” Nathaniel whispered with an embarrassed hiss although no one was around to hear. His Mom only chuckled and waved goodbye as he closed the door then drove off.

Nathaniel shook his head as he mentally frowned, as if I don’t have enough reasons to worry about being picked on. My Mom still calls me Honey!

Nathaniel saw Kim and Ivan chatting just outside of the school and was grateful that for once the two boys were getting along.

Nathaniel took two steps towards the school and then he was assaulted with the most delicious smell. He couldn’t help but breath it in and his mind grew a bit drunk on it, but he was able to keep his mind clear. He had to, for his friend, for her…

Marinette!

Nathaniel took another deep breath, and took off like a bloodhound after her scent as he vaguely remembered a conversation that he had with Chloe in confidence the night before…

…

“Nathaniel, I know this sounds crazy, but I need you to keep an eye out for Marinette tomorrow.” Chloe had told him after everyone else had left. He did have the most to try on after all.

Now that he thought about it, maybe that’s why she me try on so much stuff.

“She’s my friend Chloe, of course I’ll keep an eye out for her. I was planning on it already. Why’s it so important to you?”

“Ugh, well, I’m trying to be friends with her.” He gave her a shocked look and she waved it off, “but I don’t have time explain it, but right now I can’t look like I’m trying to be, but what I want to is ridiculous, it’s utterly ridiculous! She somehow got her hands on and clumsily used a potent perfume that attracts boys, and since she’s supposed to be coming back to school tomorrow and well, let’s just say that we just don’t need any new rumors floating around.” Chloe had quickly explained.

“Well, umm, that kind of makes sense, but why me?” Nathaniel asked.

“You seem to know what’s going on with Lila and you’re a friend of Marinette’s, right?” He nodded as she answered, “isn’t that enough?”

“Well, I know that Lila is a liar and that she’s out to destroy Marinette and now Adrien too I guess, but he’s kind of messed things up himself with Marinette too, hasn’t he?” Nathaniel asked.

“Well, yeah, but he likes her and he’s working on that. Neither of them is perfect you know, but they do compliment each other I guess.” Chloe shrugged indifferently.

“You’re okay with them getting together?” Nathaniel was astounded that seemed to be what she was implying as his eyebrows disappeared completely in his bangs.

“Ugh, I’m learning that I don’t get everything I want and yes, I’d like to see them happy. Having a common enemy in Lila has given me a new perspective on well,” she waved her hands, “all of this. I’m a new person, worthy of being a hero!” She proudly proclaimed as she took a hero’s stance momentarily.

“Well, I guess you are getting there.” He had teased her as she huffed.
“Well, I’m glad to see that you’ve noticed.” She turned around and was fiddling with some of the clothing hanging nearby as she added, “y-you’ll save a few dances for me then, won’t you?”

Nathaniel had been surprised at that, “you want to dance with me? I’m not a good dancer though Chloe.”

“Psft, I can lead and we’ll just dance the slow songs.” She turned around waved it off like they were going together, her confidence back, “I’ll wear something that goes well with your tux and we’ll match.” Then she took a deep breath and quietly told him, “just, please, if Marinette is too umm, fragrant tomorrow, make sure that she’s watched over.” He raised an eyebrow at her, “just get Adrien or someone to help if something happens. The more people looking out for her the better. I don’t want either of them to be hurt if something happens.”

“I know things aren’t the best at school right now, but you really think that something could happen?”

Chloe nodded, “it might. Depends on how strong that scent of hers is. I can barely smell it, but it… it could get her the wrong attention, if you know what I mean.” Nathaniel frowned but nodded.

Nathaniel hesitantly placed his hand on her shoulder to comfort her and she didn’t slap it away as he told her earnestly, “I’ll keep an eye out for her, I promise.”

Which was why Nathaniel tried to run, following Marinette’s scent and just as he reached the stairs as Kim grabbed his arm and stopped him, “hey, where’s the fire?”

“I think Marinette’s in trouble!” Nathaniel told him. “If you’re her friend, you should come too.”

Kim looked shocked as he let go of Nathaniel, “I never said she wasn’t, jeez.”

Nathaniel didn’t wait for them and started running inside once more.

After glancing at Ivan who nodded as if he read Kim’s mind, Kim & Ivan jogged after Nathaniel, letting him lead the way as they ran into the school.

“Hey Nath!” Marc caught up with them just as they entered the school, before he took a breath himself, “whoa! Can you smell that too?!”

“Yeah, I think it’s Marinette!” Nathaniel jogged quickly towards her scent, remembering something like it coming off of her faintly the other day when the wind blew her scent right at him. It was better than the treats her family baked, and it was calling him, but he wanted to defend her from anyone that would be answering that heavenly call with the wrong kind of attention…

“No, no, NO!” Nathaniel gasped as he tried to hurry up as he followed his nose as they finally heard a shriek that sounded like his blue haired friend. Marc and the other boys were on his heels as he followed her delicious smell to the locker room and opened it to peek in, only to find Marinette surrounded by four boys from the grade above them.

As far as he could tell, they hadn’t hurt her, but she was cornered and they were eyeing her like a piece of meat as they closed in.

“Go get Adrien!” Nathaniel hastily whispered to Marc who just got there. Somehow Kim and Ivan
was taking longer to arrive.

“Where is he? I didn’t see him!” Marc looked down the hall, perplexed.

“He’s probably with the fencers on the other side of the courtyard that we saw when we came in! Now go Marc!” Nathaniel hissed.

“We’re here to help!” Kim announced behind them as Ivan stopped beside him, holding his side for a moment as he caught his breath.

“Nath! Don’t you do anything dangerous! This isn’t a comic book!” Marc warned.

“I may not be a superhero, but I can’t let anyone hurt Marinette,” Marc made a face like he wouldn’t either as Nathaniel coaxed him to get going, “don’t worry about me Marc, Go!”

“Alright!” Marc finally took off to find Adrien, leaving the other three boys to help Marinette.

Nathaniel quickly took a deep breath and braced himself as he brushed back his hair and opened the locker room door, with Kim and Ivan behind him as he lead the way to come to their Everyday Ladybug’s rescue…

Chapter End Notes

Gotta love Nathaniel, he's an under represented character and I like to think that Marc would be playful and able to ignore Chloe being, well, Chloe, once he got a bit more confidence by working with Nathaniel too.

Also, now we know the class, Luka, Ondine, Marc and Kagami will be at the Ball tonight too.
Before School On THE day Part 2

Chapter Summary

Adrien’s POV, basically it starts with a warning, throws in some fluff, a laugh and a certain someone looks for Adrien…

Timeline: This Chapter begins around 5:30 am. Friday Morning…

And it ends with less than 13 hours until the Mayor’s Ball!

Chapter length is about 2800 words.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Earlier in the day with Adrien while he got ready for the day…

“Adrien, there’s something that I want to warn you about.” Tikki quietly told him as he brushed his hair before putting the gel in it that his father required of him to use.

Adrien gave her a quizzical look, “but I thought things were finally going right? Did I ask out Marinette too soon?”

Plagg snorted, “if you’re considering that you should have noticed that she liked you and that she was Ladybug MONTHS ago, then yeah, sure.” He threw the last of his cheese up in the air and swallowed it.

“Plagg, he doesn’t need to be reminded of that.” Tikki sighed, her pink coloring was much darker than it was last night, but she was still not red yet. Plagg still looked like a mix of seeping shadows and his normal self. Adrien had never seen them this bad after an overnight cuddle session and he wondered if he should be worried.

Adrien tried to put on a brave face though as he replied, “thanks for the defense Tikki, uh, so what’s up?” He asked as he finished with his hair and moved on to putting on his sunscreen slash moisturizer.

“I just wanted to let you know that you need to keep an eye out. The balance was disturbed for some time and while you’re on the right path to fixing it, bad things could happen as a result. It’s like when you overcompensate on a teeter totter, you can send the other person flying off the handles if things aren’t done just right. That’s why I wanted you to be with her as much as possible today Adrien.”

Adrien nodded at her as if he understood what she was talking about since he’d never ridden a teeter totter. Tikki blindly went on, “anyhow, Marinette is learning to trust Adrien you now, and while you know that she’s who she is for sure, that unbalances things a bit too.”

Plagg rolled his eyes, “here we are with the good luck bad luck talk again.”
“That’s just the nature of these kind of things, stuff tends to get worse before they get better.” Tikki shrugged as Plagg rolled his eyes at the idea.

“Plagg? Should I be worried?” Adrien asked his kwami who sighed and flew up into his face to touch his nose supportively.

“You just need to remember to watch out for your Lady, I mean, sure things are not over with, but I have faith in you Kid. You can handle it.”

“Ah, thanks Plagg.” Adrien grinned at him before glancing at his phone for the time. “We’ve got just about thirty minutes before Nathalie comes to get me for breakfast, I should have some time to get and drop off some flowers for Marinette at the bakery if I hurry!”

“Marinette will love that!” Tikki giggled.

“That’s the idea, I want her to know how much I appreciate her.” Adrien told her as he plucked her off of the counter and walked towards his window, “now let’s get Tikki back home Plagg.”

“Just say the words kid.”

“Wait! What about that ziplock bag with the handkerchief full of your scent that you made! Marinette needs it!” Tikki exclaimed.

“Oh, right!” Adrien darted back to pick it up. “I’ll leave this on the balcony for her.”

“Great start Kid.” Plagg chuckled.

“At least Tikki’s helpful and reminded me.”

“Hey, I’m helpful!” Plagg pouted before proudly exclaiming, “when I feel like it!”

Adrien rolled his eyes as he hurried to the window as he called upon his transformation. “Plagg, Claws out!”

“Here we go Againnnnn!” Plagg whined as he was sucked into the ring.

Tikki giggled as Chat Noir put her on his head for the ride before he launched himself towards Marinette’s house.

…

After dropping Tikki off at Marinette’s skylight with the handkerchief full of his morning sweat (aka from before his first shower of the day), Chat Noir spotted a street vendor pushing his cart across the street on his way to a nearby bridge to sell his flowers for the day.

Stopping in a nearby alley, Adrien de-transformed, tossed Plagg a slice of Camembert and then rushed to catch the vendor, selecting a lovely bouquet for Marinette of lilies and chrysanthemums. After paying for them and being thankful that the vendor was too tired to recognize him, Adrien checked his phone for the time and gulped.

“I’ve got nineteen minutes Plagg, do you think I still have the time?”

Plagg rolled his eyes from his pocket, “it takes two minutes to get to your place from hers. You’ve got the time.”

Adrien nodded and headed to the bakery, only to knock on the door since it was still locked. The
bakery wasn’t supposed to open for another twenty minutes after all.

Sabine looked over the counter, smiled slightly and went to open the door for him and noticed the lovely flowers. “Good morning Adrien, oh, are those for Marinette?”

Adrien blushed slightly as he answered bashfully, “yeah, I can’t walk her to school today because I have an early morning fencing practice and I only have about ten minutes before I have to head out. I don’t want to wake her up, so I decided I’d drop them by so that she’d know that I was thinking about her. Can you give them to her for me please?”

Sabine chuckled, “I was about to wake her myself, but I’m thinking that maybe you can do that for me when you give them to her yourself.”

“Oh, I don’t want to invade her privacy.” Adrien shook his head, he wanted to respect Marinette after all.

“It’s not invading her privacy when I say that it’s okay.” Sabine lightly scolded him. “It normally takes me three tries to get her up and about.” Then she noticed him looking behind her into the bakery with a worried frown on his face. “Why do you look so worried dear?”

Adrien swallowed, “well, I’m honestly surprised that you’re okay with me dating your daughter, after, well, everything.”

Sabine nodded, “I tend to follow Marinette’s lead and to let her make her own decisions. It’s Tom that you need to worry about, he’s making a delivery right now.” She shrugged and Adrien gulped, “I think it may take him some time to fully trust you, especially about everything that has been going on. He tends to get a little overprotective about Marinette, even though she explained everything and convinced us to let her make the decision about changing schools.”

Adrien fully understood, he remembered having to fight Weredad after all and he cringed at how Marinette’s father had beat him to a pulp and almost took his Miraculous as he defended his daughter. He sincerely hoped that Tom wouldn’t be like that when he met him as Adrien.

“Anyway, don’t worry about Tom.” Sabine waved it off, “he’d probably be like that with any boy that’s interested in his baby girl, she’s kind of fragile right now after all.” Sabine explained.

Adrien nodded, “I kind of suspected that, and I’ll do my best to be there for her and I’m going to do what I can to help her since she deserves only the best.”

“Then I think that we’ll be fine dear,” Sabine told him as she reached out and patted his shoulder, which was somewhat of a reach for the shorter woman. “Now I know that you only have a few minutes, but go on and run up to her room and try to wake her up for me please.” Sabine chuckled as she led the way to the staircase to their apartment. “I’ll pass you a croissant on your way out.”

“Thanks, but uh, are you sure?” Adrien asked worriedly once more.

“I’m her mother, of course I am dear and maybe with your help we’ll actually get her to school early for once!” She laughed before sizing him up a little and told him almost as a warning, “besides, I trust that you’ll respect her.”

“Oh, I will, and uh, I’ll get going, if you insist that is.” Adrien replied.

“I do, now hurry along!” She waved her hands at him to rush him along.

Adrien felt reassured as he finally ran up to Marinette’s room to wake up his sleeping beauty.
A minute later, and Adrien was checking his phone again at the bottom of the steps that led to Marinette’s room, he really had only ten minutes left now before he absolutely had to run home.

He gulped as he climbed the stairs that led to her attic room and knocked as he gently called out, “Marinette? Are you awake?”

Tikki phased through the door and giggled sweetly as she saw the flowers, “oh she’ll love those! You can come on in, just knocking won’t wake her up after all Adrien, she’s a deep sleeper.”

Adrien swallowed, “o-okay.” It still felt weird to go into her room at this hour while she was in bed, but Sabine had said that it was okay.

Adrien let himself in and looked around Marinette’s gently cluttered room, he grinned as he saw the picture of himself in the frame by her computer, but he shook his head as he mentally reminded himself, *come on Agreste, focus!*

“Marinette?” Adrien called out, as Tikki floated over to lay down on a pillow and munch on a cookie as he added, “time to wake up!”

That’s when he heard her gentle snores coming from her bed.

*Ah, I truly have a sleeping beauty to wake.*

Adrien shook his head, put the flowers on her desk and smiled as he climbed up to her loft bed to wake her up. He couldn’t help but blush as he gazed down upon her.

*She’s SO beautiful!*

He lost all ability to speak as he was swept away by her sweet and innocent slumber.

After all, Marinette was sprawled out on her bed, her blankets a mess, her pigtails lopsided and a little drool running down her cheek. He blushed even further as he noticed that her pajama top strap on one shoulder was slipping down.

“W-Wake up Purr-incess.” He almost purred.

Marinette whined, “noooo,” as he climbed up to kneel beside her. Adrien swallowed and reached out to fix her shoulder strap for her, trying to not blush himself into oblivion as he did so.

Having succeeded in preserving her modesty, Adrien sighed, “oh, Marinette, just you’re so amazingly beautiful no matter what time it is.”

Marinette let out a gentle snore as a response.

Adrien smiled softly.

“Ugh, gross.Kid, hurry up!” Plagg whispered as he peeked out of Adrien’s jacket pocket.

“Quiet Plagg.” Adrien whispered as he pushed his head out of view as he kept his eyes on Marinette while he did so.

Tikki giggled slightly at his comment before reminding him, “you’re supposed to wake her up silly, not stare.”
Adrien swallowed as Tikki rolled her eyes and hid herself behind his framed photo as he muttered, “sorry.”

Adrien called out again a little louder, “Marinette! Princess!”

Brushing back the hair in her face with one finger he sighed, “please Purr-incess, wake up for me.”

“Go away Chat.” Marinette mumbled and then finished with a yawn, “it’s too early.”

Adrien held back a snicker before he almost sung, “but Beautiful, I shouldn’t kiss you without you being aware of it.” He then leaned down and nuzzled her cheek, almost swept away by her scent, but he managed to control himself.

“Later Kitty.” She answered with another yawn as her hand fumbled out of her blankets and pushed him away, “it’s sleepy time.”

“But I want cuddles!” He whined, “Please wake up.” He even gently shook her shoulder for emphasis.

Her only response was to mutter. “L-Later Chat.”

Adrien chuckled and decided to tease her a bit as he leaned back and asked loudly, “should I be worried that my girlfriend has a cat themed hero that comes to her bed for cuddles and kisses?”

“Hmm, nope. Just my Kitty an’ Hot Stuff.” She mumbled as she rolled over.

“You’re going to have to try harder than that.” Tikki hissed from across the room.

“Adrien shrugged, “well, alright.”

“Oh dear.” Tikki muttered as she took a glance at him and noticed the very Plagg like grin on his face.

Adrien rubbed his hands together.

“Marinette!~” He sung, “you need to get up before I pick you up!”

“Nope.” She yawned, “dreams can’t wake me up!”

“Oh, but I can Beautiful.” Adrien purred as he slipped his hands underneath her to pick her up bridal style.

Marinette groaned, “noooo! Put me down! The alarm only went off once!”

Adrien walked down her stairs carrying her as she automatically began to cuddle into his chest as she sniffled lazily, “I wanna sleep!”

“It’s time to wake up Marinette.” Adrien told her with a smirk, “now either you wake up, or I’ll wake you up.”

“Noooo! Put me backkk!” Marinette struggled weakly, before commenting as she nuzzled into his shoulder, “you’re the best smelling dream, just like Adrien.”

He laughed as he set her down on her chaise as he held her close, “that’s because it is me.”

“Huh?” She yawned as she blearily looked up at him before commenting, “nope. Still dreamin,”
and then she started to burrow into the chaise, pulling him down next to her as if he was her pillow as she tried to go back to sleep.

“Well, I can’t say that I didn’t warn you.” Adrien smirked again as he leaned in and briefly placed his lips on her neck, he could feel her inhale and almost startle just by that action, but he wasn’t finished yet as he blew a raspberry on her neck loudly.

“PFFFFFFT!”

Marinette squealed and jumped off of the chaise and out of his arms as she wiped her wet neck only to glare at him, “A-ADRIEN! That-that wasn’t necessary!”

Adrien laughed, “oh yes it was. I tried waking you up about five different times, including literally picking you up. Your Mom sent me up to get you when I came to deliver these before I had to run home.” He waved at the flowers and then pulled out his phone, “I’ve got four minutes before I have to get out of here now, we could have had nine together if you woke up on the first try.” He chuckled.

“Yeah, but a raspberry?!” Marinette walked over to the flowers and picked them up, taking a deep whiff and sighing appreciatively.

Adrien shrugged, “hey, it worked.” Then he bit his lip as he became more uncertain about his actions, “umm, I hope I didn’t cross a line though?”

Marinette giggled, “no, it’s fine. You woke me up to give me flowers. I can overlook it, this time. Just-just try something else first next time?”

Adrien nodded, “I’ll try to think of something. I’ve heard ice works well.”

“Don’t you dare!”

Adrien giggled before he walked over to her and placing his hands on her shoulders, “although I admit that you look lovely in the morning my sweet Marinette.”

Marinette blushed deeply, “th-thanks!” Then she turned, making him drop his hands and she pushed past him to look at herself in the mirror, “oh my gosh! I look awful!” She tried to fix her loose pig tail as Adrien laughed and hugged her from behind, causing her to giggle.

“I mean it Marinette, you’re gorgeous!”

“Adrien!” She squealed as he gave her a final squeeze before turning her around, Adrien shook his head as he told her, “Marinette, you look better than I do first thing in the morning.”

“You don’t mean that.” She looked sad again.

“I do. You’re beautiful, Beautiful.” He reminded her as his phone chimed, “ugh, I really have to get going though.” He leaned over and gently kissed her on her temple.

She giggled, “I’ll see you later?”

He nodded, “yeah.”

“Sounds good.” Marinette told him as she stood up on her tippy toes and kissed him on the cheek, “see you later Handsome and thank you for the flowers.”

Adrien blushed as he pried himself away and headed down the stairs as he waved goodbye, “you’re
welcome.”

…

Back at school, later that day…

The morning had been wonderful and Adrien had had one of his better training sessions for fencing, having beaten Kagami four out of five bouts, which was a new record for him. He couldn’t wait to tell Marinette and return to her side for their first class, he didn’t know how but he was determined to find a way to sit beside her all day.

The tired and sweaty fencers were just heading back in as Adrien was beginning to wonder if Marinette had made it to school on time, when he heard Marc calling his name as he ran towards him, “ADRIEN! ADRIEN! Where’s Adrien!? Come quick! It’s Marinette!”

Chapter End Notes

Sorry about the long hiatus there for this story, I was struggling with what is essentially the next chapter and this chapter demanded to be written from Adrien's POV first apparently. Guess I needed a laugh and some fluff.

Personally I'm doing better, still stressed out and have a lot on my plate, but I'm trying to get back into things. Thank you for your patience and support everyone, I appreciate it!

Hopefully I'll have the next chapter out in about 2-3 weeks or less since it's mostly written, just needs finishing and the double quick edit.

Anyhow, the next chapter will include a fight... question is, shall I leave it with just canon violence or should there be more injuries involved? What I have written already leans towards the latter, nothing really descriptive. It's more PG-13, not quite prime time gore. Should I tone it down from that?

Writer waves and runs away from that possible spoiler...

Thanks again everyone!

End Notes

Thank you for all the great comments and kudos! I appreciate it!

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!