Outside my troubles are over (But in your eyes the melody is frozen)

by Aki_of_Eyluvial

Summary

A collection of one shots based on the Whumptober list, with just ONE rule: How many time I can make one character before he rebels and come find me? (It's basically the angst feast in here, be warned.)

[Translation from Italian]

[Chapter 01: Poison]
[Chapter 02: Bloody Hands]
[Chapter 03: Hypothermia]
Francesco feared Jacopo would do something from the very moment he closed the gates of the palace behind himself, from the moment he chose to be by Guglielmo’s side no matter what, - «You’re brothers.» His mother once said, holding the two of them close to her chest. «When the rest of the world will betray you, you’ll be the one who stay true to each other.» and Francesco never stopped believing that. Because his mother was always right, and Guglielmo was his brother. And brothers never betray each other. - from the moment he openly took the Medici’s side. At the same time he knew Jacopo was a careful man, he would have never attacked, not during a dinner, not against his own nephews. Or maybe, in a fit of naivety, Francesco believed it.

No one in their right mind would have killed someone in the house of one of the most powerful families of Florence, - Only later he would remember the day his father died, and maybe yes, he had been way too naïve. - Jacopo was always careful and Francesco thought he knew him.

**Thought.**

It began at the end of the evening, - Because even in his madness, Jacopo Pazzi was indeed careful. - when the guests began to return to their homes; Guglielmo was standing next to him, smiling quietly, relaxed, like all the troubles crowding one on top of the other in his brother’s mind couldn’t touch him.

«It went better than what you expected. - Because Francesco warned him, remembering their mother’s words, because he was loyal to a fault, especially toward him. Because no matter how many years could have gone by, he was still trying to protect him. Because they were brothers, and he would have died for him. - Not that it was too difficult.»

Guglielmo kept smiling, like he didn’t take him seriously on his concerns, he wanted to feel hurt, betrayed by his lack of faith in him, but he didn’t. - Guglielmo has always been that blind in those matters, that was why he, even being the youngest, had to protect him. -

What he felt instead was a sense of warmth spreading in the middle of his chest, a strange warmth, a wrong one, like the wine he just finished drinking was fire. He slowly nodded but the movement was enough to make him dizzy forcing him to grab his brother’s sleeve to remain upright.

«I’ve… I must have drank too much.» He slowly said regaining balance, he learnt way too soon to lie convincingly, and way too often it was easy to do it to his brother, it should have never been that much easy. He always believed him on that, but when he truly had to believe him… Well.

Giving him a light pat on the arm he bid his farewell choosing to retire for rest the night and let the burning feeling, that nothing had to do with drunkenness, leave his body. He didn’t even drank that much, and yet the sensation was similar. But different, too much different.

When he finally reached his chamber Novella wasn’t back yet, he vaguely remembered seeing her chatting with Bianca and some other ladies, wives of the remaining guests. The fire that burnt in his body until a moment before became all of sudden like ice, so suddenly to make his gasp. It was like an icy winter morning was trying to embrace him, and choke him; Francesco hobbled toward the bed, stretched out a hand to find a support but it only resulted in making everything he had left on the nightstand fall on the ground.
It was wrong, *everything* was wrong.

«You need to be smarter than him. Cautious. He’ll do something, I can feel it.» He could remember warning Guglielmo, then why couldn’t he follow his own warning? Why couldn’t he be careful enough?

His legs were the first to give in, his hand let go of the nightstand and he fell, - *In a far, far away memory he could see his father hobbling through the corridors of the palace, leaning against the wall, against a piece of furniture and then falling, taking everything on it with him, much like he did it a couple of minutes before. He still remembered the sound of glass falling and breaking, his moans, his body trembling. He was too young to do something, too naïve to really understand. And remained so all those years later.* - he wanted to call for someone, he wanted to ask for help, it wasn’t important who would have answered, anyone was fine by then. He wanted to call his brother, seeing him again even though they parted barely some minutes before. Because Guglielmo was his brother and he couldn’t betray him, and he truly needed him now. - *Did he really had to be one step away from death to admit it?* -

The first cough caught him off guard, he felt his body spasm, shiver from a cold he couldn’t explain and when someone finally opened the door he never fully closed he could barely focus on them. Until the figure spoke.

Or screamed. Because the sound coming out of Novella’s mouth couldn’t be otherwise described. Francesco didn’t see her, too weak and tired now, he didn’t see how she gasped and took her hands to cover the mouth, how her eyes went wide. He couldn’t see the terror taking place on her face, taking a hold on her heart or tears running down her pale cheeks as she threw herself at his side and took him gently in her arms.

He had been so unwary, so *stupid*, he accepted that single goblet of wine from the same man he warned his brother about. And to toast to what, in the end?

«*To your health, nephew.*» Jacopo said, with a strange, almost creepy, smile, drinking from his cup first. And Francesco did the same. So, so stupid.

Novella was screaming, calling for help as sobs wrecked her body, her small hands caressing his face as she tried to keep his body still in her arms, his head on her knees where she fell on the floor. She screamed but Francesco could only hear little words and his name, repeated over and over and over.

- *He remembered his mother falling on her knees, holding his father’s body and screaming for help. He remembered a man standing still at the end of the corridor, looking at them with little to no care, and then turning his back and walking away. He shouldn’t have been there, he should have never seen that, he should have been in bed, sleeping by then, but there was a storm outside and he was more scared than what he would have ever admitted. Or maybe it was the feeling something bad was going on that kept him awake. And he saw. And he tried so hard to forget. All those years. And now he was living it.* -

«*Francesco!*» Guglielmo’s voice seemed to be so far and yet so close, he couldn’t understand where it was coming from, it was like an echo, resounding everywhere around him, he wanted to look for him but he didn’t move, he couldn’t move. - *After all, why looking for him when he couldn’t even see anymore?* -

The last thing he saw, blurry and fading to black, where red curls close to his face, and his wife’s voice calling his name in despair. Then everything vanished into nothing.
OK, so... It took me a while to translate it from italian, but it's finally here. As I said in the first italian version, the first chapter is short and not one of the best i could write, but this show really helped me getting out of a writing block, so...
The reference to Francesco's father's death is... well, most likely not historical correct, I know, I just needed the scene as a mirror to what was happening. (you can also read it as "Jacopo is a big ass**** and killed his own brother and his wife." if you prefer.)

On my tumblr you can find the whumptober list i'm using, (here, https://aki-draws-things.tumblr.com/post/180773608745/conto-di-sfruttare-questa-adorabile-lista-di-angst), I've already 4 fics ready to translate and 2 more in progress, but if you have any request just hit me up on tumblr, or here, or anywhere you can find me, really. It will all revolve around our beloved Francesco (cause you know, he didn't suffer enough already, mh?) but I ship him with mostly everyone so, it's really up to you guys.

All comments are welcome, and if you want to chat with me about this fic, or the show, or anything, really, my tumblr is up here, just come and say hi. I promise, I don't bite.

(Also, I checked twice for mistakes, but english is not my first language so I probably missed something here and there. I hope it's not something really big.)

Love~ (and angst)

~Aki~
Giuliano wanted, really wanted to ignore Francesco in the most civil way he could think of, if not for himself or the Pazzi boy, at least out of respect for Lorenzo. And he was succeeding, all their interactions were small nods of the head whenever they met each other, things like that. Of course, holding him in his arms in the middle of the courtyard wasn’t part of his whole “ignore him” plan, Giuliano was very much sure of that. And yet here they were. Giuliano had no time - nor the wish if he had to be truly honest, not that he would have said aloud - to stop himself, or step away, or do anything but grab him. So yes, here they were in a position neither of them ever contemplated before.

Talking to Jacopo was the worst idea he could have ever thought of, Francesco knew it by then, but he had to. There was a war closing by, another one, a stupid one, as most of those fights were, and they really needed his support too to prevent it. He knew his uncle would never give it to them, he would never vote for Lorenzo no matter what, but he had to try. The mere thought of everything he saw in Volterra made him sick every time, he couldn’t see something like that again, he didn’t want someone else seeing it, he remembered the haunted look on Giuliano’s face when they found him, for days he saw that look every time he closed his eyes. But his uncle had no intentions of listening to him, no intentions of helping them, no intentions to stand at Lorenzo’s side for one, just one time. Like always. It wasn’t like Francesco didn’t know that already, he simply hoped for the contrary for once. He wasn’t a dreamer like Lorenzo, or like his father had been in his short time, he didn’t even had the same strength they had, but he hoped, he truly did.

Things escaped his control way too fast, the once calm voices became some kind of yelling match, the quiet discussion turn into a fight he could never win, Jacopo was too expert on that side, he knew what to say and when, he knew using Guglielmo as bait would have taken him by his side again, because Guglielmo was his greatest weakness and his uncle knew it well. But that time it only made the hate he felt for the man greater. A hate he never learned to keep under control and stop, and always threatened to drown him into its darkness.

Later, much later, he thought pointing his dagger against his uncle was an idiotic idea, but not at the time, not when he should have. The rage he felt when Jacopo threatened Guglielmo in front of him made everything else disappear, so he took out the dagger and run to him. A second later he staggered back, his short weapon fell on the ground and he took the hands to his chest, to his ripped doublet where Jacopo turned the dagger against him. There was no pain, – not in that moment at least, it would come later. - only shock, surprise, he knew he would defend himself but he never thought he would be so fast. He always thought himself quick in battle, but he was nothing more than a child.

Jacopo’s words kept echoing in his mind with every step he took toward the Medici Palace. “Go back to them like the dog you became.”

That hurt more than any wound, he wasn’t their dog and he would never be, most of his loyalty was for his brother, of course, but a smaller part was with Lorenzo, there was no point on denying it now, he convinced him of a better future, in the end Francesco began to believe in it too. - Because deep, deep down he was a dreamer too, hidden behind the words his uncle whispered incessantly in his ears since his youth, hidden from the world Lorenzo always dreamt of and that
he knew he would end up loving too. Hidden from the darkness he lived in. - Yet, those words hurt him nevertheless.

It was only when he reached the gate and entered in the garden that he realized Jacopo didn’t just cut his doublet. It was only when he felt the piercing pain he managed to ignore until then, his mind was too concentrated on another kind of pain to feel it before. It was only when he looked down and noticed the blood on his hands. It was only when he heard Giuliano speaking to him that he decided things may be worse than he expected. It was then, when everything that happened came crashing on him like the most violent tide that the earth beneath his feet disappeared.

“You know, you could have cleaned your hands after... – Giuliano stopped for a second thinking carefully on what to say, and how. - Well, after killing someone. You’re dirtying the floor.” It was brutally honest but, after all, it was the truth.

Francesco wanted to answer back, say he killed no man and, even if he did it he would have never walked the streets with his hands dripping blood at every step. No man in his right mind would have done something like that. But when he opened his mouth all that came out was a choked sound. He took the hands back on his chest, on the cut fabric, warm blood dripped on his hands mixing with the already dried one. He felt his head light, his vision got blurred for a moment before coming back slightly darker than before, much like the dark curtain of night had fall upon him all of sudden. Slowly he took a few more steps, he wanted to reach his room as soon as possible so he would be finally safe and able to rest, but his body had a very different idea and walking wasn’t an option.

His legs gave in and he fell. Unfortunately – or luckily, he wasn’t sure – on Giuliano. He didn’t realize it immediately, everything seemed to slow down while his head was spinning way too fast, it was only when he felt those arms grabbing him and stopping his fall he understood what happened, but surely not why and neither did Giuliano. He heard him swear under his breath as he kneeled on the ground holding him in a more comfortable position against his chest, - Francesco’s mind was racing, a swirling motive of “why-why-why” dancing everywhere. He didn’t understand, he could barely think. He was so tired. - Giuliano put a hand on the wound and Francesco wanted to stop him, the idea of his dirty blood on him was making him even more sick. He deserved better, Giuliano de’ Medici, not that he would ever say that aloud, but he did, and for sure he didn’t want to see him bloodied again, not after Volterra, not after seeing those vacant eyes. And now his blood was on his hands, slowly seeping through his fingers and on the ground beneath them. He wanted to stop him but how to tell him if he could barely stay awake?

“Lorenzo!” Giuliano’s voice seemed to rouse him a little, there was a hand still pressing on his wound, and the other holding his head up, fingers gently caressing his cheek like he actually cared for him. It was strange, it felt strange, and comforting, Francesco almost smiled letting his eyes shut.

The footsteps grew faster when Giuliano called his brother a second time, louder, more and more scared as Francesco closed his eyes. - There was some kind of echo in his mind, Giuliano’s voice was an echo, the footsteps, everything was echoing. It was almost unsettling. - He tried to smile again opening the eyes just a little, he tried to convince them he was fine, well, maybe not completely but mostly fine, nothing more than a scratch – a bleeding scratch, leaving him weak and drowsy but only a scratch, or so he wanted to convince them. And himself. - but the two Medici brothers didn’t believe him.

Giuliano was tempted to slap him, hard, without if nor but. There was nothing to smile about, not while he was bleeding out in the courtyard, in his arms, not as his face became pale as a sheet, with cold sweat on his forehead.
For a moment he stopped to think of why he grabbed him instead of letting him fall, ignoring him as any other time, turn his back and walk away, leaving him on the ground for others to find him. But what if they found him too late? What if the wound was too deep? Could he really do that to Guglielmo? To the boy who was now like a brother to him? To a too kind boy who loved his sister more than words could explain and, probably, loved his own brother even more? He could hate Francesco, he did hate him, but this was too much even for him. So he grabbed him, lead him on the ground and hold him up as Lorenzo, trembling more than he should have, tried to take out his bloodied clothes.

“You need to calm down Lorenzo.” He whispered hoping his older brother would listen to him, but he didn’t, he never did. He was shaking so much he barely unbuttoned the doublet and was now fighting to untie the knot of the vest.

“Listen to your brother…” Francesco’s voice was a low, soft breath, and somehow made the shaking even worse.

“You don’t have a say in that.” Giuliano turned to him, there wasn’t anger in his voice, not real anger at least, it was something else. And, dear God, Giuliano really wanted to slap him now, to bring a little more colour on his face, to keep him awake, he was scaring him. “Not as you’re bleeding out in our garden. Do you understand?! It was almost hysterical by then.

Giuliano really wanted to hate him, he wanted to be happy he was hurt, maybe now he would understand how he felt, but there was something in his look that was slowly changing his mind. It was almost like Francesco was used to that, like it wasn’t the first time that happened and no one ever noticed. And now Giuliano wondered how many times he hid some kind of wound to them, maybe even to his brother, how many times he suffered in silence for something his uncle did. How many times Jacopo raised a hand, or worst, on him and he said nothing. - Lorenzo knew, he saw sometimes; he noticed a limp or how he held his side or sucked in a breath. But he remained quiet waiting for Francesco to open up and trust him. And look now where his silence and waiting lead to. -

“It’s – It’s a scratch, - Francesco tried, stubborn even in a weak whisper – stop acting like I’m dying…” But he wasn’t convincing, not at all. He couldn’t fool them. - He wanted them to stop looking so scared and broken, dealing with one was bad, but both was too much. -

He was most definitely not convincing as he his eyes closed. He didn’t hear both the brothers calling him in panic.

Chapter End Notes

First of all, it almost 3 am and I've probably mosse a lot of mistakes that I'll hopefully fix tomorrow, sorry about that. Second, it's a translation, of course, but I took a few liberties with some sentences here and there, what in Italian sounded good didn't work as good in English (it's fine since the Italian version is mine, I would never change it if it wasn't.) Third... Well, the ending is open here too as for the first chapter, I honestly had no idea of how to give it a proper ending so I stopped it there. He can survive, with Lorenzo and giuliano taking good care of him (and Giuliano being in denial because "I
hate you, Pazzi. But not enough to see you dead."). I can be a pre slash if you Wan to 
see as that.
OR. Or he could die, there in the garden, in Giuliano's arms with Lorenzo trying to 
help him. It's you choice.

The list of this whumptober is somewhere on my Tumblr page (https://aki-draws-
things.tumblr.com/post/180773608745/conto-di-sfruttare-questa-adorabile-lista-di-
angst), if you want to ask for some of them. Or you can send prompts and idea. I 
mostly write angst, if that's not clear enough, and on Francesco... Both as general or 
ships (everyone really.. Novella, Lorenzo, Giuliano... I don't care, I ship him with them
all.)

OK, I think that's all. Let me know what you think and, again, I really apologies for 
the mistakes.

~Aki~
“I can’t believe I let you convince me.” Francesco took a new blanket out of the old wardrobe and threw it at Lorenzo without even turning to check if he caught it or not, he just dug further in the closet for heavier blankets. There wasn’t much left there, after all both him and Guglielmo stopped going to that house long ago, no point on keeping anything there, for sure no point on keeping winter clothes there. Now he wished they did, he wished they forgot something.

That winter held Florence in an icy embrace from the first days of December. Now it was March and snow had fallen all day long. And here they were, stuck in an empty, forgotten house in the middle of the countryside, with snow piling up outside and no way to get warm.

“I couldn’t predict it would have snowed again.” Lorenzo tried to sound optimistic, he always tried to see everything in the best way, even that.

“I hate snow. And cold. - Francesco turned closing a long, dark brown fur cloak around his shoulders, there was something about that sight that made Lorenzo’s heart clench. - And I hate you, Medici.” No, he didn’t, and they both knew it, he walked quietly to him, Lorenzo was only slightly taller than him, not much, just enough for Francesco to have to lift his eyes to look straight at him. Lorenzo suppressed the urge to hold him, embrace him tight against himself, ask forgiveness for something it wasn’t his fault but apparently made him upset. Children could get upset over the smallest things, in that moment Francesco was like a child, maybe it was because of the place they were in, for all the memories it held.

Lorenzo just wanted a quiet place where they would have been safe for a couple of days, away from Florence and their families, together, and that old house was the perfect hideout. Or, well, it was supposed to be.

“I’m sorry… - Lorenzo said holding out a hand to Francesco, inviting him closer. Francesco sighed before closing the distance between them and putting his forehead against Lorenzo’s shoulder. - Next time we’ll go somewhere warm, I promise.”

As the hours went by the snow didn’t seem to stop, big, heavy snowflakes kept falling from the white sky and piled up on the road. Night was closing by and it was clear that returning to Florence would have been impossible for the time being. Not if it kept snowing.

When night fell, the temperature did the same; it was unbearably cold and even Lorenzo was starting to regret his decision.

“Will you tell me a story? So we won’t think of the cold.” Francesco turned to him, the cloak now draped around them both, with all the blankets they found scattered on the bed to cover them. “A story?” He was shivering, even in his voice, he was tired and cold. And shivering. So was Lorenzo, he could feel it next to him.

“About this place or… I don’t know, really. - Lorenzo smiled softly turning his face to him and laying a quick kiss on his shoulder. - I just want to hear your voice.” It wasn’t such an odd request if Francesco had to think about it, it wasn’t the first time Lorenzo said things like that, somehow he liked his voice, especially when Francesco didn’t seem to appreciate it enough for it was too deep and dark. - Like everything else surrounding him. -

“It… It doesn’t have a story. - He said uncertain. He briefly closed his eyes letting memories flood
his mind with warm days and children’s laughters. - Mother took us here when she wanted to run
from Florence, and from Jacopo. It was her house, our sanctuary. Our safe place. Nothing could
ever harm us here.” He gripped the cloak a little tighter and lay his head on Lorenzo. “She said we
would have brought our wives here one day, and our children. She said we could have lived here,
maybe. Away from the city and all its people.” - “She said she would have been there to wait for
us.” He thought, but Lorenzo wasn’t interested in that, right?

“We could. Maybe. If you and Guglielmo want.” Francesco nodded slowly, for some reason the
cold wasn’t so piercing anymore. He wasn’t warm, he could feel it all too clearly, but he wasn’t
even that cold as before. Just a lot more tired. So tired he couldn’t find himself shivering anymore.
Which was strange because he felt cold.

“Could… Will.” Talking suddenly became hard, God, he really wanted to sleep. With a sigh, he
closed his eyes and slipped a little more on Lorenzo, safe as his arms tightened around him.

“You’re freezing Francesco.” He muttered back something and didn’t move, too comfortable as he
was. “I… I don’t think you should be that cold.” He held him tighter, a hand moving slowly on his
head, caressing the dark hair and his face, trying to warm him somehow.

“’t’s fine.” Francesco muttered sleepily. He tried to open his eyes, to remain conscious and stop
Lorenzo for worrying. He always worried for him even though he didn’t deserve it. Lorenzo was
too kind with him, Francesco always wondered what he could see in him to feel attracted, there
were people a lot more beautiful than him, he had a wife who learned to love him, a lover most of
Florence envied, and yet he chose him, it was to him he came at night, him he held tight and
kissed, to him he would whisper things his wife should hear.

“Don’t deserve you…” Lorenzo gently hushed him, even in the freezing cold his hands were warm
and soft against his skin. - He didn’t realize he was only feeling them warm because he was too
cold. - He fell asleep with his soft voice whispering something against his skin, warm breath
cressing his cheek.

“You’ll be fine, love, I promise you. You’ll be fine. I’m sorry, I’m so sorry…” The kiss was soft, it
was almost like Lorenzo wanted to warm him through it.

When he woke up, warm, in a bed he recognized as the one he slept in at the Medici Palace, it was
almost four days later and his brother was just a step away from detaching Lorenzo’s head from his
neck. He looked calm on the outside, standing on feet by the bed as Lorenzo was sitting next to
him holding his hand, but Francesco knew his brother better than anyone else in the world and in
that moment he was planning of killing Lorenzo in the most vicious way he could imagine. But
only Francesco could read those eyes and he would deal with them later. For that moment, just a
little more, he turned to Lorenzo and smiled squeezing his hand a little. There was a sequence of
endless apologies coming out of Lorenzo’s his mouth along with unshed tears.

“You were dying because I wanted to spend a day away from home.” There was no point on
denying that, he was actually right, though Francesco wasn’t immediately aware of the real danger
he had been in. He squeezed the hand tighter bringing back the attention on himself instead of the
blankets, he didn’t spoke, still too tired, but smiled, and Lorenzo leaned in to place a kiss on his
lips.

Chapter End Notes

Written for Starblessed. It wasn't the easiest prompt probably... but I tried my best, I
hope you liked it. <3
Also, it shows when I write directly in english than when I translate from Italian...
(Why is translating my own works so hard?!)
As always, if any of you reader want to leave me a prompt, from the whumptober, or
..I don't know... an angsty prompt of your choice, I'm here and taking requests!! <3

Love
~Aki~