Manifestations

by aeber

Summary

Robin awakes to the sensation of feathers nested in the dip of his back, and despairs.

Alternate universe where instead of the mark of Grima on his hand, Robin manifests wings and horns.
explicit for chapter 12 + start of chapter 13
Chapter Notes

there are better places to nap than on the ground, you know

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Robin awakes with a splitting headache and a persistent ache in his back.

He hasn’t opened his eyes. Instead he opts to curl into himself, as if that would make his shoulders hurt less. The wet squish beneath him tells him that no, he is not within the comfort of a bed. He is, in fact, laying on a large expanse of grass still wet with morning dew. He tries moving his limbs, but they feel like slush. His mouth is filled with a sour, disgusting taste.

His contemplation of his whereabouts is however short lived. He hears footsteps, and the loud, unmistakable clopping of hooves on a well-trodden dirt road. He tries to roll over to no avail, pain still rocketing up his spine whenever he tries to shift his position. A presence—several, closes in on him. For a moment panic seizes his throat and his mind flails frantically. There’s a second of silence, then a springy voice that sounds oddly familiar to him.

“We have to do something.”

“What do you propose we do?”

“Uh, I don’t know-“

He snaps his eyes open. Light blinds him and he shies away as his pupils adjust to the sunlight. He can see now that he’s on a field in the middle of nowhere. The strangeness doesn’t hit him as hard as the surge of emotion when he sees the man in front of him. He recognizes him. He recognizes the blue of his hair, his eyes, the tug of a smile on his lips. Time freezes for a second as he furiously files through his memories to rewind to where he’s seen him before.

He doesn’t remember. In fact, he doesn’t remember a thing, not about himself, not about the world around him. But he’s sure down to the marrow of his bones that the man with the brand on his right arm is someone to be trusted.
How, he has no idea. He just knows.

It scares him.

“I see you’re awake now.”

“Hey there!”

“There are better places to take a nap than on the ground, you know.” Chrom kneels and proffers an outstretched arm. "Give me your hand.”

Dazed, Robin clasps his hand into Chrom’s. He’s pulled up, only gently brushing Chrom’s chest as he does and he feels himself shiver despite the thick coat he’s wearing. The girl watches him with genuine concern and a side of curiosity as he winces in pain. There it is again, the shock of agony coming from his spine in continuous rivulets. He stumbles. Chrom catches him last minute, and the bubbly blonde girl rushes to him, babbling.

“Are you okay? Are you hurt?”

Robin regains his footing and blushes. “No, I’m not hurt. Thanks.” He can hardly look at Chrom now. “Where am I?”

“You’re in Ylisse! Or, at least, the rural parts of it. Oh, I’m Lissa, by the way. That man is-”

“Chrom,” he finishes.

“How did you know?”

Robin shakes his head. “It’s strange… I can’t remember anything else. The only things I remember are my name and yours.” He realizes how suspicious that sounds and adds, “my name… is Robin.”
“Amnesia?” Lissa helpfully provides. “Maybe you hit your head a little too hard. I heard your memories’ll come back eventually.”

“I sure hope so.”

“Let’s get you back to civilization first. Then we can sort things out. Do you have a house, or any relatives or friends to speak of?”

Robin gives him a pained smile. “Not that I can remember.”

Before the exchange can continue, Lissa grabs Chrom and points to a horse in urgent gallop towards them. He hears the rider shouting, in full armor nonetheless, something that sounds vaguely like ‘milord’ and ‘brigands’.

“Chrom, Freddie’s back!”

“Frederick? Did something happen?”

The horse slows beside them. The man doesn’t bother to dismount but directs a lance of fear-inspiring size to a wisp of smoke in the distance. Despite the heat Robin sees no sweat on his brow nor the back of his neck. His posture is straight and steady. He cocks a brow at Robin.

“Milord, the town nearby is nearly overrun with brigands. We must haste at once.”

“Right. Lissa, are you ready?”

She nods, clutching her staff tightly. Frederick turns his horse and measures up Robin menacingly. “And who is this?”

“His name is Robin. He’ll be coming with us.”

“Robin.” Frederick muses over this. “Is it foreign? How exactly did you come across this… person, anyways?”
Robin’s heart sinks. He knows he won’t hold up under the tight scrutiny of the towering knight. He’s about to open his mouth to defend himself when Chrom speaks up.

“We found him collapsed on the ground, unconscious. Lissa thinks it’s a case of amnesia.”

“He could have been robbed by bandits,” Lissa adds, not unhelpfully.

Frederick does not seem convinced. “Milord, it is hardly wise to let any random person to travel with us on such short notice.”

“It’s equally cruel to leave a clueless amnesiac alone on the fields, no? Besides, how can we call ourselves Shepherds if we can’t help even one person?”

Robin holds it on his tongue to ask just what in the world ‘Shepherds’ meant. Did they herd sheep, or…?

He doesn’t linger on it longer as Frederick concedes with a soft grunt. Lissa bounds over to him with a fresh bout of energy while Chrom beckons him over.

“Come. This way.”

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The town is in absolute chaos. Smoke rises to the air in thick, rolling waves, hanging over a sea of flames contained only by frantic townsfolk dumping sand and water around its vicinity. Children cling to their mothers, crying and screaming. Some trip and fall and don’t get up again.

The brigands themselves are easy enough to identify, if not by their maniacal laugh and how each and every one of them are either pillaging abandoned storehouses or terrorizing frightened women. Chrom’s grip on his sword- Falchion, Robin’s mind helpfully supplies- tightens. He draws it from its sheath with a sharp whoosh of air and readies it in front of him. Even the gem topping Lissa’s staff thrums as she gives it an experimental whirl.
He cuts them down like paper. Robin watches in awe as Chrom dances from foot to foot, muscles rippling as he swings Falchion in a wide arc and brings it to bite into the neck of a yelping thug. He yanks it free, sidesteps a desperate thrust and jabs the man in his stomach, tears the blade away, spinning and slashing another down his shoulder. The last man falls by the tip of his blade, shining red with blood, pierced through and pulled out gracefully. He heaves with the effort, panting, sword dropped to his side. Sweat drips off the ends of his hair.

Robin is rendered speechless. Chrom doesn’t revel in his victory, but instead stares at the corpses with an expression akin to regret. He turns to Robin. Only a second later Robin registers how the motionless body on the ground reanimates itself, no, the man isn’t dead, he’s-

By reflex Robin jams a hand into his belt and utters a line of incomprehensible words. Electricity burns through him and surges out from his arm to his fingertips. He sucks in air and hisses at the pain. It sears through his skin, his blood. Every fiber in him seems to be on fire. His vision goes black and he feels himself stagger. Something bursts out in front of him and swathes his surroundings in a deep, chilling cold.

He opens his eyes.

The ground is black and charred around him. Chrom’s assailant, supposedly, is lying on the ground in the form of a withered, mangled corpse. Robin stares in disbelief. He finds purchase on the hard item tucked against his belt and feels along its edges. It’s a tome, bound in fine leather and capped with metal on the corners. Chrom turns and look at him, mouth slightly agape in shock.

Robin lowers his hands to his side. He hears Chrom’s voice, but can’t understand him. His head is spinning. He tries to walk, to do anything at all but collapse on the ground.

He fails. The last thing he remembers is a flash of white and the dull thud of his back hitting the ground. Not again, he thinks, before the darkness takes him and swallows him whole.

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Robin wakes up for the second time feeling like wet sludge. This time, however, he’s wrapped in something comfortable, and he has a vague recollection of past events. That isn’t to say he’s in good condition, though, as the same aching pains him as he sits up abruptly.

“Where am I!” He yells without meaning to. All three people look at him from behind the fire. “Oh,”
he says self-consciously. He sees that Chrom is without his cape. He’s about to ask when he looks down and finds out. He’s wrapped in it. Color rises to his cheeks as he clumsily peels off the layers.

“About your cape- ah, I’m sorry.” He fumbles with the clasp. It’s a little more complicated than he would like to admit. Ylissian climate is colder than he had expected, and he rubs his arms unconsciously before going back to unclasping the cloak.

“Keep it.” Chrom smiles at him while tending to some sort of stew cooking above the fire. “You seem cold.”

“And you’re not?” Robin looks pointedly at his one bare arm. “It’s freezing.”

Chrom gestures at himself. “I’m nearly sweating here. I hardly need it to singe as I’m cooking, anyways.”

Robin stops fiddling with the metal in defeat and looks curiously at the pot. “What’s inside?”

“Bear meat,” Frederick scoffs.

“Bear meat,” Lissa agrees, scooping out a bowl to Robin with a glint in her eyes.

He hesitates. “I can’t possibly.”

“No need for formality. It’s good!” He can sense the disdain in Frederick’s expression.

“If you insist.”

It does indeed taste good. The full extent of his hunger reveals itself as he gulps down the stew ravenously in one go. Frederick looks like he might as well have seen someone eat a bucketful of frogs.

“Does it actually taste good?”
“It’s delicious.” Robin says as he licks the rim of the bowl discreetly. “What?”

“You and my brother are exactly the same.” Lissa glances at Chrom and him incredulously. “Ugh.”

“Hey!”

“Can’t say I disagree, milady.”

“I guess it does taste familiar, that’s all.”

“Familiar? Do you remember something then?”

“I don’t. Maybe from where I’m from, I’m used to more exotic foods.”

“It’s true that Plegia is known for its wild cuisine.”

Lissa and Chrom fall silent.

“Plegia? What’s- I mean where’s that?”

“You seriously don’t know?”

They tell him about the country of Plegia and its deserts. With further prodding Lissa tells him, reluctantly, of the holy war that happened over a decade ago. She tells him of Gangrel, the Mad King, and the Grima-worshipping Grimleal. Now that he knows, Robin can definitely see the similarities. His coat, for one, bears markings eerily similar to eyes on each sleeve. Just like the six eyes of the fell dragon.

“And that’s why Freddie here was so prickly.” She finishes with a flourish. “Of course, once he saw you save Chrom, he-“
“It is getting dark.” Frederick interrupts. “We should turn in for the night.”

Lissa looks like she’s about to object but a yawn from her drives the point home. Robin helps with cleaning things up and setting up camp, which turns out to be not as hard as he thought it would be since Frederick’s done most of the work already. He settles into the tent awkwardly sandwiched between Chrom and Frederick. Sleep doesn’t come to him as easily as someone who’s just woken up from a short coma. Nevertheless, he lulls himself asleep to the ambience outside. He’s barely slipped into a half-lucid state when he feels the man in front of him shift and leave.

It jerks him awake. Now, he’s contemplating moving and potentially waking Frederick, or laying still until Chrom comes back. Chrom could just be taking a night stroll, or relieving himself outside. You could never know with these things. So he rolls on his back and stares at the ceiling, counting the number of times a stray tentstring has swayed in the wind.

All of a sudden there’s a commotion outside. Robin and Frederick leap up at the same time. Robin grabs his coat and rushes out after the knight. They head right after the source of the noise, and quicken their place after the explosion reverberates beneath their feet. He makes it just in time to see another blue-haired person talking to Chrom, the sword on his hip an exact replica of Chrom’s.

“You may call me Marth.” The man replies briskly, before slinking away to the shadows. Chrom is visibly shaken, as well as Lissa. Frederick asks what’s happened, and they tell him eagerly.

Robin only listens to half of what they say. Because that thing in the air, even when nobody acknowledges it, sends a shiver down his spine. He can’t see it. But he can sure feel it. It fills him with an unknown energy that buzzes in his head, his back, his fingertips.

He doesn’t comment on it, seeing how Lissa is holding her staff in a white knuckled grip. He follows them back to camp, unsure of what to say. And nobody says anything, only that everyone feigns sleep later till morning.

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They head to Ylisstol on foot. It was, apparently, a ‘short walk’ that took the entirety of morning and most of the afternoon. Robin attempts to cut back on his questions about the townsfolk there, doesn’t succeed, and ends up chatting with Chrom the whole way. He learns of the Shepherds and of the Exalt, Emmeryn.
He spends some time gawking at the wares vendors are selling and some more staring at the baker’s stalls for an inappropriately long time. Chrom catches him doing this and laughs. He walks over to the stall and returns with a bag smelling of freshly baked pastries. Robin stutters, apologizing and refusing the offer. They end up splitting the berry pie and earning a glare from Frederick.

They act like old friends who’ve known each other for a long time. Chrom goes to point this out and Robin playfully jabs at him for being so friendly with a stranger.

“That’s the strange part, isn’t it? It feels like I’ve known you forever, in another lifetime. Like two halves of the same whole.” Chrom muses, thoughtful.

Robin’s breath hitches. A sense of déjà vu washes over him. He barely manages to save the conversation with a clever quip and the banter continues without any hiccups. Lissa teases them for flirting with each other and Chrom makes a comment on Lissa’s bad habit of listening on others.

It really does feel like they’ve known each other since the dawn of time.

As they reach the gates of the castle Robin is ushered aside to some obscure wing. He wonders if he’s done something wrong and panics. The serving girl reassures him that no, he has not. In fact he’s going to meet the exalt, which is in all practicality, the queen and ruler of Ylisse.

He panics even more.

At long last he’s left alone to scrub down in a simple yet elegant bathroom. He soaks himself in and sighs as the hot water scalds his skin and he can finally wash the grime out of his hair. The steam mists the mirrors mounted on the far side of the bath. He wipes it away with his palm idly. He catches a glimpse of something sticking to his back as he turns around and nearly falls out of the bath in surprise.

It’s not a parasite. It doesn’t itch, so it’s not a rash either. He touches his backside to the best of his ability and feels the wet, scale-like texture. He pulls and rubs at it and on his hand are several strands of wet, black, not exactly hair. Fur? He thinks animal people exist somewhere, but he’s not very sure. And he would definitely know if he was one himself. He wipes the mirror clean and glances over his shoulder to get a good look.

It spans from his shoulder blades to the end of his spine. He blanches at the sight. Feathers, small
enough to still be tiny nubs, sprout from the center of his spine and outward, not quite wings yet. It reminds him of an unsuccessful skin transplantation from an oversized raven. Was he an escapee from some sick human experimentation facility? Unlikely. And now that his hair is sopping wet, he can see two bumps on either side of his head, right behind his temples. It’s not obvious. He runs a hand through his hair to feel them, and sure enough, they’re there. Hard enough to be horns.

Oh, Naga, he thinks. I’m a monster.

He bites his lip in thought. He can’t show this to anyone. Not Chrom, whom he’s just met the day before. Not his sister or Frederick, and certainly not the exalt herself. For now, he can only keep it to himself and hope that he comes across some information on just what in the world he is.

There’s a knock on the door that makes him flail behind the folding screen. Turns out it’s only a servant bringing him fresh clothing. He calls out his thanks and bubbles in the water miserably.

Eventually his fingers prune and he has to get out. He dries himself with a towel and puts on the simple shirt and trousers provided to him. It doesn’t hide the feathers that go up to the base of his neck as well as he would like. After some deliberation he dons his coat as well.

He’s immediately led to the throne room the moment the door to the baths close. Anxiety pools in his gut as the servant leads him through the twists and turns of the castle. He sees Chrom and Lissa waiting for him outside the looming archways.

The sight reassures him more than he would like admit to. He breathes in deeply and exhales. He’s not nervous or anything.

He just wishes that the feathers on his back would scratch on his shirt less.

Chapter End Notes

Thanks for reading! Proofread and beta’d by myself but if anyone would like to volunteer to beta you are welcome, pls (or scream at me about anything) Also is this a good idea should I even continue this
Chapter 2

Chapter Notes

By the power of your comments I have risen to write yet another chapter within 24 hours. I've been writing since morning. Take my blood sacrifice.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Dumbstruck, Robin trips over his own words like a spluttering fool.

“Brother? You- Exalt Emmeryn and- then Lissa is also?”

Even if he doesn’t want to believe it, he can see it as clear as day. The brand, for one, is present in both the exalt and Chrom. The hair shared between her and Lissa. Robin mentally curses himself for being so crude to both of them on the streets and in the rural wilderness out at the border.

“Forgive me, milord, or is it Prince Chrom?” He doesn’t know the specifics to royal titles and for this he blames his amnesia. “I didn’t know that you were royalty.” He nods to Lissa.

Chrom blinks. “What is there to apologize for? And- Chrom is fine. I wish you didn’t call me that, everyone does nowadays. Damn if I can’t make any acquaintances without them treading around me like I’m some fragile glass sculpture.”

Lissa joins in. “Princess this, princess that. Just call us like you would with anyone!”

“Wouldn’t it be improper?”

“Not in any way! We’re not the exalt, like Emm here. Technically, we’re not even royalty since we joined the Shepherds.”

“Then… Captain Chrom.” He sees Chrom visibly wince at that. “Not any good, huh?”
“It greatly joys me to see that you are on good terms with my brother. However that,” Robin tenses. “I still have a duty to my people. And that duty includes protecting the militia from potential threats. Robin, you are a foreign mystery, and if we take your words as truth, then you have no recollection of your past or anything related to your identity.”

“I understand.”

“Would it be possible for us to look at your belongings? Perhaps there would be some clue hidden there.”

He’s left his old clothes at the baths, he explains, while rummaging through his coat pockets for several not exactly odd items including a half-full inkwell, a gold-tipped quill, a compass, a couple of coins and procured from a larger inner pocket, the metal capped tome. Ominously bound in black leather and lettered with gold, its weight is familiar in Robin’s hands. It did save Chrom’s life once, after all.

Emmeryn inspects every single item meticulously. She declares that the coins amount to a meagre amount, both in Feroxian and Ylissean, that could buy him exactly six apples and a pint of ale on a good day. Robin had apparently wandered into Ylisse penniless. She arches a brow at the tome and inspects the cover. She can’t seem to read it. When handed to Robin, he admits that it looks readable, but in fact he can’t make sense of any of the letters when strung together.

“It looks like Plegian, but it’s not Plegian.” Emmeryn comments, leafing through the pages. “The pages are mostly empty, save for several scribbles on the first pages. That, is in Ylissean. It looks to be a journal in its most early stages.”

“Oh.” Robin looks over at the tome curiously.

As she flips it through, a slim piece of paper flutters out. With surprising dexterity she catches it between her fingers and scans the print.

“A document of Feroxian residence,” she declares after what seems like an eternity. She holds it under the light and rubs the paper between her fingers. “Genuine, unless the making of a very realistic forgery.” Robin’s shoulders sag with relief. “The evidence leads to that he’s an unfortunate immigrant with a case of amnesia, or a traveling scribe. Either way, his behavior leads me to believe that he’s not a seedy character.”
Chrom gives Robin a pat on his shoulder and grins. “Welcome to the Shepherds.”

“Huh?”

“Unless you don’t want to?”

“No, I’d be honored, to say the least. But what about Frederick? Or the others?”

“They won’t mind.”

Robin isn’t convinced. At the very same moment a guard hurries into the throne room. Phila, Emmeryn calls her. She looks at Robin with the same cautiousness Frederick gave him. It’s understandable. Robin doesn’t trust himself either. She reports, wary of Robin’s presence, about the Risen. Emmeryn relates Chrom’s story to her and Robin can literally feel the suspicion rolling off her in waves.

Chrom volunteers to go to Regna Ferox to seek aid. Emmeryn agrees for him to go. The Shepherds dismiss themselves and Emmeryn acknowledges Robin with a reassuring nod. At least he has the exalt’s favor now. Lissa bounds around excitedly as she introduces him to the other Shepherds, though he hasn’t met them yet.

“I’m sure they’ll love me,” Robin says dryly.

Lissa doesn’t catch his sarcasm and continues. Chrom nudges his sister to stop overloading Robin with information and let him rest, he’s tired from all the walking. She grudgingly quiets down. It’s not until he’s walked to a room and the siblings stop that he realizes that he’s being walked to his own, personal quarters.

The room isn’t big, by any standards. His old clothes are freshly laundered and dry, probably by a combination of fire and wind magic. The bed is a lot more comfortable than it looks. He sets his things on the dresser and picks up the tome.

The exalt said it was a journal. It’s not a journal. Were they unable to feel the energy emanating from the tome? He might have written some words in there- he looks for the scribbles Emmeryn mentioned and finds it to be near incomprehensible. It looks more like chicken scratch than unruly scribbling. Here and there he finds out words like ‘sunny’ and ‘headache, the cold is terrible, why
did I...”. Besides that, through, he can’t decipher whatever he’s wrote. He tries writing something beneath those lines and it only confirms that it’s his own handwriting.

He might be using a tome for a diary, but it doesn’t change the fact that it’s a tome. Drawing power from it feels as easy as lifting a finger. He can’t remember for the life of him how the conventional tome looks like. He summons a slight breeze to blow the candle out and relights it with magic. It sends a slight tingle up his arm. He decides that it’s a little derogatory to use a weapon of mass destruction to do mundane chores and gets up to put away the candle himself.

The darkness makes him see things in the shadows. He thinks he can see the silhouette of an unseen being looming over him. Too tired to care, he dismisses it furtively and floats away into sleep. He dreams of thunder and ruin. He dreams, he wakes fitfully, he hits the covers and forgets about his dream when daybreak comes.

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He greets the rest of the Shepherds with an awkward hello. Well-rested, he shakes hands with Sully and Stahl, exchanges out polite pleasantries for Ricken and Miriel, tries not to offend Maribelle, tries not to get offended by Vaike and ducks under Virion’s flirtatious comments. He nearly misses Kellam in the background and shakes hands with him too. Kellam looks like he’s about to burst into tears of joy at this.

With introductions done they head off to Regna Ferox. Robin has no idea where that is. He follows dutifully. Everyone keeps their distance except Chrom and Lissa, who he’s grateful for. Soon they’re drawn away to conversations with the other Shepherds and that leaves Robin alone without anchorage. He resigns himself to his lonely fate because really, who would want to associate with a stranger popping out of seemingly nowhere? Though nobody voices it out loud, the atmosphere reads: Robin, Plegian amnesiac from invading country, intruder upon the Shepherds.

He makes it his temporary hobby to observe his comrades. He notices Miriel’s tomes clipped to her belt and stares at it discreetly. She makes direct eye contact with him and demands if he has any Plegian knowledge about tome usage and the sort. Amnesia, she hums thoughtfully. She asks him about his age, his parentage, religion and homeplace.

“Retrograde amnesia,” she diagnoses, holding up her glasses. “Did you hit your head before you collapsed?”

He has no idea, he replies. He did feel pretty shit when he woke up, though.
“It’s explained, then.”

“Can you use magic without a tome?” Robin asks abruptly.

“Theoretically, yes. An experienced spellcaster can cast simple spells without the guidance or power from a tome, though when done mistakenly it can cause serious drawbacks like unconsciousness, disfigurement, burns and painful scarring. There’s a number of people who’ve tried casting lightning spells without tomes and end up cooked from the inside.” Robin swallows. “I trust that you haven’t tried something as reckless as that?”

He has to weave a story for himself, for his all his trust is worth. “I suppose I got lucky, then.”

Miriel gasps, along with half of the Shepherds. Robin gets a little ticked off by how many people are eavesdropping, but secretly sighs in relief that he’s not so much of an enigma now that they’ve learnt a little more about him. He removes his gloves to show his fingers, grey and hardened down the fingertips and the discolorment along his veins.

“How?”

“I casted some sort of fire spell on a brigand. I think I overshot it, though. Will I ever recover?”

“With time. You could have been roasted alive. Consider yourself lucky.”

“Why didn’t you just punch him?” Ricken asks. “Would’ve been better than being burnt to ashes.”

“I wasn’t close enough. He was right behind Chrom.”

The small crowd that’s gathered around him murmur among themselves. Robin takes it upon himself to squeeze information about the world he’s in from them. He rules out that he’s possibly one of the Taguel since the bird tribes have gone extinct centuries ago. Manakete, he considers. Dragons don’t have feathers, do they?
No, they don’t, laughs Maribelle. They would look like giant chickens if they did, wouldn’t they?

Robin nods along weakly, and despairs.

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Regna Ferox is freezing. The chill soaks into Robin’s bones as he snuggles further into his coat. The white flecks are called snow. The piles of wet mulch is also called snow. And those? The endless, blinding white layered on top of what should be grass? That’s also snow. Robin has never seen something more confusing.

It’s frozen water, like ice, but better, Ricken tells him. Robin resists the urge to drop and roll in it and cover himself with the fluffy material. He learns that it’s also the thing that makes it so cold and damp. Everyone is unaffected except him. Why? He’s already worn an extra shirt beneath. Two, in fact. Damn Ylisseans.

The fort is foreboding in the raging snowstorm. The walls extend forever to the sides; the only entrance stands before them in the form of a single gate guarded by an excess of guards. As they get into range they’re attacked by a barrage of arrows. Everyone kneels to shield in a frantic hurry.

“What in the heavens?” Chrom comes forth to shout at the captain that’s standing between the battlements. “I come in the name of House Ylisse to seek audience with the khans!”

“Could’ve fooled me. I’ve lancers at the ready, boy. Not a step closer.”

“Emm won’t like this,” Chrom mumbles. “We come in peace!”

“We can’t let everyone who claims so in, can we? Show me proof that you’re with the Ylisseans, or I’ll strike you down right here!”

With that, a barrage of spears rains down from the sky. Chrom staggered back in alarm, but it’s too late. Robin stuffs his hand into his pocket and power surges into his body. The spell takes form immediately. At the last moment remembers what Miriel has said. He whips around to snatch Ricken’s wind tome from his belt and randomly snaps it open as a storm bursts from his gloved hand. It’s a low class Elwind, but he can pass it off on his mana. The blast empties a tunnel through the flurries of snow. Their ears pop with the pressure; several cover their ears at the sharp whoosh it
gives. The spears split into tiny pieces and get slammed into the fort walls, where the metal bits leave sizable indents. There’s no snow anymore. He’s blown silence in the blizzard.

Everyone looks at him in awe, including Chrom. The prince is left standing in the aftershock, a path clear of snow and debris leading straight to him. Robin’s mouth feels dry and his head spins. He clutches at air and staggers. Elwind drops to the ground. The same throbbing shoots up his entire back and numbs his limbs.

“Healer…” He rasps. Lissa rushes forward and nearly shoves her staff into his chest. He kneels to stop himself from swaying into the ground. The magic is very slowly filling his blood with energy and clears his vision a bit. A hot waterskin is thrust in front of him and he drinks gratefully. Chrom runs up to him and asks Lissa if he’s okay.

“I don’t know… I’ve never seen anyone do that with a wind tome, an Elwind no less. He’s completely overexerted himself.”

“I’m okay. I’m fine.” Robin gets up to his feet. “I just need- I just-“ He steadies himself. “A little more time.”

“That, we can’t give.” Even Frederick sounds concerned. He gestures to the booming war cries of the Feroxi. “I’m afraid we’ll have to fight.”

“Lissa, you stay with Robin. Shepherds, to me!”

Lissa is giving her all in healing him, he gets it. But she’s staring at the sky and at Chrom who’s charging headfirst into battle without second thought. Everyone follows behind in sloppy formation. Once the fighting starts what vague assembly they have falls completely to pieces as everyone is caught up in their own messy brawl.

“Sumia’s here!” Lissa exclaims suddenly, and Robin looks up. A pegasus knight is flying to them full speed, lance at the ready. He watches. A familiar feeling blossoms within him as she flies within range of an archer. A harsh yank in his gut tells him that this isn’t good. He takes off running and screams at the top of his lungs.

“Sumia!” He yells, uncaring that Lissa’s also shouting for him. “Fall back! To the left!”
By the breadth of a hair she dodges the arrow that would have lodged itself into her pegasus’ flank. Robin keeps shouting instructions while clutching at his sides. The throbbing’s ceased considerably, thanks to Lissa. Don’t scatter, hold formation, Chrom, get over to Maribelle so that she doesn’t get stabbed in her leg. Archers behind melee fighters, mages to counter armored units. It all comes to him so easily he doesn’t actively realize what he’s doing. Very soon they advance to a point where even Robin picks up a sword from a fallen foe and joins the fray in swiping and jabbing. He holds the hilt like any other experienced swordsman would and pirouettes to wedge the sword in a guard’s gaping mouth.

He keeps instructing them, of course. They follow without question once they see the effect it’s having on the Feroxi. The Shepherds are pushing forward, quickly and absolute. They hold till the captain, Raimi, concedes. She takes one look at Chrom’s brand and her fallen comrades and leads them to the khans wordlessly.

It’s an overwhelming victory for Robin. He rejoices with the rest of the Shepherds. They ask him about his genius in tactics, his last minute display of swordplay. Of course he doesn’t remember. He describes how the terrain lays itself in front of him like a map and it becomes a little like playing chess, with real lives at stake. Lance beats swords, and swords beat axes, he explains. Rock, paper, scissors. Miriel takes out a small notebook and her wrist flicks as she jots down things Robin says.

The Feroxian capital is warmer. Robin can finally take off his extra layers. As he does so, he finds stray feathers strewn inside of his shirt. His throat constricts. He’s the only one around, being the only person who has to put away clothing. He strips himself bare from the waist up and sure enough, there’s enough feathers to pluck clean a pigeon. He wants a mirror. He can’t find one. The spreading horror on his back is enough for him to touch without difficulty, though, so he has an impression of how bad it’s gotten.

The feathers are longer, sleeker. They stem from his trapezius, growing broader down his spine. If he tries wiggling his arms they move accordingly. He’s turning into a bird, he thinks. He’s definitely cursed.

He can’t contemplate any longer for Chrom calls for him from afar to meet the khans. He hastily throws the feathers under the wagon and into the bushes, redresses, and wraps his coat around him like a safety blanket. He complains about the cold when asked why he’s buttoned up his coat.

The khans are waiting. Flavia briefs them on why she can’t rule over her counterpart, Basilio. Chrom valiantly volunteers to be her champion and he grabs Robin as he rushes into the arena. The man they’re facing is unmistakable.

It’s Marth, the one who they met in the forest. He lowers his version of Falchion when he sees Robin and Chrom emerging. The gates close, clanging. Chrom and Marth circle each other.
Warily, they approach. Robin, with baited breath, waits for the first exchange.

He doesn’t miss the tilt of Marth’s torso as the man gives Robin a once over. He doesn’t know why Marth is so interested in him. He’s interested in why another blue-haired man has a duplicate of Falchion, though. He’s interested in why his stance almost exactly parallels Chrom’s.

Robin falls back, and watches.

Chapter End Notes

"dragons don't look like giant chickens"
-me, and then immediately remembering Fae
beta'd and proofread again, by yours truly. Volunteers welcome to beta or scream at moi, thanks for sticking along!
Chapter 3

Chapter Notes

I got sick lol
fueled on paracetamol and your lovely comments + kudos I present to you... a new chapter. I am dying of sleepiness but i must post before midnight. Sorry I didn't update yesterday, I was p busy with school stuff and piano lessons. It really motivates me to write seeing positive responses and I really struggled in writing this one after my impulse writing phase passed. Thank you as always!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

It happens so fast Robin can hardly react. Steel kisses steel and leap apart as if repelled by a magnetic field. They clash again. Light bounces off Falchion as Chrom turns his wrist for a parry. It strikes true, strikes hot. The metallic ringing reverberates throughout the arena.

Marth stills his blade. Chrom brandishes it in front of him, all speed and fury. There’s the difference between them. Chrom is rash, hotblooded. Marth is all skill and patience. Chrom may be older than him, but the way Marth holds himself speaks volume of training behind each movement.

There it is again. Marth eyes Robin cautiously before focusing on his opponent. Chrom sees this, sees the opening and dives for it. Falchion turns in a beautiful arc, regrettably, through air, slinks back and cuts the shadows once more. Marth flashes his version of the blade back and forth. His footwork mimics Chrom’s and they both plunge into each other.

Chrom swerves and heaves his sword up. Marth releases his grip and darts for his stomach. He almost draws blood. Not today, not tomorrow, Chrom overpowers the jab with sheer strength and pressures him with a flurry of blows. Marth blocks each move expertly yet a final swing smarts him on his cheek.

A sliver of blood lines Falchion’s edge. Marth hisses, stung, and grounds his heel into the ground. For a second his sword trembles in his grip. It’s gone the next moment he goes for a low sweep. Chrom brushes the blade away and narrowly avoids a feint to his side. He holds Falchion close to him to block the next few strikes. His arms quiver with the effort. Marth roars in fury and releases the chokehold- he skids back and leaps upward.
Robin’s only seen Chrom perform this once, during an onslaught of brigands. It didn’t seem humanly possible to jump so high. Yet Marth executes a perfect somersault and lands blade screeching against blade, blood pouring into steel. The force is enough to kick up a cloud of dust around him and Chrom is knocked off-kilter.

“Who taught you to fight like this?” He demands on one knee, narrowly avoiding the follow-up slash that could have sliced his toes clean off. Marth lunges at him.

“My father!”

They exchange blows, steel burnishing. Robin very nearly forgets that it’s not a duel but a battle of champions. He’s reminded of the fact when a column of lightning singes his coat. He counters with the Elthunder he snitched from their supplies.

The power is a lot crisper, fresher than his personal tome, lacking the endless pour of energy he’s so accustomed to. He fires a clean shot and blasts the mage against the arena wall.

He braces himself for the pain. Surprisingly, nothing comes except for a pleasant prickling at his fingertips. Another swordsman tries to break up the fiery duel between the two and Robin sends a shot of electricity his way. It only temporarily disables him enough for Robin to take on a third, an axe wielder with a fair amount of resistance. Robin dodges a blunt swing and reaches for his nameless journal.

He hesitates. He can’t risk passing out as he did the first time.

He opts for the bronze sword on his hip. The weight of the axe leaves his opponent open for attacks and he gets in a lucky hit. Meanwhile, Chrom is still locked in mortal combat with Marth, matching blade for blade. Robin fends off the lackeys well enough for them to finish up their fight, Chrom emerging victorious just as Robin grinds the tip of his sword into the dirt beside his fallen quarry.

Marth slumps, kneeling. Chrom isn’t without his injuries. He clutches a bleeding arm and limps where Marth had kicked him after he was disarmed. He helps Marth up and the man looks at Chrom in bewilderment. Or, at least what Robin thinks it is. He can’t really tell with the mask on.

Chrom clasps Robin’s hand and holds it up, shouting for all the spectators to see. Basilio grounds his teeth in annoyance as Flavia laughs and congratulates them with a pat on their shoulders.
“It’s been ages since I’ve held full power.” She smiles smugly at Basilio. “Ylisse shall have her alliance, of course. I’ll provide the troops and soldiers you need.”

Chrom thanks her profusely. Flavia invites them to a feast before they leave in a warm show of hospitality. She practically pushes them into the dining hall and calls for food and music. It’s also the first proper meal Robin’s had with the Shepherds. He drools over the roasted chicken and lamb chops. Chrom eats beside him heartily, clapping him on the back and describing in detail how Robin had guarded him against the Feroxi.

“Three!” Chrom exclaims between mouthfuls of pork. “I’ve never seen someone so good at using both weapons!”

“I couldn’t have done it without you. Your level of swordplay was extraordinary. You practically wrenched the sword out of his grip. I mean,” Robin babbles, “grabbing the blade with your bare hands? I swear, Chrom, you’re either stupidly reckless or very brave. Oh, and that parry-“

Lissa interrupts him, coughing. “Yes, yes, we know. You’re enamored with my brother’s amazingly hot sword skills.”

Robin flushes to his ears. “No, that’s not what I meant, I just couldn’t help but notice-“

“-his hotness when he’s done fighting? Gods, I don’t understand what you see in Chrom.”

“N-no!”

“It’s okay.” Chrom smirks. “I know how handsome I am. You can admit it.”

Robin wrings his hands in defeat. His cheeks are burning. “I swear! You two really are siblings!”

The banter descends into further merriment as the feast goes on. Robin eats until he wants to throw up. Chrom, with his endless void for a stomach, chugs down the beer and slams it onto the wood. Leftover bits of gris and bones pile his plate as he kicks off from the table.

They go to their respective guest rooms in the khans’ castle. Robin is there when Lissa helps Chrom
to his quarters and Chrom waves at him at the junction where they separate.

“G’night, Robin” he slurs. Lissa frowns as he stumbles.

“Good night, Chrom. Sleep well.”

“C’mon, bro. Ugh, this is why I don’t let you drink out of the castle.”

Robin’s stomach does a little flip as Chrom smiles drunkenly at him and heads off for the night. His pulse quickens, he can hear his heart in his throat. He shouldn’t have drunk that half pint of beer, he thinks. It must be the alcohol that’s making his face heat up so.

He washes his face in the basin and flops onto the bed. The events of the day plays out in his mind, the fort, the arena, Chrom. Chrom? His thoughts fog over as he drifts off into sleep.

- 

He figures out that he’s slept on his tomes the day after. The discomfort turns into a dull pain the entire day and he regrets that he didn’t take his coat off to sleep. The blizzard’s intensified, and the trek back is tedious. He gets minor frostbite on his nose. Snow gets in his hair and he pulls up his hood to defend himself against the wet flecks.

They find themselves back in Ylisse in three days time and Robin could cry in joy for the warmth. It’s autumn and the occasional gust steals his body heat still, but compared to Regna Ferox it’s a slight breeze. The trees have browned since they left and red, dry leaves litter the ground.

The Shepherds live in their private barracks a little away from the castle. Yet Robin has no home to go to, no place to put his foot down in. They scatter as quick as they gathered a week ago, leaving Robin standing with Lissa and Chrom.

Where will he go, he has no idea. Perhaps he can go out to town and find a good place to work, if his Plegian descent doesn’t betray him.

Chrom and Lissa stare at him expectantly.
He edges back. “What?”

“Aren’t you going to come with us?”

And at that moment, Robin knows, that he’s found his place to go home to.

- 

He feels oddly out of place within the Shepherds. Partly because he has no past to speak of, and partly because of how sociable everyone is. Stahl tries his best to make him comfortable in awkward silences by telling stories about how he once caught his arm in a tree’s hollow and had to wait for half a day for Sully to realize that he was gone and rescue him.

He listens to Miriel’s muted excitement as she explains the various forms that wind magic can take. She pries information from him bit by bit. For science, she declares, as she piles a stack of tomes in front of him and has him test his strength against racks of training dummies.

Ricken is apparently apprenticed beneath Miriel and has his fair share of curiosity into Robin’s capabilities. He almost gives himself a concussion trying to cast a wind spell without a tome and Miriel scolds him harshly for following Robin’s example.

Maribelle chides him on his fashion choice. You should ditch the coat, she says the moment he steps in her presence. It’s not fashionable in this weather. Robin has to physically prevent her from removing his coat forcefully. It is, after all, the only thing hiding the feathery mass on his back.

He accepts Maribelle’s invite for tea one day and finds Sumia there. He had thought the cakes were store bought. Apparently not. Sumia had baked them personally and her shy smile when he compliments her could dazzle a rainstorm into sunshine.

They give and give and Robin can only take without returning the favor. He’s an amnesiac without any quirks to show, any stories to tell. It weighs on him every time he waits until everyone’s asleep and he sneaks into the baths to hastily shower. The water’s cold past nighttime when nobody would even think of cleaning themselves. He takes care to dispose of any stray feathers that have dropped off onto the floor. Afterwards he sleeps with his coat on in case someone tries to shake him awake.

He discovers the library entirely by chance. He’s leaning on a wall for support when it gives way and he stumbles into the archives. He coughs himself into a fit as he takes in a sharp breath. The dust tumbles in the slit of sunlight shooting in between the velvet curtains.

He wanders the aisles dreamily. The brush of paper under his fingers reminds him of a memory far, far away. Within an hour he’s sat on one of the desks, a pile of books next to him. It’s a text about the holy war between Ylisse and Plegia. He finds solace in knowing that Emmeryn was the one who ended the crusade. The cold war between the two halidoms has been going on for almost a decade now, meaning that the Shepherds were formed just a few years ago.

He imagines Chrom in his youth, having just learnt how to hold a sword, demanding his sister for allowance to form the Shepherds.

He doesn’t remember falling asleep when he wakes up with a stack of books as pillows. He heads back, washes his face in a basin of cold water, gets breakfast and slips back into the library. He reads until night and then he only leaves to get a candle to keep reading. He brings his stack with him to the barracks in the morning.

“I knew I’d find you here,” Robin hears one late evening. The voice startles him so much he drops his books onto the floor. He pivots on his heel and sure enough, it’s Chrom.

“I thought you had your royal duties to attend to.” Curse his butterfingers, Robin drops one of his books again and nudges it with his boot.

“Not really. I’ve just been handling some of Emm’s paperwork now that I’m at the castle.” He sets a tray onto the table and hands Robin the fallen book. “You missed dinner.”

“No, I haven’t.”

Chrom pulls out a chair beside the accumulation of books on the table and pushes them away to make way for the tray. He gestures at the windows. “You sure?”

“You didn’t have to.”

“You need to eat.”
“I don’t think I should, in the library.” Robin sits besides Chrom and slides a bowl over. “Thanks.”

It’s steaming hot. The soup is delicious and Robin guzzles it down without caring if he’s going to spoil the books. Chrom watches him eat with a slight smile on his face. Robin’s heart nearly skips a beat when he looks up.

“Is it good?”

“Mhmm.” He pauses. “You didn’t eat?”

“Ah, no, I did, a little.”

“You didn’t eat.” Robin deadpans. He pushes one of the dishes to him. “Here.”

He can see Chrom internally debating with himself so Robin places the fork in his palm. He takes another bowl to himself and they both dine in silence. There’s too much for Robin to finish himself, anyways.

“Compliments to the chef,” he announces, silverware clattering back onto the tray the same time Chrom does. The food really is good.

“You’ve been reading up on… Ylissean history?”

“Better to know more about the country you’re in.”

“And Plegian.” His finger trails down the spines of worn, ancient books. “And Feroxian. Is this a dictionary?”

“Some of it isn’t in Ylissean.”

Chrom carefully slides the dictionary out and inspects it. “Robin, this is Valmese.”
“I know.”

“How many languages do you even speak?”

“So far, four.”

“Four.”

“Is that a lot?”

Chrom nods.

“Makes you wonder, doesn’t it. I can’t fathom what kind of position would require me to be fluent in so many tongues.”

“A translator, maybe. It would explain the ink and pen.”

“It would. Or I could be a traveling swindler, looking to cheat the money out of nations worldwide.”

“You wouldn’t!”

“Oh, but how do you know I haven’t duped you?”

“You haven’t.” Chrom says fiercely. “I just know.”

“That’s a lot of faith you’re putting in a stranger.” Robin murmurs. He closes his eyes and stretches his shoulders.

“You did save my life. I’d say that at least amounts to something.”
“I was lying unconscious in the middle of nowhere.”

“Could've been bandits.”

“I have amnesia.”

“You hit your head too hard.”

“I- Oh, this is ridiculous. Why are you defending me from myself?”

“Because I trust you.”

“You shouldn’t,” Robin mumbles. “Not when I don’t trust myself.”

They fall silent. Chrom mindlessly sorts through the titles strewn haphazardly on the desk. These are the ones Robin’s read and gone through. Books that are useful enough for him to cross-reference while reading other texts. Chrom hums as he squints at one of the covers.

“Didn’t think you were one for ornithology.”

“I’m not.”


Robin sucks in a sharp breath. He’d forgotten to put that one away while researching the Taguel. It didn’t give him much clue about his feathery problem, but he kept it on the table nonetheless.

“I thought the illustrations looked nice,” he says lamely.
Thankfully, Chrom doesn’t push the topic. Robin successfully steers the conversation to some mundane thing about pegasi and migrating patterns. A candle has to be lit before they realize it and they keep going even after dusk.

He really is beautiful, Robin realizes. His laugh is loud, echoing. He gestures animatedly when he talks about his fellow Shepherds. His tone shifts to a grudging exasperation when he talks about Lissa and goes back to admiration at the mention of his older sister. Halfway through Robin gets distracted by Chrom’s hair- so smooth, so blue-

Chrom catches his chair right as he begins to tip over.

“No, you’re not boring me at all. I’m just,” Robin yawns. “A bit tired. What time is it?”

“Past midnight, I reckon. You should go get some sleep.”

“You’re right.” Robin pushes off from the table. “You didn’t expect me to agree, did you?”

“Saw right through me.”

”Too bad. Your sister’ll have my head if she knows I held you up this late.”

“I’ll send a maid to clean this up. Just go to bed.”

“Aye, captain.” Robin rubs his eyes. “Is it just me, or are there two of you?”

“…Do you need a shoulder?”

“If you’re offering,” he waggled a finger at him, ”then you should carry me instead.”

“Alright.”
Robin blinks. Chrom steps forward, bends over and scoops him up without effort. Robin yelps, suddenly very awake. He’s carrying him bridal style. Oh, Naga, he’s in the arms of the prince and he’s very, very comfortable.

“I was joking!” Robin clutches Chrom’s shoulder for purchase.

“I wasn’t,” he says simply and strides out of the library like nothing’s happened.

“You should put me down.”

“Do you want me to?”

“No?” He accidentally voices aloud, and Chrom’s smug grin gets even smugger.

He carries him to the barracks, barely winded though he’s walked through several corridors and down a flight of stairs. His grip is surprisingly firm under him. Chrom might just have carried him to camp when he collapsed the first time. He doesn’t see Frederick doing the job, certainly.

“Show off,” he mutters as Chrom dumps him on his bed. “You’re lucky nobody’s awake.”

“Good night.” Chrom says this and it’s final. Robin glares at him.

“Good night,” he huffs and rolls himself up in his blanket, back facing outwards.

He’s not doing this to spite him. In fact, he’s doing this to hide the impressive blush that’s spread down to his neck. His heart continues to race, even after Chrom has left.

It’s platonic, he tells himself. He shifts until he’s comfortable and stares blankly at the walls.

He can’t fall asleep.

Chapter End Notes
yes it's definitely platonic, robin.
definitely

If you wanna help beta this or just talk to me hmu?? this chapter was so painful because there isn't much going on but next chapter... i can finally.. hh
Robin settles, frighteningly easily, into the Shepherds. A month passes without incident and he’s training with them like he’s been recruited since its establishment.

He’s informed one day that Maribelle’s been kidnapped. She’s gone and the Plegians were the ones who kidnapped her.

The Shepherds assemble without delay. Robin equips them with weapons and vulneraries and finds that their arsenal is very, very lacking. Try as he might, he can’t find anything better than an iron sword and even then nobody can use it due to the fact that nobody is skilled enough.

He groans and pinches the bridge of his nose. He’s going to have to talk to Chrom about this later.

Robin sighs as he distributes the tomes to Ricken and Miriel. He takes the lower class tomes to himself, his mana is higher than theirs and he knows it isn’t wise to have only a few powerhouses. Patting his coat for his journal he locks the door to the supplies and hurries outside with the Shepherds.

Several hours later he's standing behind Chrom as Emmeryn attempts to parley with Gangrel. His gaze is directed to Aversa. The woman leans on Gangrel as she whispers with a seductive smile, into his ear. Gangrel may be treating her like his personal plaything, but Robin can see as clear as day who’s under whose power. Her revealing attire is having its effect on the Shepherds; most of the men are averting their eyes. She raises a thin eyebrow to the tactician.

“A fellow Plegian?” She drawls, drawing out each syllable sweetly and slowly. “I see you Shepherds are quite… jumbled.”
Falchion is half-drawn when Emmeryn place a hand on Chrom's shoulder and reprimands him with a stern glare.

“It’s none of your business.” He grinds out as he slides the sword back into the sheath.

Gangrel refuses to part with Maribelle, demanding the Fire Emblem for her life. Maribelle begs and pleads her not to give it to him. Emmeryn’s decision is firm and ultimate. She will not yield.

“Filthy Ylisseans,” Gangrel spits. “If you want blood, then so be it!”

And blood is spilt indeed. Plegian soldiers spill from between mountains and boulders, wielding an assortment of axes and swords, tomes and staves. Gangrel, that bastard, he had never intended for a peaceful trade in the first place. Maribelle manages to wriggle out of her captor’s grasp but she’s still defenseless as a healer. Robin bites his nails in pensive worry as he directs his strongest units into the bottleneck to rescue her.

He’s almost tempted to tell Chrom to fall back in fear he’ll fall in battle. Back to back he fights viciously, Falchion raised high and razing down enemies with fervor. He’s so caught up in battle he hardly has time to react as a knight is about to run him through with a lance- Robin burns him to a crisp before that.

The Plegians are closing in from the rear and Robin struggles to hold them back. Virion’s arrows flashes silver in the air as he impales body after body, but it’s not enough. Armored soldiers are encroaching, slowly and surely, forming a wall as the arrows pelt off their shields uselessly. He needs mages. Miriel’s red hair whips in the wind as she fires them down in rapid succession. As for Ricken…

Robin searches for him in the chaos. He spots him right as he’s about to tell Maribelle where she should go and he’s apparently slipped past a temporary opening to give her assistance.

Oh no. He shouldn’t be there. Robin didn’t plan for him to be there, the whole plan revolved around there being two mages at the back blasting away at the enemies. It’s a universally acknowledged fact that Ricken has terrible defense against melee weapons and now Maribelle has another problem to deal with alongside her original predicament and oh.

Robin takes out Thunder and lets the electricity pour out from his hand. He skids back, heels grinding on soil. It deflects the soldier’s sword just in time for Maribelle to drag Ricken onto her
horse and the young mage’s hand freezes on his tome. Robin has to switch to his Fire in order to carve a way for them to gallop over.

Battle nerves. Robin shouldn’t have given him the Elthunder in hindsight. Too late though as a pegasus rider swoops into their path, javelin at the ready, several sorcerers backing him up with a nice breeze to aim properly. Robin’s mouth dries at sight.

The javelin sails in the air with a spin. A perfect throw if any but Robin doesn’t have the time to marvel at the enemy’s skill nor can he afford any more mistakes.

An idea occurs to him at the last possible second and he thinks fuck it, if he's going to die then he’s going to die trying.

The surging, burning pain tears through his shoulders and he screams as though burnt with a hot poker. He has a palm pressed against his coat pocket and the other holding the Fire that’s flipping maniacally in a hot burst of air. It works and the tome is engulfed with the sheer amount of energy he’s passing into it, combusting into a shockwave that ricochets forward. The javelin is burnt into cinders, the ground scorched, his gloves gone without a trace and his skin red with second-degree burns.

His consciousness is left intact and Robin gives a small whoop of victory as he blinks away tears from his stinging eyes. The adrenaline numbs the acute stab of agony on his back, allowing him to keep fighting, to cast Thunder without swaying like a dazed maiden. His mana nears depletion and he channels it from his journal—again, but the ache doesn’t nearly compare to the pain he’s just been through. It keeps his veins thrumming, his feet alive, that there’s power in his veins and power in each spell he casts.

Or it’s the hint of familiarity behind how easy each maneuver is to him. Maribelle slows her horse to a canter besides him and Robin dares to shove her aside to take the kill for an approaching soldier. Energy crackles beneath his hand and he lets loose an exhilarating laugh.

His newfound power tastes sweet and saccharine, he’s drunk on it. He feels limitless. Godlike. He could keep going for hours without end and still be able to take on the most powerful of warriors.

“Robin,” Chrom says urgently. Robin spins to face him and would have thrown a fistful of lightning into his face if the tome in his hand was not worn to shreds. His surroundings blend into each other as he tries to focus his eyesight. Black and white meld back into solid lines, sunlight still gives the battlefield its color. Blue. All he can see is blue and Chrom’s concern as he lets go of the useless tome.
The sensational rush drains out of him swiftly. The world seems to suck back from a vacuum and all his deadened senses come to life. It hurts. Everything hurts. His legs turn to jelly and the roar of his pulse is deafening.

“Chrom.” Reality dawns on him and Robin wobbles unsteadily. “Is it over?”

“Are you okay?”

“I am.” He walks over, careful not to falter. He stumbles anyways. “Maybe not.”

Ricken runs over to apologize. Robin’s too much in stupor to respond properly. He slurs his words and gripes at Chrom’s arm for support. His movement is sluggish and his brain is slow to process information. They sit him on a horse and lead it by the reins while Robin fumbles with a hazy headache.

“You shouldn’t overdo it,” Maribelle huffs as she heals him of his burns. “But thank you.”

There’s a commotion as to where Gangrel’s slunk away to. Phila scouts the terrain on her pegasus and reports that the two have likely made their escape once the battle started. Robin listens with dull interest. He teeters on the edge of falling asleep and being wide awake. His hearing has gotten so sensitive that normal talking sounds like shouting in his ear.

“What’s- what’s happening?”

“Mana shock.” Maribelle is shaking her head. “You aren’t injured, not externally, at least, but you should get some rest.”

They practically lock him up in his own room after that. Robin paces restlessly, he gets told that he can’t come out before nightfall. There’s not a lot he can do except read and sleep, both of which aren’t appealing to him at the moment. He longs for company, but the rest of the Shepherds have been given orders not to disturb him, including Chrom.

Chrom again. Why his thoughts always gravitate towards the prince, he’ll never know. He sits, dawdles, walks in circles and sits again. He takes the jug of water and pours himself a glass. His
hands are trembling so much he has to hold the cup with both to prevent himself from dashing it into the ground.

In, and out. He breathes deeply, it helps calm him down to the point where he can take a sip of the ice cold water without choking himself on it. He lies on the bed and closes his eyes. The clock’s ticking is soothing, stark against the erratic rhythm of his heartbeat.

Robin jostles awake to the extreme discomfort of lying on something bulky and hard. He supposes that he’s been sleeping on his journal again, but his journal is lying on the dresser, next to the half-full glass of water. It must have been the battle in the morning, then. Didn’t Maribelle say he had no external injuries?

The blackness in his periphery makes him look again, and Robin kicks off his covers. He scrambles out of his bed, unbelieving. A mound of feathers sit on his duvet, spilling onto the floor where he’d gotten up. Some are a bit bloody, some withered, all black and smooth like a raven’s.

He can feel bile rising up to his throat. He tugs off his shirt and more scatter to the ground, wreathing around his feet. The disease has spread around his shoulders and a little below his armpit, little mottled tufts that hurt when he attempts to pull them off. Pull a little more and he suspects he’s going to bleed.

He walks over to the vanity in trepidation. His face and front look fine, nothing wrong there, but when he turns, he has to resist the urge to throw up. He has wings. Two impressions hanging off his back, with muscle and flesh, bone and skin. They’re not fully formed, the feathers only extending to his scapulars and coverts. It reminds him of a drenched sparrow after a rainstorm.

The wingtips don’t look avian. The velvety membrane between the thin, clawed fingers look similar to those of bats. He wonders- and finds that he can, indeed, move his extra appendages with ease. He unfurls them and rubs his feathers consciously. They’re real, alright. And sensitive, too. Especially to the cold. He shivers and folds them neatly to his back.

It’s a blessing now that the weather’s gotten chillier and he can get away with wearing more layers. His shirt is fortunately baggy and it doesn’t drag against his pseudo-wings. Beneath his usual coat he puts on another long-sleeved shirt to hide the lumpiness.

He twirls in front of the mirror. He does look remarkably normal for someone who’s hiding two extra limbs attached to his shoulders. His bare feet touches one of the feathers on the floor and he remembers. Right. He has to clean this up.
Rolling his shoulders, Robin gathers the plumes into a heap and wraps it up in a bundle to throw away later. He stashes it beneath the bed where the maids won’t hopefully discover by chance. Then he sits on his duvet, buries his face into his pillow, and broods.

He’s never shed so much before. A little during his month of stay, but so much? Not since his encounter in Regna Ferox. His wings appear to grow at random intervals, and only when he’s unconscious or in deep pain. Or, the pain could stem from the rapid formation of mass from flesh, the conformational change that’s wrecking his nervous system...

He reaches over to the leather-bound tome and grasps it by the ledge. Tentatively, he siphons in some of the power, bit by bit. At first he feels nothing but a slight thrum up his arm. Slowly creeping up, until it hits him, right at the dip between his shoulder blades. The same, exact burning, flaring agony, down his back-

He lets go instantly. His hypothesis is proven. This book, this tome, whatever it is, is his culprit. And though he has no one but his own recklessness to blame in abusing what he thought was a convenient bestowal, he can’t help but feel a little betrayed by the inanimate object.

Every power has its price, Robin thinks and knows. It strikes him odd that nobody ever recognized it as a tome. Not even Miriel, who has read the entire library section dedicated to magic. He comes to the conclusion that it’s enchanted for his exclusive use, but why enchant something with so many drawbacks?

He downs another glass of water and slams it on the table. It’s nighttime, and that means he’s finally allowed to go out. He needs some fresh air to clear his mind. His gaze lingers on the journal and he sighs as he brings it along. Darkness hangs well on the castle walls, thrown aside by the lanterns mounted on the ornate columns.

Footsteps echo in the silence. Robin halts. He knows this sound.

He peers around the corner. It is Chrom. What was he doing here, in the middle of the night?

“I could ask you the same.” His contemplative frown breaks away at eye contact. Oh, he said that aloud.

Robin sniffs. “Getting some fresh air, since you wouldn’t let me go out the entire afternoon. And, I
“…I was thinking about Emm, and the war.”

“The war?”

“Gangrel declared war on us, claiming that Maribelle had tried to invade Plegia.”

“Unsurprising.”

“It’s just that, Emm worked so hard for the peace. She took the blame and the anger of the people when our father died while I was busy fooling around with a sword. She’s suffered so much, and now it’s for naught. Maybe, if I had helped her instead of going to the Shepherds, then this wouldn’t have happened.”

“Plegia would have found an excuse either way. I don’t believe for a second that a country such with a well-built military isn’t looking for war”

“You really think so?”

“The records in the archives show that not only have they been expanding their arsenal, they’ve been allocating a disturbingly high portion of their taxes into their military, too.” Robin looks into the forest glades. “It wasn’t your fault in any way. Nor was it anything Exalt Emmeryn could have prevented. Don’t beat yourself up over it.”

“I suppose.”

“Indeed.”

Chrom and Robin both snap to attention to the newcomer. “Marth,” Robin breathes without intending to.

“Good evening to you.”
“How did you get here?”

“That cleft in the castle wall, behind the maple grove.”

Chrom looks positively stricken. “I thought I’d hidden it well!”

“I bet you broke it while training, didn’t you?”

“…And how did you know?”

“Chrom,” Marth interrupts. “Your sister, the exalt Emmeryn, is in mortal danger.”

“There’s no way, she’s guarded at all hours. Unless you have proof, I don’t think I can believe you.”

“If you want proof,” Marth unsheathes his sword, the flawless copy of Chrom’s Falchion, “Then I shall give it to you. Stand back. I’m about to save your life.”

Chrom tenses as Marth points the blade at him. He unsheathes his own, sword at the ready, and Marth turns his attention to the bush next to them.

“-From him.”

The assassin takes Chrom entirely by surprise but Marth is ready, other Falchion gleaming in the moonlight and slicing his assailant’s throat clean and smooth. The blood seeps through the mud-colored fabric and into the grass.

Chrom steps back and swallows. Marth straightens himself, opening his mouth to speak and tenses. Another assassin emerges from the shadows and the long, sleek katana arcs through the air. He reacts reflexively, dodging the hit with a leap backwards. It connects however barely to his mask, breaking it in two.
The crystal clang of steel fills the air. Chrom offens him with one fell swoop and twists about his
position. He’s met with an entirely different person, one with long hair and a softer voice.

“You’re… a woman?”

She turns and tilts her head. “And quite the actress, too. Honestly, I’m surprised you didn’t figure it
out until just now.”

A rumble echo from the distance and Robin spots a figure running into the castle grounds. Marth
immediately tails him, Robin follows, and Chrom does the same. “An assassination plot,” Robin
muses as he sprints after the mysterious woman. “I can’t believe it.”

The throne room is in pandemonium. The smell of smoke permeates the air and guards and assassins
alike are streaming in from every entrance. Robin spots Emmeryn in the midst of everything, giving
commands as she wields a golden lance with Phila at her side.

A formidable leader, skilled in court and in duel. Robin sees Chrom hesitating and he pushes him in
her direction.

“Go,” he simply states. Chrom widens his eyes but Robin’s after Marth already, gone in the smoke.

Robin has no idea where he’s going. He can’t see where and who’s Marth chasing corridor after
corridor. Her determined chase has him intrigued so he follows, till they hit a dead end and he finally
sees who it is.

A Plegian in Grimleal robes sneer at them, a dark tome glowing in his clutch. He seems to notice
Robin first even though he’s behind Marth. His gaze sends goosebumps down his arm.

Marth pauses in his presence. “You,” she seethes. Her posture radiates hostility as her Falchion is
raised to her waist.

“Who is he?”

Marth raises an eyebrow. “You don’t know him? Thats-“
The man opens a tome and sends a cloud of dark magic towards them. His booming voice says something in Plegian that Robin can’t identify and Marth charges into the purple miasma. He can’t see anything in the dark and he burns the carpets out of necessity. The momentary blur of brightness shows Marth and the man locked in mortal combat, her swinging her blade with clenched teeth and him singeing her hair with dollops of fire.

She fights with an intensity Robin’s never seen before. She growls as she ducks past a bolt of lightning and tears her Falchion through his shoulder. The man exhales and Robin can see the spell forming in his palm. A Goetia. Dangerous stuff, Robin identifies. He grits his teeth and a volley of fire erupts from his hand.

It effectively reduces the man to a charred corpse and Marth tugs her Falchion out of his burnt flesh. She stares at Robin with wonderment.

“Do you not recognize him?”

“I don’t. Am I supposed to know him?”

“His name is Validar. He’s the one who plotted all this.”

“Doesn’t ring a bell.”

She looks at him incredulously. At that moment a voice calls for him from the halls and Marth slides Falchion back to her hip.

“I have to go. May we meet again, on better circumstances.”

She disappears just as Chrom materializes from the corridor. Robin prods at Validar with his boot.

“Who is he?”

“Apparently, the leader of this whole assassination scheme.”
“Come, we can talk later.”

Chrom brings Robin’s attention away from the corpse. He goes along dutifully, of course, but he can’t stop thinking about it.

The marking on Validar’s coat. The brand of the Grimleal is on the cursed journal he owns.

Chapter End Notes

I just love lucina a lot ok my love for her rivals my love for chrobin and that’s saying a lot

thank you for reading and good night i will Sleep pls screm at me in the comments so i can have motivation to update (near) daily even with school
Chapter 5

Chapter Notes

I AM SO SORRY i said near daily updates and turns out I completely forgot about the two whole-day competitions I had the weekend and on Friday. I had to furiously type during our lunch breaks while a friend laughed at me for being incompetent at writing. Kudos to her for alerting me to some of my (very serious) problems and I'm going to edit the prev chapters later. Anyways I should be able to keep up regular updates now that I'm free (not really i have school but that isn't important). here is the chapter. take this

See the end of the chapter for more notes

He enters the main halls coughing in the smoke. Marth’s forewarning had allowed Chrom to run by Emmeryn’s side and defend her till Phila arrived with the royal guards in tow, pushing back the invading troops with crushing force.

A headful of ginger piques Robin’s interest and he ducks away from Chrom’s side to catch a glimpse of whoever’s lurking behind him. The person immediately hides behind a cracked column. It doesn’t work as his hair and feet stick out every so slightly.

Robin, taking advantage of this, circles over and taps him on the shoulder. The man jumps, yelping. He has a lollipop held between his teeth, three daggers at the ready and he whistles as he pulls the treat out with a slick pop. Saliva glistens on it, Robin winces.

“Easy there, I’m not here to hurt anyone.” He cautions as smoke curls from Robin’s fist. “Gaius’ the name.”

“You say, as you run with a pack of assassins?”

“I’m a thief, see, with an expertise in breaking in, unlocking and stealing things. Nobody said ‘nuthin bout killing people tonight. I’ve no blood on my hands, ain’t planning on getting any.”

He’s right. The throwing knives on his belt are unused, unstained. There are candy bars shoved into his breast pocket and are those gummies sticking out of his sheathes? Gaius licks at his lollipop and suckles at the ball of sugar on top. Robin cringes inwardly in disgust.
Chrom’s eyes sparkle and Robin knows what he’s going to do next. Predictably, he asks if Gaius would like to proof his innocence by assisting him in defending the exalt. The thief thinks long and hard, obviously itching to get away.

Robin takes a look through Chrom’s inventory of things and a familiar vial catches his eye. He plucks it from Chrom’s pocket and uncorks it. The sweet scent of the tincture grabs Gaius’ attention immediately. Robin’s unsure of its contents. It smells of a heavenly combination of honey and sweetened apples.

“I’ll give you this.” Robin tosses the bottle and Gaius catches it with a greedy grin.

“You have yourself a deal.”

“Good to know.” Chrom gapes at their exchange. “I see some trouble down the west columns. There’s a royal stash of sweets collected by the princess herself too, if you know what I mean.”

“Yessiree.”

The thief scrambles away into the mess below. With an extra hand, the battle goes much smoother according to the tactician’s design. The fighting is mostly over by the time Robin and Chrom reach Emmeryn’s side.

Robin’s heart skips a beat. A woman- a taguel, is conversing with Emmeryn. Her hair is a deep chocolate brown, luscious as the fur on her drooping ears and her reddish markings stand out like tattoos on her face. She senses Robin’s gaze and turns, slitted eyes sharp and distinct as she sniffs the air.

“Who is this?” She asks cautiously, eyeing Robin up and down. “And is that Prince Chrom?”

“That’s me.”

She nods in brisk acknowledgement. Robin shrinks under her calculating stare. Her armor is loose and snug-fitting in places to accommodate her beast form and he can see the lean muscle where she’s exposed. Her tan complexion is unlike anyone but him and Robin finds comfort in knowing that he’s not the only one with a darker shade of skin amidst the Ylisseans.
“You smell different,” she concludes. “Like ash and oil. But you are not one of us, are you?”

“It must be the fire. It’s nice to meet you, my name is Robin, the tactician of the Shepherds.”

“I’ve heard of you. I am Panne, a taguel, and the last of my kind. By your house’s grace I come to repay our warren’s debt, and to serve under your name. If you would allow it, of course.”

“With great pleasure,” Robin replies, shaking her hand. “Any addition is sorely welcome among our scarce numbers.”

“We shall see,” she hums, sluicing her words in her strange, foreign accent. She dips her head at Emmeryn, beaststone swaying on her hip and wrapped in cloth. The delight of Emmeryn’s praise tugs at the corners of her mouth and Robin sees admiration beneath the tough exterior of the taguel.

The temporary gathering dissipates as Emmeryn announces her retirement into the night. It’s late, and with the guards on high alert, there’s not much to be done till sunrise.

That very night Robin lays on his bed, exhausted. By sheer luck he’s been able to hide his arm, now entirely numb from spellcasting, beneath his long sleeves. Now he listens to the nighttime silence of the barracks to pick out signs of wakefulness. It’s dark outside, the castle halls being the only places that’s glowing with warm light in the darkness. He checks the rooms again before heading out, a towel and a fresh set of clothes piled in his arms.

There’s a private bathroom, used exclusively by the militia, but he doesn’t go there. Instead he chooses the long walk to the castle public baths and dumps all his clothes into a basket there. The cold breathes goosebumps on his sensitive Plegian skin. Quickly, he scoots over to the outdoor hot spring where a large boulder blocks his view of the other side and immerses himself into the scalding hot water.

He sighs in satisfaction. Mist rises from the surface, forming a dense veil of fog over the baths. The heat chafes his skin deliciously raw. He wets the towel that he’s brought in with him and rolls to place it around his shoulders so he won’t have to dip his chin into the water.

Gazing into his reflection, the murky depths gaze back at him. It’s completely dark save for the pale shade of moonlight obscured by the thick clouds overhead. He can dip his fingers into the water and it’ll disappear into the inky blackness. Still, he sits and enjoys the hotness seeping into his feathers
and skin. Each puff of air blows a gaping hole in the fog and he melts into his rare times of tranquil amidst all the chaos in his life.


Chrom is tired. He’s stressed and he’s tense and he’s wound up like a toy with a tight spring from all that has happened since Robin’s arrival. He has no idea what to do with the maelstrom of emotions inside him. He’s tried sleeping to no avail as his fear for the future overrides his physical and mental need to take a long break.

Falchion rests by his side as always, golden and pure as it has been since the first dragon was slayed at the hands of the hero-king. The training grounds don’t open till morn. His room is not exactly the best place to swing a sword; he’s broken more than enough shelves, desks and chairs for Emmeryn to forbid him from unsheathing any weapons in the presence of any royal furniture.

There’s an inner struggle as to what he should do. At last he settles for sneaking out, carefully so as not to wake Lissa, to the baths for a good, long soak. His chambers are conveniently close to the baths, the walk takes less than a few minutes and he slides open the door to find that one of the baskets is already occupied. It piques his interest as to why someone would choose to go to the baths at two am in the morning and he shoves his clothes next to the slot. He’s never one to be shy, of course, so he loudly announces his presence by sliding open the partitions with a noisy bang and sliding them shut with an equal amount of strength.

The fog, the blasted fog, is making it hard to see what’s in front of him, much less a person several feet away. He spies him right as he’s wading into the deeper, hotter areas. The headful of white is stark against the blackness of night.

Robin is a ghost in the moonlight. A radiant, delicate figure in the dark, ethereal as his head turns to give Chrom a faint smile.

Chrom stops in his steps. He notices the heated blush on Robin’s cheeks and the way he relaxes back into the water as he recognizes Chrom. The water ripples around his chest as he sinks back into the hot springs and Chrom is suddenly very grateful for the steam.

“Care if I join you?” Chrom asks, already settling a safe distance away from Robin, just enough to be able to faintly make out his features. Robin hums.

“Couldn’t sleep? It is quite late, you know.”
“Says you.”

“Too many things to consider, too many things on my mind.” He sighs. “I sometimes wonder what would have happened if you weren’t there when I woke up, on that field. Would I have ever met you again?”

“I’ve never thought about it.” Chrom confesses. “Quite frankly, I can’t imagine- or distinctly remember how life was like without you. It feels as if our fates were intertwined from the very start.”

“Is that so, a chance of fate? What did compel you to take me in when you found me, collapsed and without memory?”

“Well, I can’t just ignore someone, as you so eloquently put it, that’s collapsed and without memory.”

“So it was pity?”

“Is that not enough?”

“It could have been a trap.”

“This conversation, we’ve had before. But well, that’s what I have Frederick for. Robin, if I see someone hurt or in need, I’m going to help.” He laughs. “Or would you rather I’d left you face down, stuck in the muck?”

“No, of course not. I’m grateful for what you’ve done. I truly am, but chivalry and longevity don’t often go in hand. You should be more careful.”

“I’d be the richest man in Ylisse if I had a gold coin every time I get this lecture. But no. If it happened again today, I’d do the exact same thing.”

“Chrom, I understand that, and if you were any normal soldier I would encourage your selflessness. You’re the prince. You can’t just, well, risk yourself with every shady amnesiac you see.”
“Peace, Robin. Your counsel rests on willing ears, and I know you mean well. But as I said, this is who I am. I can’t change that, nor would I want to.”

“Chrom,” Robin protests but stops. “I suppose. If that is your decision, then so be it. But for my peace of mine, if not your own, do try to be careful, okay?”

“I will. I promise.”

The comfortable quiet between them lasts for several minutes. Robin soaks in apparent bliss, unaffected by the heat. Chrom’s having a harder time handling it and after some time, dunks his head underwater.

“I’m done.” He splashes himself on the face. “Gods, I’m being boiled alive in here.”

“It’s more like a low simmer.”

“You Plegians, I swear.”

Chrom rises from the water, the chill stinging on his skin. As Robin says a brief farewell he shifts his position, revealing a lithe figure haloed by reflected moonlight. His snowy hair drips onto his shoulders, and for a split second Chrom swears he can see the shadowed impression of a bird’s wings behind him. Hooked, feathered, like a terrible angel, a prophet of destruction, the harbinger of death.

If death came as sweet as Robin’s touch, Chrom thinks, perhaps he would not mind it at all.

And yet the night is not young, the starlight faint, and he pushes through the waters with dwindling consciousness. His thoughts linger on pink lips and bright, pale eyes, to the graceful brush and tilt of his tactician’s fingers on the rocks, in the water, on his skin-

Chrom moves to get dressed. He can blame the bath for the way his body is reacting, caught in the heat of his tactless musings. He knows there are certain ways a prince, a captain, a soldier should act. Letting his imaginations run wild is for a fact, not one of them. His nightshirt clings to his skin uncomfortably even after he’s dried himself vigorously with a towel.
He’s glad it’s not near morning, when the maids and servants are up and scuttling about to prepare the castle. His trip back is punctuated by peace and lamplit silence, the creaking of his bedroom door familiar as he settles back in bed.

Try as he may, there’s no solution to his increasing affections towards his talented and incredibly cute tactician. As he awakes he gets painfully alerted to his growing… problem beneath the sheets as Robin’s wetness fades away into the hazy memory of his dreams.

The trip to Regna Ferox is grueling. The humid air there sticks to their skin during their march. There are insects and mosquitoes and ticks buzzing around and the road is steep and narrow. The cavalry riders skirt around the mountainside in an attempt to navigate.

Phila and Cordelia’s arrival to announce Emmeryn’s kidnapping sends everyone on edge. They turn back immediately without reinforcements and that throws Robin’s plans into the water. He senses Chrom’s distress as he urges his horse to the front of the Shepherds.

They get to the border in a matter of hours. The riding is hard on Robin’s fragile legs and his stamina is nearly spent as if he’s the one who ran the entire way. Gangrel is here. Gangrel, cackling as the Plegian forces flood into the barren grounds. The Shepherds push back with equal fierceness matching teeth for blade.

Robin sees a blond in a monk’s robe swinging an axe and razing the enemy down in passionate fervor. He directs Chrom and himself to the man and he introduces himself as Libra, a warrior monk. Robin gushes excitedly at the staff Libra’s holding.

Chrom ushers him into their cause without fail. Robin directs him to the rear. He pairs up his fighters with healers, mages with swordsmen. Sumia scouts ahead with Frederick for their impressive reach with their mounts. Maribelle stays with Virion protected by a wall of infantry. As for himself, Robin stays by Chrom’s side, much to Frederick’s obvious disapproval. It does prove to be effective as he deflects an incoming arrow with his Elthunder.

“I’ll have your back if you’ll have mine,” Chrom drops in the middle of battle. Robin has only a moment to spare before he loses of sight of him in the chaos.

The leap of dread in his stomach sends him after Chrom urgently. His blood comes alive with a
familiar thrill. Falchion, finely polished to a fault, reflects sunlight to Robin’s coat in fleeting glimmers. They make for a terrifying duo, a perfect combination of magic and steel, occasionally switching between weapons to catch an approaching rogue off guard.

Chrom spins and thrusts his sword with brimming ferocity. Robin syncs his movements to the swing of his blade. He weaves between blows to strike and burn, aid and pummel. Chrom’s in such close proximity he can smell the scent of his sweat and the oil on his steel. A sidestep to parry. Flames nip at his feet and he’s created an opening for Chrom to open a nasty gash in a wyvern’s neck. The stink of its dark blood is pungent as it bucks its rider off to the ground.

Finally, the skies are clear. Robin gives two shrill whistles and Plegia’s wyverns are replaced with the golden sheen of pegasi armor. There’s not a lot of them, but the glint of their shields and spears speak more volume in strength than their numbers.

Gangrel reels in disbelief. “What? I could have sworn- That’s playing dirty!”

His advisor smirks. “No matter. We fight fire with fire.”

Aversa snaps her fingers, and the corpses of the previously fallen stagger up with bows in hand. Arrows pelt through the air, whistling in the bloodcurdling cries of the pegasus riders. Like lambs to the slaughter. One by one they drop dead onto the ground, reduced to twitching, bleeding cadavers. Peals of ugly laughter ring through air.


“Now, now, my boy- no one needs to die today. Not you. Not the exalt. Not your friends. Just lay down your sword, and give me the Fire Emblem.”

The Risen surround him, and the weight of the decision weighs heavy on Chrom’s heart. His sister or his kingdom’s heirloom. Family, or responsibility. He hesitates, hand loosening on his sword.

Robin snaps him out of his trance. “You can’t possibly trust him,” he warns. “He might kill Emmeryn, all the same.”

“But if I just say no, he’ll kill her! The gods are cruel, damn it!”
“There has to be a way,” Robin mutters. “I-“

“I will count to three! Throw down your weapons, or your exalt becomes the world’s largest quiver. One!”

Chrom trembles. Emmeryn, his beloved sister, whom practically raised him since his father’s death more than a decade ago.

“Two!”

Robin licks his lips and steps forward. The temperature seems to drop around him. Chrom sees this. He may not be an able magic user, but he can identify the singular thrum in the air as well as any other. Robin steals a glance at him as he raises his arm.

“Thr-“

“Gangrel, hold!”

The king twists his features into a cruel grin.

“…You win. Everyone, lay down yo-“

“No, wait!”

Oh, this is bad. Emmeryn’s determined glare tells Chrom what she’s about to do in an instant. He calls for her sister to no avail; she does not hear him, nor shall she, in her last moments of regal glory.

“King Gangrel, is there no hope that you will listen to reason?”

“You mean more of your sanctimonious babble? I think not. Take one, long, last look from your perch, as you do so enjoy looking down on people… That is, unless someone were to give me the Emblem. Now!”
“Wait! Emm, I know you won’t approve, and one day maybe we’ll face a crisis where maybe the Emblem would’ve helped. But right now? Ylisse needs their exalt. Ylisse needs you. If this war is any indication…”

“Chrom…” She smiles sadly. “You know what I’m going to do, don’t you?”

“Emm-“

“Plegians!” She turns to address the armies beneath her. “I ask that you hear the truth of my words!”

Her speech comes to a blank as Chrom wastes no time in breaking into a desperate run. He’s too late, though. He never had a chance in the first place.

Lissa’s scream pierces the air. Chrom watches, in aghast horror, as Emmeryn tips over the precipice, and falls.

Chapter End Notes

chrom and robin have attained support level C

when will they finally fuck

I cannot write dialogue. If anyone has any tips/advice on how to get better/beta this piece of crap of a fic i am eternally open. honestly just knowing there are people (esp fic authors themselves?? respect?? you know who you are i do click into your bios dear commenters and also the long comments on multiple chapters ((i may be very specific you also know who you are)) actually looking forward to reading this fic makes me really happy, in a warm, specific way.

Thank you for bearing with late updates and my shitty writing!

also alright guys we’re getting there dya want more/mind the explicit/touchy-feely scenes bc i am a thirsty chrobin shipper or should i put it as extras in another fic lol
Chapter 6

Chapter Notes

I accidentally fell asleep with microsoft word open yesterday oops (near daily? updates?? two days is near daily... right) here it is who needs sleep anyways

thanks to Daraen's Descendant for pointing out I messed up canon? (and your other thoughtful contributions in the comments!) it has been six million years since ive played the game i am sorry

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Robin plays aggressively and viciously in the next battle. His tactics ensure no casualties as they plow through the grounds.

“No.” He says firmly, as Chrom shifts his weight from one foot to the next. “This is not the time. You are not to go rushing headfirst into the Plegian capital. You will only die. We will only die.”

It takes little convincing for Frederick to tow Chrom home. Denial is written in the way he acts and hacks mindlessly at a training dummy. He doesn’t speak unless spoken to. His food is left untouched as the spoon clatters to the floor and he retires to his chambers.

This passes, and anger comes roaring in the form of shattered plates and broken vases. He growls at Lissa as she offers to bandage his bleeding knuckles in front of a small crater in the punched-in plaster. He breaks training swords as one would break wooden sticks- snapped in two, bent at the hilt, dulled beyond repair. His palms bleed when he flings useless, broken sword hilts to the ground.

Nobody dares to spar with him but Robin, who walks onto the deserted grounds one day and picks up a sword, simply, swishing it in the air. He draws Chrom’s attention with the coarse scratching the tip makes as he drags the bronze blade through the ground.

There are no words exchanged. Chrom moves mechanically, Robin instinctively, as the sword bears down on his limbs. Robin slides away, fluid, as forgotten skill seizes the forefront of his mind. He counters Chrom perfectly in an unthinking blank.

At last Robin’s blade gives a telltale creak and gives way under the consistent pressure. It skids a long way from their position. Chrom’s glazed stare unfreezes and he catches himself leaning onto his own abused sword. The smile that cracks his lips reflects itself on Robin, and thus begins the quick
tumble through bargaining.

Chrom isn’t one for lingering around Emmeryn’s rooms, brushing the dust off abandoned mementos, and he spirals into unhappy despondence again. He holes up in his room and wanders under the stars at night. He’s seen to kneel beside her temporary grave and weep without tears. Falchion lies abandoned as he finds his way back into the light, a step at a time, listening to messengers bringing the news that the Plegian troops are deserting en mass.

As for Robin. Robin plunges into despair, slowly and discretely. He fills his schedule to the brim to delay his admittance of her death, and when he does reach the tipping point he continues to deteriorate, silently, till he deems it appropriate to settle it with another distraction.

It’s a trap, he knows. It’s a lure to bait them into getting surrounded by enemy forces and butchered like cows. He knows and he piles maps and tactic volumes into his tent and studies them with maniacal obsession. He continues slaving away, night after night, till Chrom walks by and sees the Robin’s mistake in not closing the tent flap the entire way. Flickering candlelight pours through the gap.

Robin is hunched over a map for what looks to be the thousandth time since their departure. He doesn’t notice Chrom until Chrom’s walked over beside him, a lamp in hand.

“What are you doing?”

“Chrom,” he greets weakly as he scoots over to allow visual access to the map. “I’ve gone through the route for tomorrow. See, here, between the hills,” he points, “we’re nearing their forts. There might be ambushes along the way since there’s a number of small paths leading up to their walls that could potentially bring a near infinite supply of provisions in case of siege. I’ve-”

“You shouldn’t be talking tactics at this hour. Go get some rest.”

“No, no.” He yawns, rubbing his eyes. “I still have the assault later that’s yet to be sorted out.”

“That’s a week away. Robin, you don’t need to push yourself so hard. What if you collapse tomorrow?”

“I’ll be fine.”
“No, you won’t. Look at you, you’re almost falling asleep. What’s gotten into you? Is it because of Emm-” Chrom doesn’t need confirmation, he knows. All that’s happened till now is finally taking its toll on Robin as he stiffens at Emmeryn’s name.

“…Maybe.”

“Look,” he has to swallow. “Staying up and working yourself to the brink of death isn’t going to solve any problems.”

“I didn’t see it coming. It was a preventable loss.”

“It wasn’t your fault.”

Robin inhales sharply. “I could have saved her- I could have saved Emmeryn. I had the power to wipe them all out in a single blow. You knew, right? It didn’t have to be her. It could have been me, if I hadn’t been such a coward-”

“Don’t you dare. Don’t you dare even think about it.” Chrom grabs his shoulders and stares at Robin dead in the eye. “What’s past is gone forever. You can’t change what’s happened.”

“Don’t you want her back? Don’t you want- don’t you wish that someone should have died in her stead?”

“Of course I want her back. I miss her just as sorely, if not more- but Robin, it’s not your fault. Never would I ever want you to sacrifice yourself. Please, don’t torture yourself over something out your control.”

“I- I don’t know about that.”

“Nobody blames you for it. You don’t have to make up for anything.”

“But-“
“No buts. Emm chose to sacrifice herself for the country, and for us to win the war. How are we supposed to do that without your health?”

“I suppose you’re right.” He pauses, a hand hovering over an enemy fortress. Swivelling on his chair, he faces Chrom. His exhaustion is apparent in the bags under his eyes and his pallid complexion. ‘Thank you… I needed that.”

Chrom staggers a little as he bumps into his lamp and it rolls onto the floor, extinguishing itself. All’s left is the candle’s feeble light, wick burnt to a near stump. The amber glow fills the air with a warm, late night ambience.

Blinking, Robin looks at him tiredly, the quill already capped into the inkwell.

“Let me have this, won’t you?”

He leans onto Chrom, breath hot on his arm and they stay like this for what seems to be an eternity. Robin’s eyes flutter close. His erratic breathing slows to a gentle heaving of his chest and Chrom can smell the fragrance of his shampoo at such close vicinity.

His hair is incredibly fluffy like this. His hand slips off the edge of the desk and swings to his side. The candle flame wavers in the breeze.

He’s drifted off into sleep. His clutch on Chrom’s sleeve loosens just slightly as his entire body slouches into his embrace, mouth slightly agape. Robin is surprisingly heavy for his slender build and Chrom hefts him with minor difficulty to his cot where he feels a large, lumpish structure jutting out from Robin’s back.

It’s impossible for him to feel it up any further while carrying his tactician with both hands and he lays him on his side. He contemplates removing the coat. Then, as he reaches over to tug off one sleeve Robin rolls over to snuggle closer to Chrom’s warmth. He murmurs something incomprehensible before shifting to his other side again and shivering.

Chrom can’t. He can’t touch him, his heart is racing and his pulse roars in his ears. He takes the blanket from the end of the cot and drapes it over Robin whose light snores fill the air. As he turns Robin seizes up and mumbles again.
“Chrom...”

Chrom freezes. He’s certain that its his name Robin is slurring. So close, yet so far. He succumbs.

He makes sure that Robin’s sound asleep and still dreaming. Fingers threaded into his hair, he bends down and presses a chaste kiss to his forehead.

He immediately straightens and flushes in embarrassment even though nobody’s there to watch him. He snuffs out the candle and hastens out of the tent, powerwalking rigidly to his own and burying his entire face into his pillow.

He’s a mess.

-

The Plegian heat scorches the earth in an all consuming hellfire that makes progress slow and sluggish. Robin would have suggested traveling at night if not for the sudden drop to freezing temperatures then. This is his birthplace. He feels at ease traveling here, the sun a welcome change to the mild climate in Ylisse.

His coat makes everyone in the party wince. He’s not sweating a lot thanks to his ethnicity, but it still feels stifling at times. At least sunburn isn’t a problem- Maribelle looks as if she’s about to faint from heatstroke.

They do get ambushed. In the middle of the stretching desert road, a girl scantily clad in only shorts and a black cloak runs out with troops of Plegian soldiers in pursuit. Her eyes are a glimmering amethyst colour and her hair vibrantly lime green and golden.

Chrom instantly spurs the Shepherds into action and Robin comes to know the girl, the manakete, she calls herself, as Nowi. Her touch is so hot Robin recoils as if burnt and she laughs. She may look like a child, but the depth behind her eyes sings of her age.

“I thought you knew! Aren’t you like me?”
“Like you?”

She produces a large crystal from her cloak and throws it in the air.

“Like this!”

Robin is stunned into silence as the chunk of crystal disappears and is replaced by the giant form of a fire-breathing, flying beast. Its purple eyes nictitate intelligently as it lowers its head to nuzzle against Robin’s chest.

Nowi’s voice reverberates in his head. “You can hear me, so there’s no denying it!”

“Deny what?”

“That you’re a dragon!”

She shifts back easily. She twirls a loose strand of hair with a finger as she circles him curiously. Her hands dart into his pocket and tug out his journal, worn from his travels.

“Tada- wait. This isn’t a dragonstone? It sure feels like one. Hmm…”

Nowi is a walking, bouncing enigma. Robin can only hold his tongue loaded with questions as Chrom comes over to inquire about her. He, too, stands in utter shock as she transforms once more.

“I thought manaketes were extinct.”

She sticks her tongue out. “Well, I thought humans were extinct too.”

She joins the Shepherds after blasting four soldiers into oblivion. She hangs out mostly by Robin’s side as he’s one of the only few that’ll play with her. As Robin goes to ask her during their monotonous march she whips her head around and grins.
“You’re about to ask me about your not-dragonstone, right?”

Her devilish smile tells him that she’s not as young as he thinks. Robin cringes at how loud that was and hopes to the gods that nobody overheard her.

“My journal,” he whispers harshly, “and nobody needs to know.”

“Young secret is safe with me.” She declares, with the same volume she used just now. “As for that, I have no idea what it is. I can’t use it either; it’s not a dragonstone, like I said.”

Robin is mildly disappointed and hopeful at the same time. He’s not one of the highly sought-after species of transforming dragons, which makes being hunted much less of a threat. If he were indeed a manakete, then at his height and build he should have lived for several millennia.

“Nowi, are there any manaketes that have wings in human form?”

“Hm? Why ask? I don’t remember seeing any back at home. Oh, oh— is it because of your wings—“

Robin claps a hand over her mouth. She raises an eyebrow and licks his palm. Robin retracts his hand, wiping it on his coat in disgust.

“Nowi!”

“Is that also supposed to be a secret?”

He groans. Her terrifying observation skills have him completely defeated. Who knew a child could have such accurate instinct, except that Nowi isn’t a child and he sees the fact now.

“Don’t worry,” she says, forming eye contact. “I won’t bring it up again.”

And she doesn’t. For the rest of the trip she talks about the weather and the sunny plains of the north, where she originally came from. Her dragon blood runs heated in her veins, she explains, and she can’t stand it when clothes trap the heat. Her species are one of fire and she is absolutely burning in
Plegia’s weather.

The knowing glance she spares him sets off a warm feeling in his gut when Chrom asks if all dragons burn in the sun.

It gives him assurance that even if he somehow lets loose his growing secret, at least there’s one person who he can fall back on.

The atmosphere in the army turns grim as they arrive to the heart of Plegia. Robin’s route lets them wind around sleeping armies ready to assault them any moment. He forces them to train every evening to keep their fight alight and alive. None of them complain.

He goes himself to restock their weapons in a Plegian town and apparently white is not an unusual hair colour to go with the tint of his skin. The armourer automatically talks about Emmeryn as he goes to pick up the cartful of swords and lances. Her sacrifice made his son return from the army. Robin nods along as he expresses his longing for a peaceful ruler, unlike the militaristic regime of the Mad King, Gangrel.

It fills him with unspoken determination. As he presses the killer lance into Frederick’s hold he tells him that he will lead the Shepherds to victory no matter the cost. The knight stares at him, incredulous.

He walks away with a faint smile, all the same.

Gangrel stands at the back of his army, armoured and ready for battle. His sword jags like a lightning strike, wicked edges teethed to tear an open wound. He glowers at them in his fort.

“What’s this, little princeling? Still dreaming of your squashed sister?”

“No more talk, Gangrel.” Chrom states plainly. “Today, peace returns to Ylisse and Plegia.”

“Such hypocrisy,” Gangrel sneers. “Let’s see how you fare in the blood of your dear friends!”
Chrom spits out a long, unwavering breath. Robin takes a step forward. Together, they edge into the battlefield.

“Steady now,” Robin murmurs. “Are you ready?”

“As ever,” he replies, and lifts his sword.

He spins and whirls and rams into enemies in a flurry of rapid strikes. First blood is drawn in a streak across his cheek, not his own but the sleek jet of enemy blood cutting the air and splattering Robin’s monotone vision of blue and white with a stroke of red.

Lighting courses through his limbs, from cold metal to fiery flesh, from flesh to blade, binding him to the rhythm of his pounding heart. The battlefield sings to him, and he is the chorus, chanting loud and clear. He hears the war cries of his quarry and he responds with a call of his own. That death is the answer to all stands in his way, to the sound of naked steel whinging along the edge of its brethren.

He spills blood by the gallon with only the tip of his sword. The crimson dyeing his gloves a bruised purple isn’t his own’s.

The world thrums in anticipation, in a sluggish halting of time to let him run his blade through bodies like water. Falchion is a weapon, and so is Chrom. His dexterity his shield and swiftness his blade. He is the descendant of a king, a slayer of dragons, of gods, and he shall let his prayers burn in the pyres of the corpses he leaves.

And for all he remembers in the haze of battle, there is one thing that tethers him to his mortality. The voice, his mind vaguely registers. Who does it belong to, and why is it so familiar? The buzzing of magic around him settles his nerves. A sign of affirmation, a warm assurance that he will be safe no matter his place in this bloodied wasteland.

It occurs to him that he shouldn’t be so trusting of the jumping sparks of a residue Thunder spell dancing across his feet, but it doesn’t matter, anyways. He’s nearing his goal with a blood-stained weapon in hand. A slayer of gods, he repeats to himself. A slayer of kings if he would be. His eyes narrow to the sword the abhorrent man is holding.

His last present to King Gangrel, murderer of his sister, blight of the continent: a simple, honourable
death. A quick, agonising, public execution.

The king’s protectors have fallen to their knees. He’s several paces from him and the effort is catching up to his laboured breathing. It’s a duel now, fair and square. He raises Falchion, and forgets.

He fails to hear, he fails to see. The voice again. Who-

-Robin hurtles towards Chrom. The crackles of electricity sifts through the air and he knocks Chrom to the ground. Everything goes dark. It doesn’t even hurt, it’s only numb through the excruciating torture that’s happening at the back of his mind. He drinks in power from a hand on his tome and sets his jaw.

The injury’s cut off any and all sensation from his left arm. Gangrel’s swooping in for the kill. He forces himself to his feet. The sound that rips out from his throat is inhuman as a sheer cold blankets the area and darkness reigns in the middle of noon.

Robin can feel it as he reaches his limit. With a final push, his throat constricts, his nervous freezes over, he sees Gangrel drop the damned Levin sword.

There is silence, then, he does not dream.

-

He surfaces from unconsciousness once or twice. He’s being carried and rushed to somewhere. His chest hurts, and he plunges back into the comfort of unthinking void again. He hears voices everywhere. In his sleep, in his half-delirious fits as he thrashes awake in utter darkness. He’s not sure whether he’s awake every time he wakes up.

He thinks he’s dreaming, or it’s his vivid imagination. Chrom is there every time without fail. He’d wake to Chrom’s gentle caresses only to wake again to nothing. He develops a fever and sweats profusely under the blanket. Lissa and Maribelle and Libra watch over him in turns. The first time Robin catches sight of them he panics as he realizes that the reason he’s sleeping so comfortably is because his wings have grown to be able to wrap around himself.

His clothing hasn’t been touched, judging by how grimy it feels as it sticks to his skin. Two metal
poles mounted with glowing blue gems lean against the medica’s walls.

Thank the gods for healing staffs.

He’s never conscious for over five minutes at a time. As his strength slowly returns to him he senses warmth to his side and cracks open a single eye.

He’s half expecting to wake up again. When he doesn’t and Chrom continues drowsing against the cabinet he squeezes the hand clasped into his and the prince almost falls off the stool.

“You’re awake.” The excitement is ill-contained as Chrom stands from his stool.

Robin’s mouth feels dry and he gestures for water. Chrom pours him a glass and Robin struggles to sit up. He gingerly raises a hand to weakly grasp at it and Chrom helps him in taking several large swigs. Water dribbles from his chin and he wipes it away with the back of his hand.

“Thanks.”

“I should be saying this to you instead.”

He cocks his head quizzically. “Why?”

“You saved me. Don’t you remember?”

“Remember? I don’t-“ he pauses. “Who are you?”

The expression of abject horror on Chrom’s face is enough to make Robin burst into laughter. “I’m joking, I’m joking.” He exhales. “Did you- did we defeat Gangrel?”

“We did.”

A wide smile splits his face. “Really?”
“Really.”

“Oh.” He flops back onto his pillow. “What about Ylisse? Are you going to inherit the title of Exalt?”

“I have to. Lissa’s too young, too inexperienced. She was never brought up to bear such a heavy burden. But now? The war’s over. We did it.”

“We did it.” He closes his eyes. “This can’t be happening.”

“I couldn’t have done it without you.”

He senses that this is the right time, the right moment to say something. He’s been through an entire war with this man, surely he must deserve to know. No, he needs to know. He’ll accept any and all judgement, disbelief and disgust directed at him and his lying ass.

“Chrom,” he says. “I need to tell you something. I’m sorry.”

“For what?”

“I-“

The door slams open with a bang.

“Robin!”

Lissa and Nowi both barge into the space. Startled, Chrom whirls around to his sister and the manakete launches herself into Robin for a bone-crushing hug.

“Ow, ow, watch it-“

“Nowi told me she heard you two talking.”
Nowi releases him. “I thought you weren’t waking up!”

Robin looks at Lissa, then at Nowi. The atmosphere’s completely dissipated. With more people streaming in to visit him, he wishes that he hadn’t woken up at all. Chrom talks about the country and its future, now that the war is won. He takes Robin’s hand into his own and brings up what’s happened the week he was gone.

The opportunity is lost forever. Robin smiles, banters, and laughs with them, promising to join them in on a celebratory feast. He puts his feet onto the floor in trepidation and walks out on crutches.

In the end, Robin despairs.

Chapter End Notes

it’s getting there
i promise
next chapter.

(panne is coming out in feh lol so I’m going to spend all my chalices(?) to get a +10 of her)
(are they called chalices)
(goblets?)
(what is the translation dammit I’m not playing in english)
(grima robin’s japanese va is v hot tho)
Chapter 7

Chapter Notes

I died towards the end it is 2:39 am as of typing this

Burning away 3k per day has taken an actual physical toll on me (i get extremely tired and feverish during the day i’m not used to sleeping so late) so maybe updates may come a little irregularly this week as i have a lot of stuff to do. Anyways thanks for all your support and comments (they do mean a lot to me! it's what keeps me going even when I'm sick) and enjoy(?)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Peace dawns upon the halidom of Ylisse. It seems to Robin at times that, at first glance, the kingdom has healed from the ravaging of war. He sees no drought, no famine as he travels, only merchants throwing their stock of armor and weapons into the forgeries in exchange for good coin. Plegia licks her wounds and sends no messenger to Ylisse, but the silence they keep is enough, for now.

He’s given a room in the castle grounds now that the Shepherds have lost their captain to his royal duties. Everyone has a home to go to, Stahl to his rural village where he hailed from, Maribelle returning to her mansion in the rich lands to the border in the south. The exceptions are Nowi, Libra and Panne whose homes span too far for them to return in a fortnight. They, too, are housed within the castle grounds.

He barely sees Chrom nowadays. He gets glimpses every now and then as he traverses the halls, catching him around corners as he sees him with a stack of papers in hand. Peace may reign in the people’s lands, but within the castle walls it is absolute pandemonium. He passes Chrom’s room and sees him burning the midnight oil, scribbling away at his pile of documents. Robin brings in tea and urges him to sleep.

“It seems our roles are reversed now,” Robin says as he pours Chrom a steaming cup. Chrom cracks his knuckles and stretches from his desk.

“I thought being the exalt would be require less… paperwork. I’m no good at anything that can’t be solved by swinging a sword.”

“Sounds like I’d make the better exalt than you.”

“To be honest? You would. There’s what- over twenty provinces in Ylisse? I can’t even name five
off of my head. Gods, how did Emm do it?”

“Hmmm. Need a hand?”

Robin had meant it jokingly, not for Chrom to gratifyingly accept and start filling him with the goings-on of petty court disputes. He reads through the pile of paperwork with terrifying efficiency and starts sorting them through and putting notes in the margins. He’s used to Chrom’s equally terrible handwriting and it sends his stomach aflutter to see both their scripts side by side in the small slips of paper inserted between pages.

It’s not an unpleasant surprise he’s suddenly acting as a temporary advisor to the exalt of Ylisse. It gives him something to do during the day instead of aimlessly wandering the castle corridors in the footsteps of a vengeful ghost. He spends most of his day in Chrom’s room discussing foreign policies and bickering about his choice of fashion (Chrom still refuses to wear two sleeves, even in court), dining with him with Lissa and Frederick as if they’re one small, eccentric family.

Time slips by easily in his presence. Chrom’s fallen asleep once or twice at the desk and Robin doesn’t have the strength to carry him to bed, opting to drape a blanket over him and adjusting his position so that he doesn’t pull a muscle when he wakes in the morning. He’s careful not to disturb him as he ducks out of the room, but eventually gives up being quiet as Chrom’s snoring layers over all the noise he can make with a heavy wooden door.

He still waits to the wee hours of early morning to bathe. The mirror is the one thing he dreads to see every night as he finally unfolds his wings to their full extent. His wingspan is massive, going a few inches off his fingertips, velvety where the bone is pronounced, little ruffled feathers fleshing out in the matter of weeks as he tries his best to hide it under the guise of the winter cold.

He finds another problem when he washes his hair, sopping wet as he finds two obvious bumps on either side of his head. He thinks it’s some sort of malicious welt that’s gathering pus, till he reads up about deer mating habits in a spiel of extreme boredom and it occurs to him. The fuzzy texture is akin to antler velvet and sure enough, he’s able to scratch some of the velvet off to reveal the cartilage beneath.

He’s not sure what he can do to get rid of it. Sawing it off provokes a deep sense of fear inside him and sandpaper does nothing to the hard bone. It doesn’t grow as fast as his wings do though, so he grows his hair out. His already messy haircut, if it can be called as such, has enough volume to just about cover his horns, and he doesn’t worry about it as much as the two appendages attached to his back.
During a day off he sucks in a deep breath and makes his way to the guest wing. It’s afternoon when most people are busy but he tries his luck anyways and knocks on the door. It pivots on its hinges a second later.

“Panne,” he rasps. “Can I come in?”

She gives him a sceptical look but invites him in nonetheless. The room is nondescript and roomy with a lack of furniture. He sees rabbit hair sticking to her sheets and the carpet.

Dressed in a simple robe, she plops down onto the couch opposite to him, hands crossed with a bemused expression on her face. “What do you want.”

“I was wondering. Are there any bird taguel from where you came from?”

She raises an eyebrow in a way that tells him she’s not buying his farce. “Why ask?”

“Would you believe me if I said I was curious?”

“No.”

“It’s a little hard to explain.”

“Go ahead, you have all afternoon.”

“I’ll show you, then.”

He shrugs off his coat. Underneath, he’s only wearing a baggy tank top that he pulls off to an unamused Panne and her eyes widen. She stares as he gives his wings several experimental flaps and folds them back against his back.

A faint smile shows at her lips and she slouches back onto the couch. “I had my suspicions. You smell like a drenched turkey.”
“I’m sure I’ll make a delicious holiday dinner.”

“Rabbits don’t eat meat.”

“You still haven’t answered my question. What am I?”

“If you must know, the term ‘taguel’ refers only to my species. I’ve never seen a half-human, half-bird hybrid like you.”

Robin sighs in defeat. “And there goes my only lead.”

“Not quite. You could perhaps be one of the laguz, belonging to one of the shapeshifting bird tribes in the continent of Tellius to the far north. I remember in the first years of my youth one visited my warren, a heron with a beak as long as my arm. They retain their wings in human form too.”

“Can they transform without a beaststone?”

“They can. Though I do not know how. Is that all?”

“I suppose so. I won’t take up more of your time now.” Robin stands up. “Thanks for having me.”

“A pleasure. I’m surprised the exalt doesn’t know, given all the time you spend in his quarters.”

He whips around. Panne is smirking at him, a leg over her other. “I don’t stay in his room for that long.”

“Please. Even the blind can see how much he cares for you.”

“What are you implying?”

“That you should suck it up and confess to him,” she states blandly.
The effect is immediate. Robin blushes bright red to his eartips. “I- I don’t think of him that way!”

“If you say so.” The shit-eating grin she gives him tells him otherwise.

“Anyhow, there’s no way he has- um- any r-romantic inclinations towards- oh, forget it. See you around.”

He leaves without waiting for her response and storms off into the corridors where he accidentally bumps into Chrom on his way to his own quarters. He swears he’s going to faint as he apologises profusely and slinks back into his room to a very confused Chrom.

_That you should suck it up and confess to him._ Was he that obvious? Was he? There was no way she could have known right?

Right?

-

Chrom returns from a trip to the city and the first thing Robin does when he hears the news is run to the gates still clutching his books. He’s panting strenuously from sprinting from one end of the castle to the other, his legs are about to fall off and he’s gasping for breath as he addresses him.

“Chrom! Are you alright?!”

He dismounts from his horse, sword on display at his hip. “Er, yes, I’m fine. What’s got you so excited?”

“They told me you were attacked behind a pub!”

He chuckles. “Pfft. Some local thug approached me with a dagger, but he bolted when I drew iron. The poor fellow probably thought he was mugging a merchant. Ha!”
“You challenged him? Alone?!?”

“Well, I wouldn’t say ‘challenged,’ exactly. More like ‘shooed away.’ Can’t very well leave that sort untouched, can I?”

“By the gods, Chrom! Please, I beg you, take no more of these foolish risks! We’re not at war now, there’s absolutely no need for you to do so.”

“Surely you’re not saying that I’ll be beaten in a fight?”

“I don’t fear anyone besting you head-on; I fear you being stabbed in the back!”

“Do you really think some random cutpurse could get the better of me?”

“Shall I list every hero who said that before being poisoned, sniped or snared?”

“Well, I don’t think a list is necess-“

“You’re the exalt, Chrom. Battlefield victories mean nothing if the country loses its leader. You’re no longer simply your own man. You stand for all of us. For the country.” For me, he wants to add but holds his tongue.

“…You have a point. You’re right, as you always are.” He smiles. “I’ll take care to be more cautious. Thank you, Robin.”

“I hope you do good on your words,” Robin huffs as he goes with Chrom towards the archway of the castle entrance. He shoves his armload of books into his chest. “Help me lift my books as compensation for you worrying me.”

“Alright, alright,” and he does, the servants all looking at them incredulously as the exalt walks to the library doing what a simple maid could do at the simplest command. They whisper among themselves of the blossoming friendship between the two, and the countless nights they spend in company of each other. Advisor, acquaintance, friend, lover. Robin overhears the kitchen staff one day and he’s never looked at his breakfast the same way again.
And as winter rolls into spring, the walls wet with moisture and the flowers in budding prosperity, Ylisse settles from tumultuous political chaos to a long, gliding halcyon. Robin visits Chrom for work less and less, for idle chat more and more. He knows his way around the exalt’s room to a minute degree, knows the notch in the desk where Chrom accidentally stabbed his fountain pen into the wood, knows the scent of the bedsheets and the fragrance of the delphiniums in the glass vase by the windowsill.

He’s listened the countless stories of Chrom’s younger, rasher days and Lissa’s unending bawling when she was still a toddler. He can pick out which dishes Chrom likes and what he hates from the dinner table, he’s adapted to the ridiculous filing system Chrom uses, he helps him tidy his mess of a room. They make it a game to see if Robin can guess which exact pastry Chrom’s wanting as he takes a trip to get snacks, and as of the last thirty rounds he’s had a winning streak.

It’s late at night and they’re sharing a bottle of wine one of the noble houses sent to Chrom, both of them slightly buzzed and a little less coherent than they should be. Robin is focusing on Chrom’s face as he tries his best not to tip over the chair while pouring himself another glass.

“The council,” Chrom slurs, “they want me to marry.”

“Then- do you want to?”

“No!”

“Then don’t.” He concludes, tipping the contents of his glass into his throat.

“Ugh… They’re saying it’s going to stabilize the country. I don’t get how it works. Why would- hic-spending all our tax money on a large as shit wedding make the country, uh, better?”

“I guess you’ll be marrying a girl from some high and mighty house? And you’ll get money… which is always good?”

“Noo…” Chrom wails as he uncorks the second bottle of wine. “I don’t want to marry some random chick I’ve never met before. I don’t even like girls. They’re so confusing-“
The conversation veers off-topic from there. Robin wakes the next morning with the vague feeling of hope without knowing why, and goes about his day as usual.

Robin may have been acting as Chrom’s advisor, but he’s a tactician through and through. The peace is a blanketing calm that muffles his senses and dulls his wits. He grows jittery without the familiar weight of responsibility hanging at the back of his mind. Restless, he busies himself with a scribe’s work but even that exhausts itself and his life falls into disarray.

There’s nothing for him to do. Nothing left for him to do, no work tethering him to his place. He is a foreigner in the rigid hierarchy of the castle, cast away into the depths of uselessness. Summer nips at the heels of spring and he’s soon going to be unable to hide his wings. His horns break from the velvet and mature into hard bone.

If this continues, he might just get burned at the stake for being a demon.

Nowi brings him news that her family, now migrated to the frigid cold above Ylisse, may have a clue to his condition. He mulls over his situation, and decides.

He chooses a night obscured by clouds, where his silhouette would be cloaked in shifting shadows. It’s a night without moonlight nor the gentle dapple of the stars, a night when the castle guards are the ones he is familiar enough with. He leaves with the same belongings he came here with- a coat, a journal, and a scattering of coins.

He pulls up the hood of his coat, passing Chrom’s room and for a fleeting moment he’s filled with the compulsion to stay. He resists the magnetic pull of the doorknob and trods on, down the stairs, into the back garden where Marth had slipped in unnoticed. The very same garden where Chrom had nearly died from an assassin, more than half a year ago.

His boots squelch on the grass. The petrichor is fresh from rain and he stands, back facing the fading illumination of the castle, as he scans the wall for the tiny break where he can shuffle through. It’s there, right behind a rose bush, a wide gap he could walk under and never return ever again.

He hesitates.
The few seconds of hesitation is what ultimately snaps his attention to the racing footsteps behind him and he pivots on the ball of his foot. He freezes.

“Robin,” Chrom is yelling, dressed hurriedly in a plain tunic and trousers. He makes a mad dash to Robin where he slows to a stop, wheezing.

“Chrom,” Robin breathes, because even if both of them know what he’s about to do he’s going to pretend that they don’t. “What are you doing here?”

“You’re leaving.”

It’s a statement, plain and simple. A statement that slaps Robin across the face painfully combined with the hard, pleading gaze Chrom is hitting him with.

“What are you doing here?”

“Where will you go?”

“Wherever my feet will take me.”

The fact that he’s not coming back is unspoken, hung in the air on a silver thread.

“But why?”

“You've finally found peace in Ylisse. Your people love you, your subjects loyal, a war's been won without casualties. I've served my purpose- in the end, I'm still a tactician, in my flesh and blood.” He pulls his eyes away. “A tactician has no place without war.”

He takes Robin’s hand into his own and the warmth, the sheer heat radiating from his palms making him want to melt into his touch. “You don’t need to go.” His grip tightens. “There’ll always be a place for you here. In Ylisse. With us. With me.”

And as if the stars have aligned for this moment, Robin breaks away.
“Chrom,” he utters. “Before you tell me to stay, I want you to know something.”

He removes the coat from his shoulders. In the darkness, in the warm glow of dim, ethereal luminescence, he unfurls his wings.

Sleek, dark feathers blur into view. Neat ridges fold across the hooked, clawed wingtips, running across the spine of his quills. They spread in an exquisite, rhythmic sprawl, not quite of a bird’s and more akin to a wyvern’s, gleaming, radiant, and beautiful.

He quietly lowers them, to Chrom’s stunned silence, and whispers.

“I don’t deserve to be here, beside you.”

His fears have come true as his unwavering gaze stand hard against his. Chrom takes a step forward, unrelenting-

-and kisses him.

It’s sloppy with inexperience. His mouth is hot and wet and tastes of the chocolates he ate after dinner. It’s desperate, yet gentle, nudging Robin with his tongue as the other reels in utter shock. The press of Chrom’s lips against his leaves him senseless and tingling and he can’t hear or see anything except a full vision of blue.

He parts after a brief moment and stares at him.

“Did I do it wrong?”

“No,” Robin replies, and crashes into his lips again.

He chases after him, sliding his tongue into his and melding their mouths together. He drinks from his lips greedily, suckling and biting as Chrom threads his fingers into Robin’s hair and hums into the kiss. He melts into him, slotting himself against the shape of his mouth as the heat thrums throughout his body.
They break apart, breathless. Chrom finds his cheek and rests a thumb there.

“I don’t care if you’re not human. I don’t care if you have no past. You are the wind at my back and sword at my side- if you must leave, then I will go with you.”

Robin smiles.

“You don’t need to.”

“-this is my home, now.”

Chapter End Notes

i skipped the A support because it's just gay and we all know how frustrating of a cockblock the A support was

so like i realized i have social media so if anyone wants to hmu here:
my (personal) twitter: @shtrigaei (i don't post a lot but i do retweet a dumb ton, more active here)

my tumblr (tho i've kinda abandoned it after the ban in dec): @aebers (i haven't went back since my octopath age but i will respond!)

-i will defo respond to any dms/@me
-ive been kind of an internet recluse till i posted my first fic here and wow ao3 does wonders to my sociableness

celebratory i hit 20k words in a little more than a week wow what have i been doing with my life
thanks for bearing with my slow ass burn and my rushing towards the end because lmao i am tired it's 3 am
It's (finally) saturday! meaning i can actually sit in bed and write all day! man it took me forever to come up with their relationship development but here it is! (i told the school i was sick to avoid going to one of their events and here i am)

edit as of chap 9: this chapter is eh but i can't fix it because it's 1:43 am and my brain cells are going on strike

There are times when Chrom thinks he’s picked the wrong decision.

He shouldn’t have kissed him, he should have taken his hands into his and begged him not to leave. The kiss was entirely unnecessary. He was a dumb, blithering idiot for succumbing to his pent up emotions and leaning in at the spur of the moment.

He sees Robin down the halls and he blushes furiously. He can’t see if Robin’s bothered by this but he really can’t deal with the sheer embarrassment of seeing the man who he kissed so incredibly messily and talking to him as if nothing’s happened. Robin’s kissed him back, he reminds himself as he tries to work up the courage to face him like a man. That meant that he felt the same way, right?

No.

He isn’t sure what their relationship is like now. Maybe if he’d added some cheesy line like, “I love you, Robin, don’t go,” then he at least could have gotten a solid answer as to how the other man felt about him. But oh, no, he just had to claim his admittedly, very kissable lips and spout an even cheesier line about him being the wind at his back and sword by his side, like the romance novels he’d pillfered from Lissa’s room for his own guilty pleasure.

Did friends kiss each other? Was it a thing that could be done platonically? He knows for a fact that somewhere in the western lands people pecked each other’s cheeks as greetings, but did it apply to their situation?

Chrom groans and sinks his head further into his hands.
His thoughts wander to Robin’s two almost angelic wings as he leaves his desk to splash his face in the wash basin. What was he, anyways? A taguel? Manakete? He’s sure they weren’t there before when he carried him last time back from the library, so it might have been a hex. That would explain why Robin was so reluctant to let him know. He makes a mental reminder to tell him to get it looked over by a healer, that is, if he ever gets over his stupid nerves.

Gods, this is going to be the end of him.

The week passes uneventfully and another problem weighs heavy on his mind as the council starts pressing their daughters and nieces and distant cousins on him. Now that peace has been hard wrought Ylisse demands an heir to continue their legacy. Ylisse is a halidom, and as with all religious countries, requires a figurehead to act in the place of their god. Chrom curses his exalted blood, curses his blue hair that he’s the one who must pass it all on to his future child, instead of being able to run free like his sisters. He rejects their offers, first politely and eventually losing his patience and declaring at the table that he’s not marrying any one of their rich attempts to shove their bloodline up the throne.

The suitors don’t stop, as he would expect, only growing more shameless as time goes on. He is faintly surprised when one day not a girl in a frilly dress shows up but a boy bearing striking resemblance to his tactician comes knocking with an apologetic smile on his face. Chrom actually has to do a double take before bursting out into laughter and directing him to his masters to tell them good try, but not quite.

Court politics are tiring without Robin. Time wears on and he finally finds it in him to hold a conversation of more than two sentences with the object of his insufferable crush. Robin seems unfazed by their previous happenings but doesn’t bring it up again as they both ease back into easy camaraderie.

It’s less tense than he had thought it would be. Robin finally, finally ditches his coat when alone with Chrom, stretching lazily on his bed when he thinks he isn’t looking and leaving little black feathers that he finds caught in his mouth as he wakes in the morning. Chrom doesn’t ask about them; he doesn’t know how. He etches every sight of Robin into his memory, the curve of his hips and the nook of his neck, the slender arm that drapes over Chrom’s shoulder as he leans over to point at obvious signs of forgery on the documents strewn all over the desk.

He can see Robin in the way his shelves are neatly organised after one of their nightly discussion sessions and in the two cups of cold tea left over in the mornings after. He searches for him first thing as he enters any room and his heart flutters as he finds white amidst a sea of blond, brown and black.

For now, it's all he can ask for.
Robin journeys with Chrom to Regna Ferox, to his officials’ distaste, and learns of the conqueror of Valm. It’s a pleasant break from all the political chatter in the castle, and to Robin’s guilt, a spark of exhilarating freshness in his whole year of calm within Ylisstol. He brims with excited vigour once again as he meets Cherche and Virion, who turns out to be a duke of the country Rosanne.

The Shepherds gather and Robin nearly cries at seeing everyone together once again. He runs a straightforward victory against the invasion attempt at the port and raises an eyebrow as the runner hands him a scroll detailing the numbers of the Valmese army.

“We don’t have any warships in Ylisse, do we?”

“No, unfortunately, we don’t.”

Robin hums in thought. “That was just their vanguard. If it is as Flavia says, then their host will wash over the whole continent in weeks. Their greatest strength is their cavalry, which puts us at a disadvantage on land, but however, if we were to catch them at sea…”

“We’d need aid from a kingdom that borders the sea, and with enough wealth to support this whole campaign.”

“Plegia,” Robin spits.

“I was afraid you’d come to this conclusion.”

“They have gold. Countless ships.”

“Have you gone insane?”

“There is but one path forward.” He gestures at the scroll. “Do you think we can beat an army thirty times our size?”
“…Very well. Send a messenger and request a summit immediately. Let us pray that their new king is more reasonable than their last.”

They leave in poor spirits, receiving word of a promised meeting on Carrion Isle a mere day after. A quick trip to the gates of death should things go sour. The voyage makes Robin sick to his throat both metaphorically and literally. His instinct tells him that there’s something awaiting them there, quiet and terrible. The jagged outline on the horizon screams ambush in every way possible.

He’s wound up tightly, ready to react any moment. The halls are foreboding, tattered flags and tapestries hanging from elegant archways touched by the dark of evening. At the sight of Aversa he recoils, stung, as she smirks, clinging to the man beside her.

“Chrom,” he whispers. “This isn’t good. If that is the king of Plegia, then we should go. Now.”

“Why so?”

“He’s supposed to be dead. I killed him myself that night- I’m sure. He’s the one who lead the assassination against Emmeryn. The gods know why he’s up and kicking but I don’t think it’s anything good.”

Aversa cuts them off, chiding them for their whispering. Plegia can offer their fleets and an abundance of gold, she drawls. And one more person to introduce, besides the current king.

Validar calls from his position, the hierophant of the Grimleal. The man that emerges from seemingly nowhere dons the same coat Robin is wearing, his face hooded. Robin edges towards Chrom and grips at his sleeve, fingers digging into the fabric.

“The heart still sleeps, but the blood flows through it. And the blood is strong…” The man murmurs, sending chills up Robin’s spine. He steps forward and Robin takes a step back.

“Good hierophant, I would ask you to lower your cowl.” Frederick warns. “In Ylisse, it is a courtesy expected in the presence of royalty.”

“You are a long way from Ylisse,” the man sneers. “But very well.”
Robin bites his tongue to stop himself from swearing. His hands are shaking. Chrom blinks in dumb shock.

“Ah yes. Introductions. My name is Robin. Oh, and that was your name as well, wasn’t it?”

“Why, that is rather curious, now that you mention it…” Validar chuckles. “In any case, I believe we are finished here. We will let you be on your w-“

“Hold up! Why in the heavens-“

“I’m afraid we’ve no time for such trivial matters now, your highness.” She interrupts, turning. “Oh, and do be careful on your way back to Port Ferox.”

Robin yells after them to no avail. They’ve disappeared into the winding halls. He’s clutching at Chrom’s arm, he realizes to the rapid beating of his heart. His vision swims, he’s close to fainting. He breathes deeply to steady himself, his heartbeat, his trembling hands.

“Robin! Are you okay?”

“I’m okay. I’m fine.” He gasps after a while of hysteria. “Let’s go back to camp. I don’t think I can stand being here anymore.”

He wobbles out into the open staying close by Chrom’s side. Till night he ponders and stares into the distance, flinching at the slightest sounds. There are crows perched on the trees surrounding the clearing, setting their beady eyes at the low campfire as the sun sets.

He can’t sleep. He replays the exact scene over and over in his head, pacing around the forest as a thin slice of the moon hangs silently in the black sky.

“Heed me…”

Robin whips around. “Who’s there!”
“Heed my call, Robin!”

The acute ringing in his head overpowers his senses and sparks an excruciating throbbing in his temples. He presses his palms to his ears, a bitter taste in his mouth.

“Why do you close your heart to him? Have you truly forgotten?”

The hazy shadows swirl and take shape. Robin grabs at the tendrils of darkness and falls through. It’s an illusion. A trick of the light, yet too real to calm the erratic fear seizing his limbs.

“Validar? Get out of my head!”

The painful whinging shoots through his head and he collapses on a knee.

“Heh, such arrogance! You dare take such a tone with your own father?”

“My what now?”

“You are of my flesh, of sacred blood. You live to serve a glorious purpose! Search deep in your heart. You already know it is your destiny…”

“Shut up!”

“Why do you resist us? Your rightful place is at my side. Stop wasting your time with these doomed servants of Naga and give yourself to the fell dragon!”

“Robin!”

The mirage vanishes. The pain fades till it’s no more than a fraction of what it was, a delusion created by the mind. It’s almost as if it never had happened at all.

“Chrom.” Robin voices weakly. “I’m fine.”
He grabs Robin’s shoulder. “‘Fine’ is a poor choice of words. What happened?”

“Validar… he spoke to me… in my mind. He said I was his son.”

“What? Is this true?”

“I have no idea. But I also don’t know if it’s a lie. Loath as I am to say it, I felt a… strange connection between us.”

“Gods… that hierophant doppelganger… could he have been your twin?”

“I don’t know. I’m not sure I want to know anymore...”

A large rumble sounds from the distance, followed by a horrific bout of screaming and shouting. The clash of things crashing into the ground and muffled explosions. Frederick comes rushing, shouting for Risen.


“No time to lose. We’ll have to move.”

Robin returns to camp with a sinking feeling in his gut. They had camped in a valley to avoid being buffered by the ocean winds, but he sees that it was a complete, strategic fail. Staggering soldiers are closing in on either side of the ravine and the limited space they have to fight in inspires widespread claustrophobia.

The battle commences with Chrom drawing steel. It sickens Robin that they’re mutilating already rotting corpses beyond recognition. This time around the undead army shuffles about with surprising intelligence, not that Robin can’t outmanoeuvre them in any way, but as he peels their masks off with the tip of his sword he sees the twitching face of a young Plegian soldier mouthing what seems to be a prayer to the fell god, Grima. He tears his gaze away.

Reanimating corpses with a hint of consciousness is as cruel as any, and Robin plods on, grim.
He manages to rush the archers with their flyers and claim the fortresses before any more Risen can pool out from beyond their walls. With the back secured he weaves through a sea of spasming cadavers by Chrom’s side. The stench of rot permeates the warm night air, wounds reopened, congealed blood seeping out from already rigid muscle. Matted hair covered with mud and broken bones jutting out from swollen, dark joints.

Halfway up the bridge Robin makes the mistake of looking down. A drizzle passes, and a river of diluted red trickles down the valley.

He resists the urge to empty his stomach onto the ground.

The commander of the Risen stands still. A lumpish giant towering over them, a club in both of its meaty hands, skin threaded together with crude artistry, bulging where some of his flesh hangs loose in between stiches. Robin blasts at it with a powerful volley of lightning, Chrom dealing the final blow. The lopped-off head rolls and rolls and drops off the ledge.

Robin’s so distracted by the dull thump it makes as it hits the ground he barely registers the rogue that’s swinging up from beneath the bridge, dagger grasped in a fist.

“Father, no!”

There, he sees her. Marth dashes forward and blocks the strike. Her hair billows in the momentum, blade sharp and teeth clenched. Silver arcs through the air in a trail of blood and she sweeps the assassin off the bridge, panting.

“Thank the gods you’re safe!”

“…You called me ‘father.’”

Chrom seems to be more shaken by this than the fact that he had almost died from a surprise attack.

“Did I? I… Perhaps we can speak privately?”
She’s flustered as she pulls Chrom to the side. Robin listens in out of curiosity. The Risen are all down, anyways. The Shepherds can handle themselves fine.

“I don’t even know where to begin.” He hears her sigh.

“I already know that you’re not ‘Marth’, for the lack of nothing better to call you. But I’ll ask nothing that you don’t wish to reveal. Whoever you are, Ylisse owes you a debt beyond repaying.”

“Thank you… but I think you would prefer to know the truth.”

“As you wish.”

“My name is Lucina.” Robin catches a sharp inhale from Chrom. “Perhaps what I am about to say would be made clearer with this. Look closely.”

He peers over from the boulder he was hiding behind. Chrom gasps as Lucina strides up to him.

“That’s the… brand of the exalt.”

“Yes… and I am your daughter, from over a decade in the future. From a time after history takes a dark and destructive turn… where Grima is resurrected and rises from his slumber.”

“My… daughter.” He swallows. “Then who is your mother?”

Lucina visibly cringes. As well as Robin. “Are you not married?”

“No. Not yet, if what you are saying is true.”

“I’d… prefer not to tell.”

At this moment Robin chooses to step out from the bushes. “I’m sorry- Chrom?”
“Hmm? Oh, Robin. What is it?”

“Well, it’s been some time, and you two are out here alone… in the dark. Lissa is wondering where you’ve been. I wish you’d be a little less dense; this is how ill rumours are born.”

“Ah- Lucina, if you will?”

She explains. How the fell dragon has taken over the lands, scorching the earth with his fiery breath as his roar quenches any sparks of hope. The death of the Shepherds, erased with a single blast from his jaws. Naga’s plan to alter the events of a past already written.

“Yes, yes,” Robin coughs, “how do you know she’s not just some… distant relative of yours?”

“I know this is a tall tale that beggars belief, and yet she carries Falchion, my same sword, and the very one the first exalt used to slay Grima long ago. There is only one Falchion, Robin. And as for her name, it was one I used to think of when Emm asked me what I would name my child. Nobody would have known save for Emm and me. I believe her.”

“Yeah, and so do I!”

“Lissa?”

“ Heck, I saw her come from the future! She fell right out of the sky!”

“Thank you… Aunt Lissa. I made this journey with others, but… we became separated.”

“Don’t worry, Lucina. If they’re out there, we’ll find em!”

Robin scans Lucina for any clue as to her parentage, but her resemblance to Chrom is uncanny, down to the gait of her walk. It would explain her near-parallel swordplay when they had met her in the arena nearly a year ago. It’s not too farfetched of a tale when he considers the world around him, and too risky of a lie to tell. It’s the truth, he decides, while he watches Lucina hold back her tears as
Chrom makes his way back to camp, oblivious.

There’s not a lot of options, really. Sully’s out of the question, what with her low birth, and while Miriel can be considered her red hair is a dominant gene in case of Chrom’s brilliant blue. Sumia and Maribelle are the most logical candidates, but Robin’s heard Chrom complain about Maribelle’s idiot puppy crush on… who was it again?

Sumia. He’d seen her look at Chrom with a tooth-rotting intensity, and Chrom is in love with her pies. He’d marry her if not for her pies, no doubt.

Robin touches a finger to his lips. He recalls the taste, the insistent, desperate pressure on them, the heated tug of his hair and Chrom’s tongue in his mouth. The hand sliding on his back and dipping down his spine.

It’s a dim hope, but he clings onto it all the same.

Chapter End Notes

Poor lucina lmao i’ve ripped away her sense of security chrom what are you doing

The valmese war is actually pretty convoluted so I might skip some bits. nobody wants to read about non-chrobin stuff so let's cut to the chase and skip all the battles lol

thanks for sticking around to my slow updates!

post proofreading note: oh no there’s not enough chrobin this chapter but im too tired to edit
Chapter Notes

Last chapter was useless filler this time it's not

(i thought i’d update yesterday but yeehaw I was busy again sorry! i hope this chap is better)

my piano teacher : you are late by 30 minutes explain yourself
me, looking at the fic : i was busy doing... homework

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Robin hates the sea. He hates the rocking of the ship as walks, the swaying of the cabin as he sleeps, the unsteady swing of the lamps as he dines under its flickering lights. The unending expanse of blue inspires a deep, mysterious fear within him. Under daylight he can’t see anything besides the sparkling surface. Under moonlight, mysterious, giant sea deities writhe in the inky blackness, haunting his dreams as he sleeps.

Lucina hangs off Chrom in his shadow. If she really were his daughter, Robin pities her. The exalt is impossibly dense in reading her enthusiastic attempts at engaging with him. He watches them train on the deck, using random sturdy wooden sticks found in the hold instead of their swords, exchanging blows at impossible speed. Robin sees Chrom in every step she takes, the lilt of her tone and her brilliant smile when her ‘sword’ has been knocked to the ground.

“One more time!”

Robin retreats to his cabin most of the day to pour over his books. He’s brought with him a collection of obsolete dictionaries and ciphers, all stacked in a neat pile as he attempts to pry open the metal capping of his journal’s spine. He can’t make a dent out of it despite his efforts, the pages are surprisingly inflammable. The words in the front are in modern Plegian, though pieced together it means absolute gibberish in the language.

He enjoys a puzzle as much as any, but an unsolvable mystery is an annoyance. A lingering tick at the back of his mind. He reads it over and over again, searching the texts for any mutations of the words.

“Gimu- re? Gri-”
It clicks. It’s not in Plegian. No, not at all, it’s not some ancient text. He sighs in both exasperation and satisfaction as he reads the title engraved on the cover.

Grima’s Truth.

It’s phonetic, using Plegian sounds to mimic Ylissean words. He wonders what it implies. He would have guessed it to be a holy text of sorts, but that it’s empty save for his own writing says otherwise. It’s a tome, then. An ancient, mysterious tome that curses whoever has the misfortune of using it.

At the same moment of his epiphany he hears familiar footsteps and casually shouts from his desk.

“Come in.”

He can imagine Chrom lowering his hand mid-knock and turning the doorknob.

“How did you know it was me?”

“How did I not know it was you? I listen to you stomp past my tent every night.”

Chrom closes the door behind him, staying completely rooted to the spot. The scrolls he’s carrying nearly drop to the ground, saved only by Robin’s reflexes and a swift nudge by his elbow.

“What’s gotten into you? You’re not so absentminded usually.”

“I, um… I’ve never seen you…”

Oh, Robin realizes. He’s not wearing anything above his waist, what with how it binds his wings uncomfortably and he’s not in public. He’s bare above his navel, black feathers curving down his waist in a provocative sprawl. They dip right below his hips, hidden by his breeches, lacing exquisite patterns on his back and spreading along his wings.

He grins and lets the scrolls tumble onto his desk. “Like what you see?”
“Can’t say I don’t.” Chrom averts his gaze as he lays his armful next to the ones Robin picked up. “I’ve found some maps in the hold. Do you think it’ll help?”

He pulls out one from the pyramid of scrolls, skimming it over. “Hmm. Depends if we’re going to wage war on Plegia again, but I’m sure we’re not doing that any time soon. With that in mind though, aren’t these the warships we borrowed? It could be a trap laid by them. I can’t be sure if they’re accurate.”

“That’s too bad. And here I was thinking I could prove myself useful to your strategizing for once.”

He laughs. “Your presence is as good as any. I can’t stand going out into the open, the seabreeze blows me dizzy. Stay?”

“Your wish is my command.”

Robin extracts a book from the tower he’s built with them and talks. Chrom sits on his bed, enamored with the little gestures he does as he starts to get caught up in conversation. His intelligence shines in not how much knowledge he’s gathered but what he weaves out of what little he knows.

Chrom keeps up surprisingly well with what Robin’s saying, one of the traits that Chrom so dearly loves being how considerate Robin is and how he engages with him easily as if Chrom were an equal in his field. Yet his attention floats away despite his best efforts and he finds himself treading closer and closer to forbidden territory.

It’s so fluffy. He wants to sink his hands into the mass on his back and bury his face in it. He wants to run his fingers through every crest and trough of his feathers and nuzzle it like a feathery cat’s.

“Can I touch it?”

It’s abrupt. Straightforward. Robin’s noticed, in fact, because why wouldn’t he, he knows Chrom like the back of his palm, and shakes his wings out.

“Thought you’d never ask.”
“Have I been this obvious?”

"Why, you’ve been staring at them since you came in.”

Chrom flushes in embarrassment. Robin laughs, the pleasant smile that he’s been holding the entire afternoon growing wider as he plops himself on the bed, cross-legged, back facing Chrom.

The inky blackness stands out against his skin. It slithers down his spine, swirling layers that combined with his Plegian complexion forms an incredibly exotic picture. Robin spreads his wings, the tips of his flight feathers just about brushing the walls of the cabin as stray plumes flutter to the ground.

Chrom can feel the warmth radiating from him. He’s glad Robin can’t see him in this position because his cheeks are burning right now. Tentatively, he lifts a hand to start between his shoulder blades and his fingers sink into a sea of fluff. Heaven.

“It’s so soft.” He murmurs as he resists the urge to move. “How did you get them?”

“I don’t know. I think it might be a hex of some sort. I didn’t have them a year ago.”

“You should get it looked at by a healer. Lissa, maybe.”

“I’m not sure if I want everyone to know yet. It doesn’t hurt.”

“If you say so. Can I move?”

Robin hums in allowance. He trails his hands over the muscle underneath the plumage, kneading them softly as he journeys downward. It’s rigid to his surprise, most probably due to all the exertion Robin does with his magic and swordplay daily. He unconsciously pushes into the knots beneath his shoulders, undoing the stiff muscle with his thumbs.

He hears Robin sigh as he arches into his touch. Chrom’s heart skips a beat and he continues, eliciting short responses by rolling his knuckles into his trapezoid where it connects to his wings. Robin shudders. He takes this as a positive sign. He’s done this countless times with Emm and Lissa,
so he knows where to put his hands for maximum comfort and sure enough, Robin is leaning further and further back, a small step away from purring contently.

“You don’t have to do this,’ he mumbles sleepily. “But thanks.”

Robin, on the other hand, is devastated, both by their extremely close proximity and how comfortable Chrom’s massaging is. Accompanied with the gentle rocking of the ship and Chrom’s quiet, tuneful humming, he fears that he’ll fall asleep within minutes. It proves to be true as Chrom works through him with remarkable skill and prods at pains he didn’t know he had.

He gets to his wings soon enough and gods, there might actually be some benefit to having two extra blundering appendages. He’s hypersensitive towards the ends, each lingering touch sending shivers up his spine. It doesn’t help that Chrom is caressing his feathers with agonizing tenderness, and he swears, swears that he’s brushed his lips against one of his feathered joints. His last remaining flicker of logic tells him that he should put a stop to this before it gets out of hand, but really now. It’s too comfortable. He has no self control.

His eyes are heavily lidded and if the saliva pooling in his mouth is saying anything he’s actually going to fall asleep. He’s on his way to nodding off when a jolt of electricity shoots up his wings and goes directly to his groin. His breath hitches as Chrom begins alternating his strokes there. His touch is light and sensual. Addictive. Robin tries his best to keep himself from reacting too heavily and ends up staying completely still.

Chrom seems to pick up on this. He circles the area again, the heat of his palms scorching as he rubs into the flesh. His wings flutter helplessly as pleasure rolls over him in waves. His body is warm, warm beyond belief, his breathing labored and as Chrom hits a particularly sensitive spot he lets out an accidental moan. Oh, no. By the gods, not now, when both of them have a vague idea what’s going on.

Another accurate stroke has him keeling, stifled by biting the inside of his cheeks and he’s left with a painful problem straining between his thighs.

Robin is so damn thankful that he’s left his tactician’s kilt on. The thick leather can hide almost anything but it also restricts access to the friction he so desperately desires. He wants it. He needs it. He needs Chrom to touch him, to feel up the inside of his thighs, to put his mouth on the delicate flesh and leave his mark there. He needs the harsh bite of teeth on his neck, on his skin, his stomach-

“Chrom.” He whispers urgently. “It’s getting dark.”

The touching stops. He barely holds himself back from whipping around and snapping at Chrom to
keep going and slowly, carefully, folds his wings against his back. Each maneuver is deliberate as he moves to hide his throbbing erection from Chrom’s curious stare.

“I thought you were enjoying it.”

“I am. I was.” He sees Chrom and drops his gaze. The moment of epiphany is apparent as Chrom falls motionless.

“Robin-”

He rubs his shoulders. “We’re late for dinner.”

“Oh,” he says dumbly as he gets up. “I- I’ll get going then.”

Neither of them comment on the scarlet tint on their faces. As Chrom turns to leave Robin walks up and stands on his toes.

“You have a feather in your hair,” he adds as he plucks it out from his blue locks. Chrom grabs his hand before he can throw it onto the ground among the others.

“I’ll keep it.” He pries the feather out from Robin’s fingers. “As a souvenir.”

Robin snorts but lets him have it nonetheless. He ushers Chrom out of the door. Once he’s gotten him out of earshot he throws the latch over the door and unbuckles his belt, dropping all his articles of clothing onto the floor unceremoniously.

It’s not without guilt that he thinks of Chrom as he relieves himself. As he finishes with Chrom’s name sullied by his lips he makes his way to the dinner table, apologizes for being late as Lucina raises an eyebrow at him. He doesn’t know what to think when Chrom grazes his hand over his as they both reach for the same slice of beef.

He’s fine with the truce. He’s fine with the friendship he has with him, even though one day he’s going to take a wife and bear an heir for the kingdom. He’s fine with the way he looks at Sumia and her shy smile as Chrom walks by and tells her good night.
He burns the ships down with a set jaw and unwavering resolve. As they save Say’ri from the Valmese troops they make a hasty retreat down the coastline and settle in an outlying island where he broods. The ruins provide good shelter for camp and as they’re getting ready to leave for the morning the distinctive sound Risen rouses everyone from the drowsy morning blues.

The Risen don’t aim for the Shepherds, though. Instead, across the yawning maw of the river, Robin spies a purple coat and his stomach drops. The war with Plegia may be over, but the Grimleal has made a lasting impression on Robin. Despite this he yells for Cordelia and Sumia to fly himself and Chrom over.

It turns out not to be one, but two people stranded on an isle surrounded by undead monsters. A boy and a girl, to be exact, with the same shade of light hair and grey eyes. Dread piles in Robin’s stomach as he approaches them.

“Dad?”

Chrom’s eyes widen as he wildly turns from Robin to the children and from the children to Robin. He settles for addressing Robin first.

“Dad?”

“Don’t look at me. Do I look old enough to have children that are about as tall as I am?”

“Then how?”

Morgan and… also Morgan, Robin comes to know. It seems that the only thing they can remember is Robin and that he’s their apparent father. Oh, and the fact that they’re twins. The resemblance is uncanny, down to their coats and their slightly stilted accents. Robin lets them hug him in succession and allows them to pester him with questions.

And now begs the question. Who was their mother?
Both of them are equally as tight-lipped on this topic as Lucina was. Lucina recognizes them in an instant and rushes to envelop both of them in a hug, the Morgans doing the same as Lucina goes into high spirits for the rest of the day. Robin can only gawk as Lucina shows them around the Shepherds excitedly. It looks like they can use the tome and the sword with equal dexterity too, a trait inherited from Robin. Chrom stands besides Robin as they watch the two tumble around camp excitedly.

“They really do look like you.”

“Lucina’s an exact copy of your stupid recklessness, don’t you dare.”

He wonders who their mother was. He should have known by first glance but he knows that albinism doesn’t run common among the public. Instead he speculates by the purplish hues of their hair and he’s thrown into a complete enigma because hair can’t possibly be naturally purple.

It’s a reassurance that he’ll live to have children. But it’s also a persisting fear of the unknown, of who he will marry. Who he’ll have to settle for, second best to Chrom, exalt of Ylisse, father to Lucina.

So close, yet so far.

- 

The Mila Tree is easy to reach but waking Tiki from her sleepy trance is not. Nowi gasps audibly as they enter the glade and yells at her to wake up as if she didn’t just scramble up an entire mountain’s worth of branches. Robin forcibly drags her away, telling her to shut her trap or he’ll withhold dessert from her for the next week. She pouts, opting to circle the slumbering manakete excitedly.

It takes three whole days for her to wake, during which they sleep, eat and sleep more in the abundance of the hidden glade. Safety is a welcome change to the constant tension during their tiring marches. Robin spends most of his time there entertaining his future children, whom he’s dubbed Morgan and Morrigan for the sake of clarity. They’ve also taken a liking to Chrom, taking swordplay lessons from him alongside Lucina. Robin had thought that she would dislike the competition for attention but she’s been more cheerful since with two pupils tucked under her wing.

The end of Tiki’s century-long nap ends with Nowi transforming and nuzzling her with affection. Tiki smiles and kisses her snout, then tells her not to transform without reason. She reverts
obligingly. It’s amazing what little three thousand years does to a manakete. If Robin hadn’t known better she’d be twenty-five at most, eighteen at least. She speaks in Ylissean, though at times lapses back into archaic Altean.

Marth, she calls Lucina. So it is true that she bears the blood of the hero-king. At the end of her explanation she raises her piercing gaze to Robin and dismisses everyone else, uttering softly.

“You have power… like mine.”

“Grima’s power.”

“So you know already.”

He laughs bitterly. “How can I not?”

Tiki joins their cause as she foresees the inevitability of Grima’s resurrection. Robin goes to her during the cover of night and has her look over his wings.

It’s not over yet, she says. If he were really manifesting Grima’s traits, then he still had a long way to go.

How long?

Till a single wing can serve as a cape in the chilliest of winters. Till it takes over your body, your soul, and your life.

-

Lucina is training with Chrom again. She’s come this close to beating him, just by the breadth of a hair. Alas, her sword is knocked to the ground again, and she grins, exhilarated.

“I’ll definitely win tomorrow!”
She hangs the training swords onto the racks, beside the shields and lances. Her hair’s tied up, tucked behind her golden tiara. The crowd that had gathered to watch them spar murmur among themselves as people exchange handfuls of coins to signal bets lost and won.

She turns around. “Oh, and mother?”

The whole of the Shepherds freeze. Her hand flies to her own mouth but the damage has been done. Chrom is especially stricken as Lucina carefully walks out of their makeshift arena, avoiding contact at all costs.

It doesn’t slip past Robin. He’s caught the moment of eye contact at the initial syllable of her utterance.

Patience. He waits after dinner, when everyone’s prowling around Lucina for answers. It’s until the morning after he finds her warming up at the edge of camp.

“Lucina.”

She seizes up in the middle of her routine. “Robin?”

“Good morning- and for what happened yesterday-”

“No. I’m not saying. It was a slip of the tongue. I won’t repeat it ever again.”

“I saw you look at me.”

“Did I now.”

“You did.”

“I’m not sure what you’re talking about.”

“Lucina,” he presses. “I’m not trying to know who your mother was. I just- want to know. If I ever harmed her in any way. Or, if you would like me to be blunt, killed her. And if that is why you’re so distant to me, even though you treat everyone else in the Shepherds the same.”
She shakes her head. “No, it’s not your fault. You didn’t touch a single hair on her.”

“What?”

“I don’t know why. It’s hard to explain. You won’t want to hear it.”

“Try me.”

“Are you sure?”

“Yes.”

“I’ll say what I said to my father to you, then.” She takes a step forward. “Look closely.”

In the early morning light, she removes her golden tiara, glinting in the sun’s radiance. A lock, a long braid of white hair tumbles into view, swaying above her headful of blue.

“Robin, you are my mother.”

Chapter End Notes

no it’s not mpreg nor is it miracle pregnancy magic

I deliberated on how to magic lucina into existence time and time again but then a genius (?) idea occurred to me and here we are

yikes maybe I like wings a little too much lol

talk to me @ my tumblr/ twitter!
comments and kudos give me life! i have been bestowed upon the power to write a new chapter by your compliments and feedback but now i'm tired because sleeping at 2 am three days in a row is bad for my health

i will respond to your unresponded comments tomorrow,, after i get some sleep and my brain isn't consistently trying to kick me off a ledge and i can articulate my non-delirious thoughts better

thank you for reading so far! your support means a lot to me :)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“That’s not possible.”

The silence is impregnable. Lucina tucks the tress of hair behind her ear and reaches into her belt.

“Perhaps this may convince you.”

She draws out a long, thin object. It’s obviously worn yet retains a lush colour still, gold-tipped with beautiful craftsmanship. An unconventional quill in the sense that it hasn’t lost its oily sheen, as most quills would have within weeks. It’s jet black, sleek, enormous compared to the ones Robin uses.

“It can’t be.”

“It was the last gift my mother gave to me.”

“She- she’s not me. You must be mistaken.”

“I would love to say the same, but unless there’s another Plegian with white hair named Robin the chances are slim.”

Robin pinches the bridge of his nose. “Okay, let’s say that I was your mother. Then the Morgans—”
“-are my siblings. They’ve dyed their hair.”

“It’s white?”

“No. It’s blue.”

If not for the ridiculous situation, he would have blushed himself to the high heavens. He hasn’t processed the information well enough to be shocked inarticulate though.

“Are you sure I don’t have any twin sisters?”

“In my timeline, Validar had only one child. And that was you. Is you.”

“There is a chance,” Robin says cautiously, “That you might not have came from the future of this world.”

“What? Are you implying that Naga messed up?”

“I am. You’ve been sent to a timeline where I was born male, not female. Chrom hasn’t been married yet. You technically don’t exist now, do you?”

Lucina swallows. “I was born a little after the Ylisse-Plegian war. Perhaps I’ve changed the future too drastically.”

“Or that he’s destined to marry another woman he’ll meet eventually.”

She shakes her head. “My father wouldn’t have married anyone else. He’s only had eyes for you since the day you met each other. Even now.”

Robin’s heart skips a beat. “You can’t be serious. Ylisse needs an heir.”
“I can’t imagine anyone but my mother with him. Now that that’s out of the question, I’m not sure how I should feel.”

“I’m sorry.”

“I don’t mind, really.” She puts on her tiara and slides the quill back into her belt. “You act and talk like her. It’s a good enough comfort to know that my father will have you by his side.”

The sun’s risen out of the mist, clearing the camp of fog. As she heads towards the markets she hides the white braid behind the gold and gives him a wry smile.

“But who knows. Perhaps the day will come when I’ll call you ‘papa’ instead.”

- 

Lucina’s words weigh heavily on his mind as he goes about his day. He now knows why the Morgans are so distant yet close to him at the same time. If he looks close enough he can see where Chrom’s personality flitters through the cracks of their usual dorky selves. Morgan’s furrowed brow and Morrigan’s signature pout. Their incessant fascination with swords and their tendencies to walk in on people at inappropriate times- he’s not sure if they’re distracted or if it’s on purpose.

There are pitfalls all over camp. He makes a mental reminder to reprimand both of them when Sumia walks into one, the shrill shriek of Cordelia’s scream echoing around camp as they both tumble into the pit in a tangle of limbs. Their compulsion to prove themselves better than their parents is shared with Lucina, but her uprightness isn’t. He has to break up an almost-fight between them as Morgan uses Falchion to skilfully peel an apple.

“But moth- Robin! It’s a sacred weapon!”

“I’ve seen Chrom use it to trim his toenails last night.” He deadpans. “I don’t think it can get any worse.”

Morrigan returns with a basketful of apples to see Morgan and Lucina gagging on the bench. When she asks why her brother hands her the peeled apple wordlessly.
“I don’t trust you.”

Robin snorts and plucks the apple from Morgan’s fingers.

“Tastes like feet,” he comments. “Delicious.”

The battles drag on and on. He’s made it so far without any casualties, a pat on the back for himself, but for that he’s sacrificed their supplies. The arsenal may be fully stocked with weapons, the medica with vulneraries and salves, but the military budget bleeds. The fight for Fort Steiger is ultimately a failure when the Resistance ditches them behind. This, combined with leaving the khans with some of their own supplies, deals a hard blow on their finances.

He treads through the Demon’s Ingle with as much care as possible. The volcano nips at his heels, and in hasty step several carts loaded with their supplies topple into the magma. Robin groans inwardly as the crates get swallowed in the fiery sludge.

At least it helped with their mobility in battling Yen’fay. As they make their way down the mountain range the weather takes a turn for the worse and Tiki directs them to a secluded path winding around the tall, snowy mountains ringing the volcano.

Robin’s teeth are chattering. He had thought Regna Ferox was cold. Now he longs for the swift snow of the warrior country. In the face of the raging snowstorm he can’t see the footprints behind him nor can he let go of Chrom’s hand in fear of getting lost. The girls huddle around Nowi for warmth, leaving the men alone with Robin’s Elfire to keep their boots dry.

He inevitably finds out what the crates they lost to the magma carried as they camp for the night. Nearly half their tents were lost, the remaining being small, cramped spaces intended for storage. Thankfully nobody protests as he makes them pair up to sleep, till only Chrom, Lissa and himself remain unsorted.

“I’ll go with Maribelle.”
“Wouldn’t you be more-“

Lissa gives him a wink, smirking. “Have fun.”

Any form of protest dies on his tongue as Chrom takes his hand to lead him to their tent. His fingers clasp into his, mild frostbite on his nose, dragging him across the snow and ducking under the dingy tent flaps.

It’s very small. The bedrolls fit snugly at the edges, only a thin layer of woven canvas separating them and the chill. Robin gets out of his boots as fast as possible and worms under the covers, wrapping his wings around himself in a desperate attempt to stay warm. He’s still shivering despite this, rubbing his hands together and blowing on his fingertips.

Chrom’s slightly less bothered by the cold, and instead takes his time undressing. Robin tries his hardest not to stare from his very promising view on the floor. Turning the lamp off, Chrom slides into his bedroll and settles there, no shivering involved as he adjusts to a more comfortable position.

“It’s unfair.” Robin complains in the dark. “Why aren’t you cold?”

“It’s not that bad. Do you want me to go get more covers? Your teeth are chattering.”

Robin clenches his jaw to keep himself from knocking his teeth together. “Thanks for being considerate, but there aren’t any left.” He rolls, back facing the wilderness outside. “I’m going to get hypothermia at this rate.”

“Try coming closer to the middle. It’s less cold.”

It’s not working. He shifts uncomfortably from side to side and gives up. The sheets are slightly damp and he’s not wasting mana on a fire spell to dry them. Grumbling, he scrambles to his feet, rolling the bundle up and stashing it at the edge of the tent.

He nudges Chrom with his feet. “Move.”

“Huh?”

“I said, move.”
“What do you mean- whoa!”

He pulls Chrom’s sheets to the centre of the tent in a single fluid movement. The sheer cold from Robin’s arm has Chrom flinching in surprise as Robin lifts open the covers and barges his way inside, tugging his pillow from beneath him and flopping his head on it. He presses his freezing legs to Chrom’s for warmth.

He thrashes in response. “What’re you- Your legs are like ice!”

“I know.” He puts his hand against Chrom’s neck. “My fingers too.”

Chrom flips around. “Stop!”

He switches his target to Chrom’s arm and hugs it like a pillow. “No way.”

Chrom huffs but does nothing to stop him. His face is a mere two inches away from Robin’s, he can feel his breath on his cheek and the press of his chest against his own. Their fingers are intertwined as Robin cradles his arm for body heat, a leg shoved against his as Robin spreads a wing over the two of them beneath the sheets.

“It’s like a furnace in here,” Robin murmurs. “Good night.”

“Good night…? Hey, are you really going to stay like this?”

“…Yes.”

“Shameless!”

“Only with you.” He teases before closing his eyes. “See you in the morning.”

He sleeps. Chrom gives in a fair share of effort to fall unconscious, but it’s not working. Robin starts
snoring lightly shortly after, white hair haloing his delicate features in the darkness. His grip on Chrom’s forearm loosens but their fingers stay interlocked. The single wing draping over both of them is soft, the loose feathers tickling Chrom’s nose. He feels Robin warm up beside him, snuggling closer into his chest.

Chrom is shaken wide awake. He stays completely still, savouring the sensation of Robin’s bare skin against him, his lashes dipping as he lays asleep. He takes the opportunity to run his fingers into Robin’s hair and there he finds two bumps beneath the unruly fluff. The texture is velvety like antlers in new spring. He rubs them gently without much thought and Robin hums contentedly, shifting further down the sheets and burying his face into the crook of Chrom’s neck.

Gods. He can’t handle this. His can’t believe how cute Robin is when asleep, ruminating in his warmth as a snowstorm rages around them. There’s also the implication in this gesture as to how Robin feels about him. They certainly aren’t just friends anymore, but they’re not quite… there yet. He wonders if his feelings are reciprocated for the entire length of time he tries to hypnotise himself to sleep.

He lowers his lips to Robin’s hair and wraps an arm over his waist. Robin clutches at Chrom’s shoulder to pull them closer. Of course Chrom doesn’t know he’s awake, he’s busy drifting off into his dreams as Robin subtly slides his hand to the end of Chrom’s spine. He lays like this until exhaustion finally overtakes him, and as he sleeps he dreams of Chrom.

Chrom awakes to a mass of warmth swathing his entire body. He cracks an eye open to see Robin’s sleeping face in front of him, naked above the waist and his mind refuses to register his situation. He can’t lift his arm due to how numb it feels. His other limb responds sluggishly as he feels a wetness on the back of his hand.

Robin is drooling on the pillow and by extension, everything that’s laid below it. His ring and pinky finger is drenched in Robin’s saliva. Mildly amused, he forces his numb arm to move and finds out why his nervous system isn’t working. Robin’s curled his wing around it to blanket both of them at once. As Chrom shuffles around Robin hums and leans closer into him.

It must still be early as the sun’s not bright enough to filter through the thin tent fabric. “Robin.” Chrom murmurs. “Wake up.”

“Mmmhhmm…” He rolls to pit his weight against Chrom’s.
“It’s morning.”

“A’right… where am I?”

At this very moment he hears thick, muffled footsteps wading in the snow. Chrom panics to extract himself from Robin’s arms to no avail as the tent flap unzips itself and Lissa pokes her head in.

“Bro? I was so worried about you last night I couldn’t sleep for an hour! I hope you didn’t squish Robin with- Chrom?”

He pulls the thin blanket up to cover his chest. “This isn’t what it looks like, I swear.”

Robin shakes his head to clear his mind and props himself up. “Is that Lissa?”

“I’ll, um, leave you two alone now! Bye!”

She flees their tent. Chrom lets out a long groan as Robin rubs his eyes drowsily.

“What just happened?”

“I have to go stop her.”

“Nooooo, I’m cold.” Robin grasps at Chrom and drags him back down. “Let her do whatever she wants. There’s no such thing as irreversible damage.”

“She thinks we’ve-“

Lucina’s screech of disbelief is audible twelve tents away. Robin snaps to full attention and hurries out of his cocoon of warmth. He and Chrom rush out, fully dressed and tripping their way through the milky expanse of snow.
They frantically explain to a frazzled Lucina that no, they did not do anything remotely intimate last night. She’s not buying it. Neither do the Morgans, who were listening in when Lissa first went to herald the news to Lucina.

“Dad,” Morrigan begins, “I think Chrom is a wonderful person.”

“Morrigan, stop.”

“I fully support you, dad.”

Robin turns to Chrom. “I am so sorry for my kids.”

“And mine,” Chrom says, as Lucina stalks away for breakfast with the eyes of a traumatised child.

They manage to catch Lissa before she can spread any more unruly rumours. Unfortunately for Robin Panne guffaws and tells Nowi that she owes her two crowns now. Nowi grumbles as she hands her the money.

“Robin, I believed in you.”

“I didn’t do anything!”

“Congrats.” Panne claps him on the shoulder. “You two make a good pair.”

-  

Basilio’s death hits Robin like a train. He receives the Gules gemstone from a worn and tired Flavia, completing the Fire Emblem a third of the way. With trembling hands he slots it into the shield. Lucina’s tears are unbidden as she fails to change the future once more.

Excellus’ plea for mercy is music to Robin’s ears. He drives steel into her gut and tears it open with a satisfying rip, spilling her innards onto the floor. Walhart’s retreat goads him into pursuing him. The palace is gigantic and confusing, consisting of several floors, but Robin guides them through with
ease and sets the Shepherds in front of Walhart’s personal guard, which he razes down with terrifying efficiency. Falchion swings in a shining arc, heads roll, and the war is won.

It’s not a glorious victory. Valm is left in shambles from Walhart’s previous conquering. Robin leaves with a heavy heart and the ominous prediction from Tiki that Grima’s return is near. She returns to Ylisse with them by the good graces of Nowi, promising to teach her of all things dragon and human.

The castle is a welcome change to the terrible conditions of camp. He can have access to hot water and a real bed, for one. Two being he doesn’t have to hide his wings under his coat anymore. He lounges in Chrom’s room most of the day fulfilling his duties as his royal advisor, as Chrom so loudly announced during the first council meeting after war.

“You’re almost there,” Panne says over her cup of tea.

“Where?”

“His Royal Consort.”

Robin spits out his mouthful of coffee.

He knows he shouldn’t be watching this, much less from the rooftops surrounding the courtyards. It’s so painful he has to tear his eyes away as Sumia approaches Chrom, fidgeting with her hands.

“I-I’ve liked you for a long time.” Her voice is so soft he can barely hear it from his position.

“Sumia…”

He braces himself. Chrom’s blush and nervous swaying all indicate the same thing. He’s done some research in his own time, and apparently Sumia is the daughter of a rich and affluent family owning a tenth of Ylissean farmland. The perfect wife for a perfect king.
“We’ve fought together time and time again. Words can’t possibly describe the gratitude and affection I have for you.”

Robin can’t look away.

“But I’m sorry. I’ll have to decline.”

“Oh…”

A guilty burst of relief blossoms in his chest.

“You’re a good woman, Sumia. I don’t deserve you, and you don’t deserve someone as foolish as I am.”

 “…You already have someone you like, right?”

“I… yes.”

“Good luck with Robin then.” She smiles and dips her head. “You two are truly a match made in heaven.”

Chrom stands speechless. Robin’s stomach flutters, and he swoons.

- 

Chrom finds an excuse to move Robin to the rooms next to his, while Lucina and the Morgans are given rooms next to Robin’s. It’s a strange family dynamic that they have, two yet-to-be parents and their children. Lucina grows on Chrom as much as the Morgans have grown on Robin.

It’s a short peace, but a peace nonetheless. Chrom still worries about his future wife as his subjects push him to marry as soon as possible, while Robin knowingly consoles him on the matter.
In the end, this timeline isn’t the one Lucina is from. The future isn’t set into stone and neither he nor Chrom is willing to step out of their stalemate. He prays for a distraction from all of this, and a distraction he gets, not soon after, in the form of an invitation in bold, curly script from Validar, the king of Plegia.

Chapter End Notes

why am i like this why must i slow burn

why

can you see me shoving all my favorite tropes in this one hell of a fic? because i am dying for fluffy chrobin content. I'm also dying to write the explicit scenes but I'm not sure if I should do it separately in another fic put in the same collection as this one or just weasel it in so all y'all thirsty people can drink with me

i love robin a lot

thank you for reading and good night!
I aM SO SORRY for not posting for 3 days???? had to deal with school and i went home at 7:30 pm every night... now it's saturday and i can finally stay up until 2:48 am with no repercussions. My motivation to write isn't very strong today but maybe it's the sleepiness talking. Anyways thank you for all your support from the comments and the kudos (holy shit i didn't realize we went past 150)! pls take my word vomit

edit: fixed the confession because it was unacceptably ooc

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“You can’t.” Robin insists. “It’s a trap.”

“I know. But what else can we do?”

“At least leave the Fire Emblem here. It must be safer out of their reach, in Ylisstol.”

“None can do. What it’s a ploy for them to steal it while we’re away?”

Robin pauses. “You’re right. But there’s no guarantee they can’t steal it from you even if you bring it by your side.”

Chrom’s mouth tugs into a smile. “Then I’ll have to trust you to protect you from them, won’t I?”

The Gules gemstone hangs heavy on the emblem as they journey with it. Robin can’t shake the feeling that they’re being watched, he fidgets and moves on the carriage as the terrain changes from lush greenery to barren desert. At the castle gates he sees several commoners bustling about, but they shrink at eye contact and their gait is unnatural. The guards are unusually sparse, staying out of sight whenever possible.

He plans an escape route in his head as they’re lead into the main hall. There are shadows lurking behind pillars, clanking of armour behind closed doors. Robin makes a rough estimate of the ambush numbers and whispers to Chrom of the snipers crawling above the support beams. He has a hand at the ready in his pocket, where the journal he’s been distancing himself from is kept. Not a journal, he reminds himself. A tome. Grima’s Truth.
He should probably tell Chrom about it. It’s an unconventional name for a tome with unconventional properties. The blank pages are a sure indicator it’s not a religious text but with a name like this he can’t be sure. This is a time as good as any to tell him, when any misstep could cost the entire army its life, yet Robin remains unable to speak as a lump starts from in his throat.

There is something waiting to happen. He can feel it. He can touch it in the form of Lucina’s quiet step and Chrom’s grit teeth. It only intensifies as the hall tapers off into a series of smaller rooms, where Validar and Aversa are waiting.

The conversation goes a little more than a few sentences until an arrow whistles and Robin whirs to blast it to splinters. He doesn’t let the second leave the quiver as a searing heat burns around him and lightning cracks the stone beams. The snipers wobble and fall as charred corpses.

“We leave.” Robin hisses as he shields Chrom from another set of hooked bolts. “Now.”

Plegian men stream from the many orifices of the castle’s innards like blood from a freshly gutted pig. Black and bloody. They chant a grisly prayer as they die and no matter how many Robin put down more flow out in an endless supply. His hands are wracked with cuts and burns from the fire of his enemies and his own, his coat torn in places, Thoron brimming with crackling energy.

He finds Chrom easily amidst the cauldron of death. Blue with blue, Lucina fights, her jaw set, mouth drawn in a grim line. Sidestep, then parry. She ducks a powerful blow from an axe and sinks her sword in. The man roars, she slides it out, skims the crest of a desperate swing and dips the tip into his eye. She doesn’t hesitate to split the man down his chest before stabbing another with the preferred grace of her royal rapier.

She fights with a rekindled determination in her eyes. She covers Chrom perfectly, matching her rhythm to the timing of his blows. Each move is deliberate in how she deflects a fatal thrust of a silver spear, or how she bears a hit to bait a mage into impaling himself on her blade. If Chrom is the sword, then she is the shield. With a flick of her wrist she slits the throat of a rogue and swiftly pivots on her heel, weaving into a knot of brawlers and felling them with methodical efficiency. Behind her, Chrom lays waste to the mass of soldiers. His blade is brutal, his sword a touch of death. The web of crimson dripping from the golden hilt mingles with his own.

The Parallel Falchion sings in the wind, sings in the blood, sings of a nymph rising from a lake of war. Like father, like daughter. Chrom may not be good at words, but his sword speaks volumes of his trust in the child he will never have. His back is open to her defence, and hers to his. The path they carve is void of life but their own, bruised and battered and on their last shot of adrenaline they kiss their palms to the smooth surface of the door.
The air stills. Robin barely has the time to cry out as Validar blinks into existence and the spell is flung out of Robin’s hands before he knows it. His father merely laughs and circles around the jet of electricity.

“My son.” His voice grates like a needle scratching on iron.

“What are you doing here?”

And apparently, this is not one of his delusions. Lucina inhales and raises her sword. Validar laughs. He’s not in range for her to run his sword through him in time.

“Bring me the Fire Emblem.”

Pain flares through Robin’s head but he stands. No, he has to stand. The dull cloud over his mind intensifies into a leaden sludge. He’s trembling with the unbridled effort he’s using to resist the pull of his limbs to move like a puppet.

“Chrom-” He manages to grit out. “Take it and leave!”

Chrom’s stricken expression tells him that he’s not going to, so Robin forces himself to his feet and pushes Chrom towards the door. He doesn’t make it. Validar is in front of Chrom in the matter of seconds and Lucina reacts immediately. Validar clicks his tongue. She howls in pain as the tendril of dark magic hits her and her legs buck underneath.

Chrom is exhausted. Robin knows this and he knows that he’s not going to be able to withstand Validar’s magic. An inhuman scream rips from his throat as for the first time in months, years, he pulls from the reservoir in his coat and this time it lights his entire body on fire. He can’t think through this pain, the torrent of agony shattering his bones and rupturing his nerves. His surroundings glaze over with an ominous mist. It’s all he can do to stop himself from attacking Chrom, and as he collapses on the ground Validar takes one glowering look at him and walks towards the exalt, a dribbling sphere of magic in his palm.

No. This can’t be.

He sees Validar holding the emblem and making his way towards him. At that moment the doors slam open and clamour fills the narrow hallway. Robin tries to look up and see, but he can’t. Gravity
roots him to the floor as he struggles to wrestle control of his mind.

His last thoughts are of Chrom and Lucina before he blacks out.

--

Chrom.

That’s what he thinks of the moment he regains consciousness. He can’t move. Or rather, he can’t remember how to move. Discomfort has become a constant at the back of his mind and he’s overwhelmed by the sensations pulsing around him.

Little by little, he takes back control of his bodily functions to the point where he can lift his hand. This jumpstarts a reaction that messes with his hearing and he snaps his eyes open.

He focuses his vision. He’s not in Validar’s palace anymore. It smells stale and the stench of ethanol stings. He’s on a bed, he realizes. The sheets are grainy in texture and the mattress stiff, but he can’t bring himself to care. His periphery catches blue and suddenly he’s gotten full access of his nervous system again.

“You’re up.”

“I’m sorry,” He immediately says, ignoring the foul taste in his mouth. “Validar took the emblem, didn’t he?”

Chrom swallows. “That he did.”

“Naga save us.” Robin squeezes his eyes shut and rubs his face with his palms. “I… I was possessed by him. I wasn’t-”

He brushes a hard, pointed object. He freezes, lifts up his hands and feels the smooth curves and joints on its surface.
He’s completely awake. There’s no denying it, he can clearly define where it connects to his skull. It winds to his temples and twists upward, forming a blunt tip at the end. His throat constricts as he feels the ridges on the edges.

“Robin—”

He scrambles off the bed. As his feet touches the ground he nearly falls over on his back as a bulging weight pulls him down to earth. He can’t breathe. Chrom gets up to steady him and he looks him in the eye.

“I want a mirror.”

“Robin, calm down.”

“I want a mirror.”

“No. You need to breathe.”

He pauses right as he’s about to shove Chrom away and stays his hand. He takes in a deep breath, aware of his racing heartbeat, and breathes out. Biting his lip, he grasps at Chrom for support as he squares his shoulders and slowly, unfolds his wings.

Chrom’s eyes go wide. The dim illumination is completely obscured by the sheer size of them. Light flits through the gaps between feathers, streams out behind him in a soft, glowing aura. There’s another set right above the main pair, slightly smaller but equally as dark and delicate. The milk-white of his hair is stark against black. Robin smiles bitterly as he lowers them to the ground.

“I’m a monster.”

“No, you’re not.”

“Then what am I?”
“You are yourself before anything.”

He sits back on the bed, scrunching the sheets with a tight grip. “I- I don’t know anymore. This body, this cursed blood that runs through me… it’s not mine.”

“That’s not true. You fought it, didn’t you?”

“I tried to kill you.”

“You didn’t. You resisted.”

“At what cost? At-” he gestured to the sprawling mess on the bed. “-this? Every time I use that blasted tome it grows larger. What if I can’t bear the pain and I succumb? This.” He strode over to where his coat was hung and took out the heavy book. “This is the source of it all. I figured the title out – Grima’s Truth. I was part of the Grimleal. I don’t know, Chrom. I don’t know myself anymore. Was I born just to become some mutilated monstrosity? Is that my fate?”

Chrom stood up with a fierce look in his eyes. “Anything can change, Robin. The future isn’t set in stone. Validar doesn’t control you, nor does your blood. I don’t believe for a second you can’t fight whatever’s trying to control you.”

“…”

“It doesn’t matter that you’re Validar’s son. It doesn’t matter that you’re not physically human. You’re Robin, and that’s enough. For me, and for all of us.”

Robin stands still. He purses his lips, hands curled into a white-knuckled grip.

“…I understand.”

Chrom watches as he quietly dresses.

“They know already, don’t they?”

“…Yes. You had some serious wounds on you. I had to call Lissa.”
He rolls his shoulders after donning his coat. “I don’t think I’ll like this.”

“It’ll be okay.”

“Thank you.”

Chrom follows as he steps outside. The wings trail after him beneath the coat, a feathery cape the colour of night, rolling in rivulets. They’ve grown on the back of neck too, forming a scarf of plumes above his hood. The horns are impressively unmistakeable. Though not an exact replica, it reminds Chrom of only one thing.

Grima.

- 

It stings. Everyone he passes averts their gaze save for his children, Lissa and Chrom. The Morgans don’t ask, to Robin’s relief, and converses with him as if nothing’s happened. He sits alone with Chrom as they eat around the fire, slowly murmuring to fill the silence. Lucina speaks no more than a sentence each time they talk, but it’s much better than Frederick’s sullen glare or Sumia’s ill attempt to hide her horror. He’s glad that Panne and Nowi still treat him like an equal, but the silence from the Tiki is foreboding.

As the day drags on, he doesn’t even try to hide it with his coat. He asks Lissa to help him slit an appropriate length into his shirt to accommodate his extra appendages. When he asks her why she isn’t avoiding him like the others, she tells him with a knowing smile.

“I dress your wounds, silly. Why wouldn’t I know?”

“But… why?”

“Because you saved my brother.” She says seriously as she finishes the last stitch. “Anyone who helps him is a friend of mine, wings or no. Regardless, they look good on you!”

It’s not long before he’s sulking in the outskirts of camp. It’s a bleak evening, and nobody wants him in their sight. The sun floats on the silver line of the horizon, right on the cusp of two mountains, dousing the dry grass with its yellow light. He’s scuffling his boot against a rock when the footsteps
halt him and he raises his head.

He knows it’s Lucina before he can see her. She’s chewing on her lower lip, eyes unfocused as she
nears her other father. The familiar glint of pained determination doesn’t go unnoticed.

“Yes, Lucina?”

“…It’s about father.”

Robin fully turns to her. “I see.”

“I still have memories of him, you know. He left when I was around ten and was felled ultimately by
Grima’s jaws.”

“…”

“He was a kind and courageous man, destined for greatness. Everyone spoke of him so. And now,
as I’ve come to know him in this time, I can see this in full light.” She sucks in a deep breath. “I
never witnessed his death. All I knew was that he was betrayed, stabbed in the back—”

“It’s okay.” Robin smiles sadly. “You can say it.”

She flinches.

“It was me, wasn’t it?”

“!”

“Betrayed by the one he trusted the most. That’s what you told us on the ships, wasn’t it? Chrom…
the Shepherds… They wouldn’t have done such a thing.”
“Robin, I…”

“If it’s for him, then I willingly accept.”

She staggers back, a hand trembling on the Parallel Falchion. “You would do this for my father… for Chrom?”

“Of course. We did get married in another world, didn’t we?”

She unsheathes it without ceremony, solemn as the surface reflects the dying sunlight. Dusk casts its hazy glow on them and he nears the gap between them, his finger resting on the tip of the blade directed at his heart.

“…My life is yours. It has always been.”

“D-don’t say that. That… only makes it harder.”

“I know you will be quick about it.” He closes his eyes. “…I love you, Lucina. You were the daughter I could’ve never had.”

“I…”

“I’m ready. Do what you must.”

The Parallel Falchion drops to the ground.

Lucina breaks into a sob. It’s the first time he’s seen her cry, tears rolling down her face and wetting the soil. She wipes it away with her sleeve and sniffles, eyes red as she begins to uncontrollably weep.

“I can’t… I can’t do it! Damn me! I’m sorry, Robin. I’m so sorry! Forgive me!”

“There, there… There’s nothing left for me to forgive.”
“Papa…”

Robin holds her as she cries. The white lock of hair untangles from her tiara and falls to the side, swaying in the breeze.

He realizes, at that moment, that she isn’t some unknown swordswoman from the future. She is a child yet to become an adult. She is an orphan, forced into patricide. And above all, she is his daughter, and in his arms, she unchains her heart and allows Robin to bear it as his own.

Chrom is awakened to a floating light outside. He can’t sleep, so he throws on a coat over his nightshirt and stalks after the bearer of the lamp. One look and he can see Robin dragging something back to his own camp. He frowns. The moon is high in the sky, the camp is asleep, and there are guards posted around the tents. There shouldn’t be anything for Robin to concern himself over.

He waits until Robin enters his own tent and quietly slinks outside the tent flaps. He doesn’t have to wait long before the lamp settles on the desk with a distinctive clink. Then he hears the familiar tinkering of metal and there’s an ugly sound of a knife dragging over a rough surface. Robin swears under his breath.

Chrom gets increasingly worried as the screeching sound gets louder and at a particularly colourful curse he announces his presence by barging in between the fabric.

Robin ceases what he’s doing. They share a mutual glance of surprise before Robin places the saw onto the desk and attempts to hide it by shifting his body.

“Don’t tell me you’ve been trying to file it off.”

“I haven’t.” He responds quickly.

Chrom draws an arc in the greyish dust on the ground with his boot. “This says otherwise.”

“It doesn’t work. I can’t break it off no matter how hard I try.”
“Nobody blames you for the curse.”

He lets out a bark of dry laughter. “That’s not how I feel.”

“Robin—”

“Oh, don’t get me wrong. I know that they understand it’s a curse. They look at me, Chrom. Like I’m some sort of ill-bred mongrel. A beggar on the streets. A mangled rabbit corpse on the road. They don’t see me when they look at me. They see the horns. The wings. It’s not sympathy they feel. It’s disgust.”

“Stop, you’re being hysterical.”

“It’s not a curse, is it? Nobody except me can even feel, much less use the tome. Maybe I was destined to be like this. It’s all in my blood, this cursed blood that runs through me and grants whatever dominion Validar has over me. Maybe it’s him who’s made me like this. Maybe it’s divine retribution of some wrong I’ve done in the past. A puppet to his every whim!”

“It’s not your fault that you are his son. It’s what you do to change it that matters. If you can fight your blood, then you can fight your destiny. It’s not all written in stone. Lucina came back from the future, didn’t she? She’s altered the course of time. You’re no longer destined to become something you’re not.”

“But what if I can’t fight it? But what if I’m not strong enough?”

“You won’t. I believe you won’t.”

“I know you mean well. It’s just that I can’t help but think about it. I don’t know who I am and what I am anymore. Just… just leave me alone for a while, okay?”

“…Alright. But promise me that you won’t try to hurt yourself.”

“I won’t. I promise.”
“Sleep. And don’t think about it.”

He opens his palm expectantly. Robin pauses before handing him the hacksaw.

“…Good night, Chrom.”

“…Sweet dreams.”

-

Robin is leaning, standing beneath a tree when Chrom approaches. His hair, basked in sunlight, tousles in the dry breeze that sweeps the fallen leaves off-course in their graceful autumn downfall. His eyes nictitate and he raises his gaze from the book he’s holding. The amber morning glow turns his irises golden, the press of his full lips a pale pink.

Chrom stops. Whatever he’s about to say dies on his lips as he can’t find it in him to break the expectant silence.

Robin sighs, a thread of air spun out of his mouth as he closes the book. He lurches off from his perch in a single fluid movement, dropping the volume into his pocket. His coat twirls around him as he faces Chrom.

“What is it?” The next sentence is unsaid, but his body language conveys it as well as any words could have. *Have you finally come to get rid of me?*

“I was wondering.”

“Not about me, I hope. I wouldn’t want to occupy your thoughts every hour of the day.”

Chrom fights down the urge to blush. “Well…”

“You’re not wearing your gloves,” Robin notices. “I’ve never seen you without them since we left Ylisse.”
“About that, um…”

“Did someone propose?”

“Huh?”

“You’re wearing a ring.”

Chrom touches the golden band consciously, rubbing the white-blue stone set within. “No, uh, this is mine.”

“So you’ve decided. Who’s the lucky girl?”

He stares at the ground.

“Sumia? Maribelle?”

“It’s not them.”

“Who, then?”

Chrom looks him in the eye. “This-

He twists the ring over his knuckle and takes a step forward.

“-is for you.”

He hears Robin inhale sharply. A strong gale brushes through the clearing and his coat flutters in the wind.
“You can’t be serious.”

“I am.”

“I- no, we can’t, not now.”

“Why?”

“Your country,” he breathes. “Your council. Your people.”

“Does it matter?”

“I can’t- I can’t bear you an heir. I can’t satisfy you as a rich noblewoman can. I’m a monster, for Naga’s sake. Look at me. Do I look human to you?”

“I don’t care. I don’t want a hypothetical partner that’ll bring me some hypothetical happiness. I want you, Robin. I’m in love with you. I have been from the very first moment I laid eyes on you. I just didn’t realize it until the last little while.”

“…”

“I’m not trying to force you into a decision, trust me. Whatever your answer may be, I shall abide by it, no matter how painful. But know this, that we will forever share a greater bond, and I will bear these feelings till the day I die.”

“Chrom…” He swallows thickly. “Do you truly mean what you said?”

“Every single word.”

Trembling, a smile cracks through Robin’s pursed lips.

“I know not of the future nor my past, but if this war truly comes to pass… then one day, we will emerge victorious and bring peace back to the world. And when that happens, we’ll be free to follow our hearts.”
“…Our hearts?”

“Yes… because I love you as well.”

“Oh,” he says dumbly, for the lack of anything to say. “I don’t know what to say.”

Robin laughs. It’s a pleasant sound, soft and clear. The sunlight dappling his face makes the scarlet tint more apparent as he cups Chrom’s cheek with the warmth of his palm.

“Then don’t.”

He slides his lips against Chrom’s easily. As he parts his mouth he delves his tongue in, swiping over the roof of his mouth and melding them together, fingers threading through Chrom’s hair. Chrom does the same, a thumb running over the ridge of his horns. He roams further down his neck to explore the expanse of feathers ruffling under his touch, humming as he sinks his hands into the silken plumes.

And when they part, both flushed rose-pink, Chrom presses a lingering kiss to Robin’s temple and stays there, murmuring.

“I love you, and all of you.”

He doesn’t miss the tear that runs down Robin’s cheek as Robin nests his head against his chest, his smile the first ray of light that breaks through the storm.

Chapter End Notes

okay you know what i did not like their confession but it took me equal time to write that as with the above content and i want to post asap will definitely rewrite later when i post the next chapter

edit again: IVE FIXED IT holy shit it was so bad what was I thinking at 3 am
Actually most of the reason why I was procrastinating the fic was because I was trying to get feathers in FEH so I could raise my male robin to +10 (he's +7 now; I made him so in 2 days but now I have no more feathers; also, I regret using all my dragonflowers on Nowi well no she's too powerful but you get my point)

I also sold the Takumi I was saving since I accidentally summoned him two years ago (I was one of the people who played from release I don't have a life) this marks the end of my brief friendship with Fates Awakening has full sovereignty over my soul now

Also I have 11 orbs; ngsus please let me get Hrid so I can sell it to exalt Chrom if I ever get him

Is Robin even worth the close counter? No. Do I care? No.
Chapter 12

Chapter Notes

4:20 am ayyyyy

I am so sorry for the lack of updates for the entire week. I know I promised near daily updates (laughs in shame) but (excuses;) i had severe writers block and you know what i said quality over quantity and rewrote it three times. also school was really hectic and piano exams are gonna kill me and I'm still gonna be pretty busy but I'll try to update as quick as possible!! thank you for sticking with me and my late updates!!! your kudos and comments are what keeps me alive and fuels my mental stability lol

thank u to J.R.Angelie for giving me ideas but i didn't know how to stuff it in?????

fffasdfsdfjkj I'm sorry i still really love the idea i will write it in the near future!

also as you can see the rating has gone up, it's skippable and it took me 3 days to write.

mmmmMMM fuck n finally

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Robin gasps awake, clutching at his chest, fingers digging into his own skin. He’s drenched in cold sweat. The darkness around him is absolute. Panic grips his mind as he frantically searches for a source of light, till his sight returns and he realizes that he’s not dreaming anymore. It’s early morning.

He collapses onto the cot and stares blankly into the bare nothingness. The sensation of searing metal ripping through his skin is still fresh in his mind. He hasn’t screamed, or at least that’s what he remembers. It’s a pain that can’t be replicated by anything else. The soul-splitting agony of being destroyed, a fragment at a time, until all’s left is his dwindling resolve to continue living.

A headache pounds through his head as he reaches for his waterskin and drinks from it. He can’t see straight. The monochrome vision of night makes everything look surreal. His hands are shaking, he finds as water dribbles down his chin and he wipes it away hastily. Too real to be a dream. A memory, perhaps? A memory of what? It certainly couldn’t be a memory of his own death.

He can’t fall asleep. The fire pouring through his head is one thing, the terrifying image of his downfall another. There are dreams he can barely remember, and there’s these seemingly random flashes of painfully detailed dreams that he can feel and hear. They’ve grown increasingly frequent and he suspects that it’s no coincidence that they’re getting closer to the Dragon’s Table. He remembers to an excruciating extent the vivid joy of creation, the dull of living, and the anger and rage of war. He sees blood everywhere, on his own hands and on the ground around him. Then there is darkness. A heavy, silencing darkness that binds him to writhe in his eternal agony.
He lights a candle and sits on his cot, attempting to rock himself to sleep. Eventually he settles back at his desk and lays out his maps in his usual sprawl for strategizing, dipping his quill into the inkwell under the flickering flame wavering on thin stump of the wick.

There he sits until his surroundings grow light and he hears Lucina’s ritual morning stretch. He reaches to extinguish the candle but it’s already out. He sighs, leaning back into his chair, and fumbles with his balance as Lucina walks in unannounced with the Parallel Falchion in hand.

“Didn’t sleep?”

“Uh, no, I just woke up.”

“She purses her lips. It’s one of Chrom’s many mannerisms when he doesn’t get his way, Robin realizes. He relents and gets up from his desk.

“It’s too late to sleep, anyways.” He pauses. “Oh, alright. I can’t sleep. Care to spar?”

“If it’ll distract you from what’s keeping you awake.”

“If you can hold my attention for so long, that is.”

“Bring it on.”

Aversa does not beg for mercy as she bleeds to death, but instead screams for Validar as her memories return to her. Her last words are mangled with her sobs, her last breath a whimper for her slaughtered family. She tells Robin to kill Validar for her and with that she clasps her hand to her chest in silent prayer, head tilted to the heavens in rage of her stolen fate.
Chrom stands by Robin’s side as he kneels beside her body and touches her forehead in a long-forgotten religious gesture. He mutters a low string of blessings and releases his finger, then buries her under the dry sands of the desert. As the Shepherds tend to the wounded and rest under the burning heat he sits in solemn vigil. After a while he rises to his feet, dusting the sand from his coat.

“She was a villain.” Robin states as he walks alongside Chrom. “But she was also my sister.”

Perhaps Validar had sent her in a half-hearted attempt to stop them. It’s a futile attempt as his resolve is only strengthened at the memory of her sorrowful cries, her bloodied corpse now returned to the earth.

He wonders if he’ll face the same fate when he remembers. If he remembers.

-

His wings bristle at the ominous mist that descends upon them as they approach the Dragon’s Table. His blood is thrumming with power- Grima’s power, he registers faintly, the closer they are to the impressive spiral in the distance. A pulsing red brilliance dyes the upper nimbus a myriad of sanguine hues, shadowed by a bruised purple aura.

The halls are utterly devoid of life. The faint stench of blood lingers in the fabric of the carpets and damp mould sticks to the cold stone walls. The gates are tall, looming above them, set within the dark stained glass. Robin shivers despite himself, and stops Chrom before he can push the gates open.

He holds him by his sleeve. “Wait. I need you to promise me something.”

Chrom lowers his arm. “Are you…?”

“If.” He swallows. “If anything goes wrong. Promise me you’ll put an end to this. No matter the cost. If Validar somehow gains control of me, promise me you’ll cut me down.”

“You can’t- You can’t ask that!”
“Promise me.”

He flinches and hesitates.

“I… I can’t promise anything.”

“If you hold any love for me, for the Shepherds, for your country, for your daughter. Our daughter.” He murmurs. “Then you must.”

“Lucina…?”

“You will know, if we survive this.”

“…I understand. It hurts, but I promise. But you musn’t let him take control. Whatever it takes. No matter the cost.”

“I’ll give my all.”

He gives Robin one last look before pushing open the gates.

“Then let’s go.”

Validar sits at an empty throne. An empty altar, an empty reception, an empty hall. Robin seizes up mid-way, grasping at air as he barely manages to catch himself right as his father rises from his smug perch.

He can feel the fell dragon’s power coursing through him. His senses slowly dull to the back of his mind as he forces himself to stay on his feet and his limbs to obey. The chokehold of control momentarily breaks free as Validar erects a barrier between them and the rest of the army and he tethers himself to reality with the familiarity of Chrom’s voice. His vision clears and he sees.

A wave of nausea washes over him. This scene. Dread fills his stomach as Chrom rushes forth, all according to prophecy. He’s seen it play out in his mind over and over again. Except now
everything’s real. He can’t convince himself that it’s a dream anymore. All of this is real, down to the floor under his feet and the sweat running down his neck. An unsettling chill runs under his skin.

He can’t do this. Each step he takes is a fulfilment to Chrom’s death. He pulls Chrom back before Validar can ready his spell, Thoron snapped open and power forming at his fingertips. Falchion is swift in shearing flesh from bone and Validar’s grunt of pain tells him that it’s time. He’s done everything perfectly. Falchion’s glinting silver edge breaks free, dipped in vile blood steaming in Naga’s power. It almost glows with a holy light as Validar falls to his knees. Swirling, malignant flames steeple around him, as he lays motionless on the ground.

Robin yells at Chrom to stay back. He screams and tears at his throat but no sound comes out. In desperation he rams into Chrom to get him out of the way of Validar’s final spell, the ball of ice-cold fire singing just his coat as he tumbles with him to the floor.

Pain erupts in his head as the lingering connection at the back of his mind severs, replaced by a much more sinister weight. It’s unmistakeable. He cowers as a pebble in a sandstorm, a raindrop in a tsunami.

Grima.

He doesn’t need Thoron for the spell. The ease of summoning lightning comes to him as easily as breathing. It’s not horror but satisfaction that crosses his mind as he plunges the bolt of magic into Chrom’s chest, the crack of flesh singeing filling the air with a sickening burnt smell.

Chrom staggers back. He clutches the searing spear of light and grasps at air. Robin is numb. He can’t think nor feel. His entire mind is overwhelmed by the all-consuming power thrumming through his blood.

“This is not your fault,” he chokes out, falling to his knees. “Promise me… that you’ll escape from this place.”

“Please, go.”

It burns. It burns from the marrow of his bones, from the dryness of his throat. He wants to scream, but he can’t. It takes all his mental strength to be able to maintain consciousness in the ongoing war within his own mind. He shields his memories desperately and claws his way through the onslaught of commands compelling him to let go.
Suddenly, the pressure vanishes. He takes this chance to wrench control from the overbearing source. He succeeds, his vision clears enough for his periphery to catch a surge of swirling dark magic shoot past him and in his mind something breaks clean off. He pivots on his heel to see Validar reduced to nothing but ashes.

He doesn’t care about the assailant, oh no. All he cares about is rushing to Chrom and shattering the barrier with all his might. He mends bone to bone, knits flesh to flesh from what he knows, *Grima’s Truth* sending shocks of pain down his arm as he begs for Chrom to keep breathing.

He waits for an eternity. Each passing second is another second of failure. Until Chrom blinks awake does Robin’s eyes widen and a sigh of relief escapes his lips.

“Thank Naga, you’re alive.”

“I- I feel terrible.”

“That’s okay.” He sniffs, shaking his head to hide the tears that were threatening to fall. “I thought you were dead.”

“It couldn’t have killed me. You couldn’t have killed me.”

Before he can respond, the presence is here again. He braces himself for the mental assault but nothing comes.

“I see that you have ripened well, fallen vessel.”

Robin whips his head to the source of the voice- his voice. He has to bar Chrom from getting up suddenly and swinging Falchion wildly. The man emerges from seemingly nowhere, hood obscuring everything but blood-red, slit eyes reflecting an otherworldly light.

“Grima,” Robin seethes.

“Well done, well done.” He cackles unpleasantly. “What was it that gave it away? The wings? The horns?”
“You won’t have my body.”

He clicks his tongue. “Fool. I don’t need it anymore. You may have been bred and trained to withstand my power, but I’ve found a much better replacement.”

The altar glows, pulsing with red light. Robin can immediately feel the power emanating from it. The ground rumbles, the stained marble cracks. Pillars shake and fall to the ground.

Robin’s first instinct is to break out his wings to shield Chrom from the debris, to which Grima laughs. It’s jarring how it sounds exactly like his voice, save the hollow echo that follows after every lilting drawl.

“So it is true, a union between the Fellblood and Naga’s child. No matter. Enjoy your last hours together, filthy mortals, as I regain my true form!”

The chapel blinks into utter darkness. Robin’s sense of hearing is dulled to a null, and Grima steps out of the broken glass window.

Chrom is shaking. Robin steadies himself on one knee as the world flashes back into view and the first thing he hears is the clamorous rumble, the great silencing roar of the black serpent cutting the redness of the sky.

The fell dragon rises, horns curved around his six, unblinking eyes, six wings obscuring the last embraces of light. His tail flicks and the roof of the chapel crumbles, rocks and sand raining from the sullied heavens.

Grima rises, grand and terrible, a writhing plague upon a forsaken land.

There is still a chance. Tiki brings them to Naga and Robin kneels in her presence. Her aura itself is a form of purification, purging him of the scars Grima has left on his consciousness. When she tells them that Robin is the only one able to put Grima to eternal rest, his mind is instantly made.
Even when Chrom begs him not to before he walks into Naga’s fire, Robin only presses a kiss to his cheek, much to Lissa’s excitement and Lucina’s (and the Morgans’) unamused frown.

As Chrom comes out unscathed he’s hit by a barrage of infuriated questioning by Frederick and the rest of the Shepherds. He wades over to where Robin is standing and clasps his hand to his, raising it for all to see.

The engagement ring glints in Naga’s holy light. Lucina removes her tiara to show the loose lock of white, and the Morgans take the dye off with a small vial of alcohol. Everyone falls silent as Chrom announces his husband-to-be on the first dragons’ land.

It’s a first for Chrom to see Robin stammering over what to say. He trips over his own words as he attempts to explain their relationship, to which Chrom just kisses him furiously and their children groan in unison.

Naga’s abode is a surprisingly well-kept house with enough guest rooms to rival the Ylissean palace. At night, after the chaotic hubbub, Robin pads wearily to Chrom’s room and knocks. He hears Chrom’s telltale crash from the desk and he invites himself in.

“Hm?”

“There’s no heating.” He sits on Chrom’s bed and sniffs miserably. “Isn’t Naga supposed to be omnipotent?”

“She doesn’t need heating. Only manaketes come find her, anyways.”

“I’m cold, and my feathers are damp. Chrom, come be my personal heater.”

“You’ll fall asleep.”
“That’s the point. I can’t stop thinking about it, you know.”

“Me neither.”

“It’s all so sudden.” He flexes his fingers in the dwindling candlelight. “If we don’t succeed, this world will be doomed.”

“It’s certainly been… a ride.”

“We might not even make it on Grima’s back.”

“…Do you think we’ll live past tomorrow?”

Robin rests a thumb on Chrom’s jaw.

“Perhaps.”

“If I don’t survive… then at least let me have this.”

He starts slow. Edging along Robin’s mouth as he slots his tongue between his perfect lips, grazing his teeth against the sensitive skin. Robin responds, eyes closed, a hand threading into his hair and pulling insistently as he licks the insides of Chrom’s mouth. In return Chrom groans into the kiss, pushing Robin onto the bed as they part lazily, lips swollen and slick with spit. He rocks forward, Robin making no move to stop him as he leans in again, savouring the taste of his mouth, his sweet, intoxicating scent, hands pinning him onto the bed and Robin’s wings spread beneath him in a seductive sprawl.

He returns not on his mouth but peppers kisses down the bare skin of his throat, suckling on the nape of his neck and by pure instinct, biting down hard enough for it to leave a pretty bruise. Robin shudders, head laid to the side, a single dark eye gazing down at Chrom as he shifts for better access. Chrom’s hands wander down his torso, exploring every inch of skin, down the tender area of his waist and across the soft plumage of his wings. He presses his lips along the trail of his sternum to his nipples, where he latches his mouth onto the hard nub to a sharp intake of air.

Robin stifles himself with the back of his hand shoved into his mouth. The wet heat on his chest brings him to gasp and writhe under Chrom’s ministrations and as the sensation of Chrom’s fingers...
ghosting on his wings registers, he jerks and moans into his makeshift gag. Each touch has him convulsing and sends him closer to the edge, he’s begging for more before he knows it, arching into the cusp of his palm and burying his face into Chrom’s shoulder as the roughness of Chrom’s tongue passes over his wingtips.

He’s surprisingly sensitive there. Just the light pressure of Chrom nibbling at the hard ridge reduces him into a shuddering, panting mess, his chest littered with blossoming bruises, cheeks hot with shame. As Chrom busies his mouth, his hands work their way down his navel, where a sensual flick of his tongue makes Robin twitch, cock already hard and tenting in his breeches, undone and dropped unceremoniously on the ground as Chrom stops for a second.

It’s a sight to behold. He can’t even begin to count how many times he’s dreamt of Robin like this, laid bare before him, cock painfully erect and flushed against his stomach, precum beading at the slit and glistening along the tip. Small black feathers curve around his waist in an incredibly seductive pattern, accentuating the full of his hips and the dip between his thighs. His position leaves nothing to the imagination. An arm raised above his head, the other gripping the sheets as he shifts his thighs for friction in the cold night air.

It occurs to Chrom that he’s never seen Robin fully naked before. He drinks in the view as a drunkard with the sweetest wine, admiring his handiwork across his neck, his chest, his cock straining in the night air.

Robin moves his hand to cover his face when he realizes that Chrom’s staring at him and curls a wing around himself. Chrom gently pushes his thighs apart and flicks his eyes up as the white hair above Robin’s crotch tickles his nose. Robin’s breath hitches, he cards a hand through Chrom’s hair as he feels Chrom touch his lips against the head of his cock.

“You don’t have to-!”

Chrom murmurs something that Robin can’t catch and gives it a wet suck. Robin stiffens at contact and gives his hair a light tug, an involuntary moan escaping his lips as Chrom flattens his tongue and licks a longs strip up a vein, drawing back only to wrap his lips around the thick shaft. The sheer eroticism of the act nearly pushes him off the edge and he struggles to hold himself back. Breaking open a heavy eyelid tells him that Chrom’s also blushing down to his neck, a hand palming his own arousal as he spits into his other to cover what his mouth can’t reach.

He begins bobbing his head in earnest to make up for his lack of experience. Dragging his tongue up the underside of his cock he swirls it around the tip and digs it into the slit, earning hip a gasp and an instinctive buck of Robin’s hips as he thrusts himself into his mouth. Chrom takes him to the back of his throat, thank his nonexistent gag reflex, and hollows out his cheeks for saliva to pool around Robin’s length.
Robin hisses, his grip on Chrom’s hair tightening. The slick heat on his cock has him shuddering as Chrom coaxes his dick further down his own throat, sliding it out and pushing it in oscillating movements. Before he knows it Robin’s rocking his hips in tandem to Chrom’s movements, their pace quickening with each thrust, pleasure coiling in his groin. He barely has time to warn Chrom— a harsh tug of his hair, Chrom’s name crashing from his lips as he pulls out.

He doesn’t expect it when Chrom chases after him as the wave of orgasm seizes his mind in temporary euphoria. He faintly registers Chrom swallowing around him, pleasure jolting through his limbs, white hot electricity sifting away in seconds. It leaves him breathless and panting as he looks down and sees Chrom licking his lips, what he couldn’t swallow dribbling down his chin, some slashing the bridge of his nose and down his bare chest.

A mix of horror and arousal comes over Robin as Chrom wipes the cum off his face and licks that off too. To top it off he slides the digits into his mouth and pulls them away with an obscene pop, his spit slippery around his fingers.

He leans forward to press a kiss to Robin’s navel. “Was I good?”

“Gods, yes.” He gasps as Chrom bites down above his crotch, bringing himself to edge away from Chrom’s touch as he flips him around to straddle him. Chrom’s erection is obvious even through the many layers of his exalt garb and he sets himself to strip him down to his smallclothes, where he strokes over the wet spot left by his weeping cock.

He gets him out of those too and closes his hand around Chrom’s shaft. He gives it an experimental stroke before smearing the precum over his cock as lubricant and drawing himself closer to rub his own against Chrom’s. At the same time he kisses him, tasting himself on his tongue as he desperately ruts into him, pumping both of them at once and running his hands over Chrom’s muscled back. He’s hard again with a few languid strokes, still sensitive from his orgasm. Chrom’s grip wanders, past caressing his jaw to appreciating his feathered sides with fleeting touches. He feels him grope at his bottom, sliding his finger along the cleft of his ass suggestively as he makes way to lightly squeeze the inside of his thighs. The sensation coupled with the erotic friction of Chrom’s cock against his has him whimpering into Chrom’s shoulder. He shifts, shoving Chrom down onto the bed, both arms on either side of his head, and murmurs.

“I don’t have oil,” he says, bringing his fingers into his mouth and smoothing them between his legs. Chrom watches as Robin works his hands up and down his thighs, now wet with saliva, and shudders as he hooks a thigh over him. “This’ll have to do for now, I’m afraid.”

Robin’s thighs are smooth and tender, muscled from battle but soft enough to suck his cock in
without effort. He grinds down in fluid movements, fucking himself on Chrom’s arousal as Chrom strokes him lovingly. The slim divide between his thighs is tight around his length, hot and dripping, each thrust earning him a low moan torn from Robin’s throat. He starts rolling his hips with increasing frequency as he’s close to release, a guttural groan tumbling from his lips each time Robin slams himself against him.

He’s almost there. He can sense it in Robin too, just a little more-

He comes as Robin does, thick ropes of cum spurting from his cock, shockwaves running down his body as hot cum splatters over his stomach and chest. Robin arches his back, still roughly jerking their shafts through the pleasurable haze of their afterglow, the sensitivity edging him to the brink of overstimulation as he slumps against Chrom as they lay like that for a while, basking in each other’s warmth. He takes in Chrom’s scent, the smell of sweat and sex and the heady scent that was distinctively Chrom and revels in it, that he’s snuggling against him, against his bare skin.

Within a minute he’s drifting off into a warm limbo between sleep and comfort, humming contentedly when Chrom nudges him awake.

“Roll over. We’ll need to clean up.”

“Right.” Robin cracks an eye open and lifts himself up using Chrom’s arm as support. He inspects the mess they’ve made on each other and lazily sets his chin against Chrom’s shoulder. “That’s quite the load you’ve blown.”

He decides that he can never get tired of Chrom’s embarrassed stuttering. “H-hey, it was my first time!”

“Didn’t say I didn’t like it.” He tilts his head. “We don’t have any rags, do we?”

“There’s the baths.”

“Hmm... I have a better idea.”

His gaze dips, his grip on Chrom’s shoulder tightens, and he darts his tongue out to lick a sizeable dollop on Chrom’s collarbone. Chrom swallows. Robin smirks as he laps up the cum off Chrom’s chest, the bob of his larynx deliberate. He knows that Chrom is watching him as he wipes the last smear on his lips where he can lick it away. Which he does.
“Good night.” He declares, flopping onto the bed. He blows out the candle with a well-aimed wave of his wings and drags Chrom down with him, tucking his head into the crook of his neck. Chrom pulls the covers over them but nevertheless, he curls a wing over him and pulls him closer.

“Good night,” Chrom whispers, kissing him on the corner of his mouth. He holds Robin close to press his body against his, to feel the warmth, the reassurance that this isn’t some fantasy or dream. Robin purrs beside him and snuggles further into his arms.

It’s surreal. He’s going to fight the fell dragon tomorrow, the very same that his ancestors slew to found his kingdom upon. More likely than not he’s going to lose his life a handful of hours from now and he’s laying in bed with his tactician, his lover, his Robin, as if nothing’s wrong with the world at all.

As if sensing his distress, Robin mumbles, muffled by Chrom’s arm. “We’ll win.” He cradles Chrom’s face and nuzzles him affectionately. “Don’t worry.”

“I wish.”

“Go to sleep,” he chides, and Chrom does. The Awakening has taken a toll on him and he plunges to sleep once he allows himself to. It’s a fitful pit of darkness punctuated by fragments of memories, of death and turmoil, but neither fear nor sorrow comes to him.

After all, he dreams of warmth. Of Robin.

Chapter End Notes

aYYYYYY they fucked
have i mentioned i love writing sex and fight scenes speaks volumes about my personality
also no anal bc the limp will affect their fighting
4:30 am i don't need sleep anymore

thank you for reading! honestly what kept me going through my increasingly stressful(?) week was the joy of being able to go home at 8 pm and write for all your lovely comments and kudos. seriously. i would have broken down if not for y'all i have atk/motivation bond 3 equipped as my A skill
speaking of which i got my m robin in feh to +10 with 4 dragonflowers and i sold him close counter he's so powerful i love him feh isn't even relevant I'm just trash

oh yeah unrelated but does anyone know about the pokemon song that changes tempo in the beginning? it's such a banger but i forgot the name!!! It starts slow then gets really fast and it's been bugging me for an entire month... pls anyone if u find it for me i will write a fic of your request i am dying i love pokemon a little too much

edit: found what i was looking for but please still tell me your fav things about the games! let's all stray from the fe fandom for a while bc I'm sure everyone's played pokemon lol

and honestly? if anyone asked i would still write u a fic. like, actually any prompt i am a writer of passion. anything

also

fire emblem 3 houses

personally not invested yet (I'll buy it regardless bc i am fe trash) does anyone want to convince me? all i know is that edelgard hot and dragon girl good but besides that i don't like that byleth is a teacher hmmm it has potential but hMmmMM
okay, so first of all, I am so sorry for not updating for 10 days. very very very sorry i had writer's block (excuses!) and i had a competition in macau last weekend (less of an excuse but still an excuse) then i tried to get sick to not go but it didn't work so i was in terrible condition the last week. i’m so incredibly sorry man thank you for all your lovely comments even though I wasn't updating and here is the long awaited finale! Thank you for sticking along the entire way, it’s actually emotionally impactful to see so many people like what i write ((wipes tear

Shoutout to all those who've commented in the last chapters! your comments make me really happy lol it makes my day reading and responding to them!!

alternatively,

daily updates outdated,
quality overrated,
long have we waited
chrobin updated

enjoy!

Chrom wakes to warmth beside him. He rolls over to a face full of feathers and a mysterious object poking into the back of his shoulder. He blanches for a second before he remembers, remembers the heat under his touch and the sweet gasp of his name from Robin’s mouth, the insistent pull of his hair and the taste of Robin still lingering on his tongue. A moment of silent contemplation passes, he shifts, shutting his eyes as if it would dull the burgeoning lump of fear stuck in his throat.

“Chrom,” he hears, and finds Robin staring at him, eyes half lidded but bright. He tugs him closer, nibbles at Chrom’s lips for entrance and slots his tongue in. Lazily, he kisses him, his hands sliding towards his groin to grope at his morning wood. It’s a pleasant surprise when he feels Robin pressing against him and he kisses him back with the same slow intensity, fingers working to pleasure Robin as he groans at Robin’s thumb on the slit of his cock.

They make short work of each other, spilling over their hands at the same time, the soft impression of teeth on the nape of Chrom’s neck telling of the previous bruises Robin left on him the night before. Robin licks over it, sucks on the spot to renew the fresh welt raised on his skin and moves to leave more on his sternum. Chrom props himself up to chase after him aggressively and Robin allows it, until the sound of the door handle snaps them to attention.
He scrabbles for the sheets, but they’ve kicked them onto the floor. At the first hint of blue Robin rushes to unfurl his wings over their naked selves and freezes.

Lucina is as equally scandalized as they are, disbelief dripping off her shocked expression as she holds the door ajar with a single trembling hand. He can clearly make out Morgan’s voice down the hallway as he pops his head over and immediately shoves Lucina away to slam the door close.

There is nothing but ominous silence for the next minute or so, then Morrigan’s curious tone emerges from behind the door and Morgan is restraining her with obvious effort. Robin blinks. It takes them several seconds to register what exactly just happened and when they do, Robin falls onto the bed with an exhilarating sigh. He toes his clothes, all discarded into a messy pile on the floor, putting them on deliberately as he feels Chrom’s burning stare on his back.

He helps Chrom with the clasps on his cape and the buttons on his shirt, fits the glove on him and brushes a stray hair out of his face. Robin kisses him again, a simple press of his mouth firm on Chrom’s and draws him to his feet. The marks on his neck are barely hidden by his coat as they make way to the dining hall.

The preparations are silent most of the way. Naga bids them good luck and they gather, fidgeting with their weapons or straightening their tunics. It doesn’t feel like they’re going off the determine the fate of the world at all in the halcyon atmosphere of the blessed grounds, the burnt despair below forgotten and out of sight.

Lucina avoids eye contact with Robin, her ears a furious red when he finally gets her to face him before Naga sends them to their very probable end. He ruffles her hair and touches his lips to her forehead to her flinching surprise, and murmurs.

“Thank you.”

She bites her lower lip. Robin smiles and as he turns to leave, he spares Lucina the embarrassment of tearing up and goes to hug his other two children. Chrom is awkward around the Morgans but they know he’s trying his best when he offers a stammering apology for not recognizing them sooner.

Farewells are short and brisk. Perhaps it is the fact that they know that they must all fall on the battlefield one day, that this is the final battle they must win. That they will win, Robin stresses as Naga sheds her holy light upon them.
Morrigan tugs at his sleeve, pleading. He smiles sadly at her and shakes his head.

He’s made his decision, after all.

- 

His vision fades to black, and this time he retains consciousness.

“Join me.”

Grima is him, and he is Grima. He is the fell dragon’s spawn, his blood the crystallization of his power, the culmination of centuries, yet he is something more. He is the tactician of the Shepherds. He is the amnesiac that awoke to the sound of Chrom’s voice, run through a baptism of war, of time. He is Robin above all else, and by his own name he hears the sound of his family calling him, tethering him to reality.

In the end, it doesn’t matter what he says. Grima’s overwhelming disgust for humanity seeps into the inherent bond between them. His anger, his rage flashes through Robin’s mind, scrubbling for purchase in his consciousness as he forcefully ejects Robin from the dark limbo they’re suspended in.

He sees, for a moment, the prison of banishment Grima was sent to more than a millennium ago. Grima recognizes the wince of sympathy that crosses Robin’s expression and roars in fury.

“I don’t need your pity,” he spits, snarling. “Not from you!”

The trance breaks. He once again feels the ground beneath his feet, the writhing body of the fell dragon swerving in the dwindling separation between dusk and dawn. He breathes in a cold rush of air, grateful for the dizzying rush of blood into his head.

Chrom is on him in an instant, grasping his hand tightly to pull him up. Robin laughs at the concern he shows him, a fierce grip on his tome and sword, cold sweat trickling down his neck as he calls for the Shepherds to fall into formation.

Lucina grinds her heel into the ground. She stares ahead at the figure shadowed by the shifting aura
and slowly, unsheathes the Parallel Falchion. Chrom raises his own, glinting double as he falls into a silent, easy stance. Side by side, they lift their swords, father and daughter, in identical movement.

On the pseudo horizon Grimleal dot the thin line separating dragon and sky. Below, they swarm like flies, mounted with lances and swords, axes and bows. Robin’s mouth dries at the prospect of sacrifice. A wall of undead and devout separates him and Grima, stationed between the jagged spines protruding from the dragon’s back. He hesitates. As he nears the drawing of first blood, the butt of a heavy spear shoves him forward.

“Go.”

He turns, but Frederick’s already dissolved into the fray. The fighting rings him in a perfect horseshoe. Wyvern against pegasus, sword against shield. Magic buzzes in the air around him as one of them unleashes a flurry of fire.

The wind makes it impossible to hear the clamor around them. All’s left is the deafening sound of the raging zephyr and Chrom’s presence by his side.

It’s a clear path to their goal. Yet they stand still, if only for a fleeting eternity. They exchange no words. A single look is enough for them to walk in par to the fell vessel perched atop the skull of the dragon, eyes narrowed as he summons a swirling mass of dark magic around him.

Strike first, and strike last, Robin thinks, as he draws his tome. He sees Grima lick his lips in anticipation and he snaps his Thoron open.

As expected, he steps aside easily, countering with his own version of a corrupted lightning bolt. Robin deflects it with a wave of his hand, chills running up his arm where the sparks had touched his bare skin.

He circles him warily. Chrom thrums patiently beside him as he does. They edge closer with each passing second, tensing at each of Grima’s movements. It comes until Chrom’s barely within striking distance and without warning, Grima tilts his head and unleashes a burnishing volley of white fire at him.

Chrom dodges, his blade ice cold in the searing flames. Robin spurs into action. Ice hangs where his hand trails, wind sifting through shots of crackling electricity. He dances in tune with the song of Chrom’s dance. Blue, blue is all he can see as dollops of fire bleeds into the holy blade, arcing into
darkness, whirring in glory. Gold slashing into the night, the chase of dawn to morning.

His aim is true, time splits for a spear of lightning to drive itself into Grima’s flesh. Grima doesn’t flinch but seizes the chance to burn a nasty scar off Robin’s arm. Robin grits his teeth amidst the pain and repairs his wound with *Grima’s Truth*. It earns him an extra second to fire another clean shot, enough for Chrom to graze Grima with Falchion, a thin line of blood running down his cheek.

It’s not deep, but Grima lurches back as if punched in the face. He twists away, heaving, till Chrom pivots to run Falchion crisply through his shoulder and wrenches it out. Dark blood webs the golden steel, dripping and steaming like water on hot iron.

A pained cry tears itself from Grima’s throat. The searing sensation of Naga’s blade slices through Robin’s shoulder as a phantom ache spreads through the rest of his body. Grima staggers, wipes at his wound, blood flowing freely down the gaping gash.

He spins to deal the final blow, but he’s stopped by a light pressure on his blade. A firm push to his chest has him off-kilter; a slight shove sends him stumbling over an invisible barrier that Robin solidifies into a wall of wind.

Chrom’s shocked terror etches itself into Robin’s memory. A shame that this will be his last memento of him, he thinks, as he spares a glance to beyond the barrier.

The exalt’s cape whips wildly in the bruising zephyr. He’s shouting something that Robin can’t hear. That he can’t bear to hear. The shifting light weaves around him and wreathes him in a hazy light as he turns to face Grima.

Grima hisses and lunges at him, blistering energy draining from his hand. Robin doesn’t step aside but instead takes a step forward. He locks eyes with him, grey against blood-red, jaw set in determination.

“For once, I am glad you and I are the same.”

He lifts his hand, leather gloves removed. The air stills. A storm brews from one hand to another. He feels a crest of power wash over him as he directs his fingertips to the dying light on the horizon. The burbling whirlpool within him leaks into the silence, he holds his breath, yanks his hand back as Grima’s eyes widen.
Pain rips through his arm. It bursts into view, engulfing his vision and singeing his skin as the bolt of darkness hurtles towards its goal, connecting in an instant. Robin gasps at the sheer effort and with all his remaining might wrenches it back, forcing Grima to his will. It crashes over him in waves, his hearing reduced to nothing but a shrill ringing.

His entire being explodes in unbearable pain. He bites back the need to scream, to release his agony somewhere to the world and drops his hand.

Chrom watches from below as a shockwave ripples through the air and the barrier dissipates. In mute shock he sprints forth to find Robin alone, wings extended to full length, horns wreathed around his head in a terrible crown. The faint glow of twilight floats about him, pale light dappling him in golden shades.

A seraph, Chrom reckons without much thought. He can’t even begin to fathom what Robin has done.

He rushes towards him, tears unbidden as he crushes Robin in embrace. Robin holds him tightly, smiling sadly as the dragon beneath them shudders and groans.

“Tell the others… my last thoughts were of them.”

“No- Robin!”

“May we meet again in a better life.” He slides his hand to cup at Chrom’s cheek, wiping away a wet drop with his thumb.

“I love you.”

Robin pushes himself away from Chrom and from his palm arises a new light that encases Chrom and the Shepherds in a shimmering aura. The dragon’s plummet starts with a nauseous drop. Before he can get accustomed to the uncomfortable sensation of free-fall, the light pulsates once, and they’re gone.

He’s left with himself in quiet solidarity. He feels strangely at peace for someone who’s about to die. He knows he’s sent them somewhere near the shore, sees the reassuring glow of Falchion as a pinprick of light atop a cliff.
He collapses onto the thick scales and stares at the sky. The sky that breaks open to the warm rays of sunlight, and he stays long enough to see the first hint of blue shifting beyond the towering column of clouds.

He doesn’t see the way Chrom falls to his knees when Grima finally crashes into the sea. Doesn’t see Lucina’s shocked silence and the Morgans’ quivering tremble. Doesn’t see Lissa restraining Chrom from running into the watery depths to find him, though wounded himself.

And perhaps it would be for the best that he doesn’t. He’s not sure if he could have made the decision if he saw.

He’s lied, really.

In the end, his last thoughts are of Chrom and Chrom alone.

- 

Time passes. The seasons turn.

Chrom’s dreams are plagued with Robin’s death.

He wakes, hands fisted into the sheets, his pillow damp with tears. He dons his royal apparel, a simple circlet and a set of impractical gilded armor. He wears Falchion on his hip with a fancy sheath, complete with a heavy fur cape that rests awkwardly on his shoulders. His footsteps rise and fall without life.

He settles onto the throne to and goes about his day as any good king would. But after dark his regal façade shatters and he’s left with a broken man, a broken soul. He lingers around Robin’s room like a vengeful ghost, paces around Robin’s desk and leafs through the many piles of notes filled with incomprehensible scribbling.

And though the Shepherds have all moved on, it never stops haunting him. On his desk lays the sleek black quill, now capped with gold, that he took from Robin months ago. Under no circumstances does he allow anyone to touch it, nor any servant to enter his room or Robin’s. He
turns at the first glimpse of white within a crowd and grasps their shoulder, apologizing profusely when the civilian faces the exalt in fearful terror.

Each day he startles into focus in the afternoon and leaves the throne room for the stables. A different horse is given to him every single day for he rides his mount near death to the outskirts of Ylisse, where he surveys the empty fields with desperate determination. He returns by night for yet another sleepless night, drifting into turbulent dreams only in the wee hours of morning.

The rumors spread with time and he’s soon barred from his daily visits to the rural fields. His children are a painful reminder of his loss. Just the sight of Morgan carrying a stack of books from the library has his throat constrict in a sudden pang of anguish,

Robin is dead. He’s not coming back.

Lucina sits him down one day and tells him about her memories of her mother. She talks of Robin’s impossibly patient teaching to her dense questioning. Bedtime stories finished by Robin when Chrom would inevitably fall asleep mid-way.

She confesses that she’s known it was him all along. That he was destined to die or become Grima’s vessel. I’m sorry, she whispers. I’m sorry I tried to kill him. He’s gone forever now, isn’t he? I’ll never get to see him again. If only I’d treasured him for longer.

Lucina’s grip on the cuff of her shirt tightens as she snifflies. He lets her cry into his arm and soothes her as she sobs grossly, hiccupping.

It hits him then that he’s not suffering alone. Not anymore.

- 

Not a year passes before the council hands him a list of noblewomen from a variety of houses. He shreds it and flings the scraps onto the floor and leaves without saying a word.

The next encounter is a lot more subdued. They bring him letters from kings and archdukes of different countries, all offering their princesses in marriage, urging for an heir to the exalted bloodline with pure noble blood.
“I already have an heir.”

“We were not aware of a royal bastard.”

“Her name,” he calmly states, “is Lucina.”

The council blooms into disapproving murmuring.

“You cannot possibly consider that mongrel. She may bear the Brand, but-”

Chrom sighs and stands up.

“One more word about marriage, and your house is off the council. Hear me?”

- 

The letter from Plegia is unexpected. He receives it a week before the anniversary of Grima’s fall, written in curly script reminiscent of Robin’s loopy chicken scratch. Morgan translates for him at the dining table.

“In honor of the fell dragon, Grima,” he reads, “we are extending an invitation to House Ylisse to attend the mourning ceremony where He fell.” He looks up from the thin parchment. “Dad, are you going to go?”

Morrigan stabs a carrot with her fork. “I don’t see why not.”

Chrom swallows. “Morrigan’s right. What makes you think I won’t go?”

“It’s only been a year.”

“Since when did watching over me become your job?” Chrom teases. “I’ll be fine. Don’t worry.”
“I miss him.” Morrigan says quietly.

“J know,” Chrom replies. “We all do.”

They arrive at the shore on foot, bringing only family and a small party of close guards. Chrom can smell the sea in the cold fog. The sky is overcast, much like the day Robin had slain Grima.

Lucina huddles in a thick cloak, in simple fighting garb once again. The Morgans’ coats bearing the mark of the Grimleal are oddly suited to the occasion. The sand is coarse under their feet, little pebbles washed to smoothness.

The leader of the Grimleal greets them with raised eyebrows. Chrom bows his head at the hooded priestess and stares into the distance. Accented Plegian rolls off her tongue.

Morgan translates. “We do not blame you for what you did to our god, for you did what was necessary for peace. We only ask that you observe without any intrusion.”

“I won’t. I’ve seen it done once.”

There’s a little back and forth between his son and the priestess, and finally the priestess turns back to him, surprised.

“You are united with one of us?”

“Not exactly. But these are our children.”

She nods. The table is of plain wood, draped over with woven fabric. She gestures for her attendants to bring several items onto the cloth and kneels, softly chanting a prayer.
Chrom recognizes it as the same prayer Robin had said when burying Aversa, albeit with several changes. He repeats the words for the ocean breeze to carry his words over the sea. His children do the same, staring into the lapping waves.

It ends without any flourish. The priestess extinguishes the candle by enclosing it with her bare hand and presses it to her chest. She rises to her feet.

“You may leave.”

“May I stay?”

“As you like.” She waves for her attendants to come over. “But do not try anything rash. This is holy land, after all.”

He dips his head as she lifts the incense back into the carriage. The breeze tastes of salt and ice.

Leaving Lucina and the twins to skip rocks on the sea, he wanders among the caves in search for a trace of his tactician. Sand digs into the grooves of his boots and sucks him into the ground. Further out, he scans his surroundings without much hope, the morning glare already setting in.

It catches his eye, a familiar speck of white.

He breaks into a run.

He throws his sword and dumps his armor onto the ground in one go and dashes up as fast as his legs can take him. Up the slope, down the shallow valley and up again. His heart is in his throat; he can hear his own pulse beating in his ears.

His eyes aren’t deceiving him. On the sparse bed of grass lays a bundle of gold and purple, a mass of feathers tucked neatly beneath. Robin stirs and shifts in his sleep.

He’s panting from the exertion, his lungs are burning. He can’t believe what he’s seeing. His mind comes to a blank as to what he should say.
One step at a time, he approaches him gingerly. A gust slips through the clearing.

“Robin.”

Robin hums. He rolls over to support himself with a hand, and Chrom takes his other to pull him to his feet.

“There are better places to nap than on the ground, you know.”

He recognizes the voice. He knows it.

“Chrom,” he breathes, red eyes fluttering awake. “My love.”

Chapter End Notes

It's finally ended. holy shit. i had planned for this to be a little more grima/chrom but you know what i have 0 pacing skills.

It bled me dry writing this and I'm so happy i ended it! again, thank you all for sticking along with my slow ass updates and terrible writing. It's been a ride and I enjoyed every second of writing this damn fic, mostly because of everyone's support (I would die for all of you, you know?)

so like, actually i had a little more planned out for this, would anyone like me to write its continuation? pls tell me. what I was thinking was for Robin to have sort of merged with Grima and his personality sometimes shifts back and forth, or is an amalgamation between them sometimes. He relearns how to be human and of course heavy chrobin (and smut,) and you know, grima angst, wing sex

the wing sex part will probably appear in a separate fic even if its not a continuation of this fic lmao

Also requests for fics! give me prompts/requests and i will gladly write them. i have 3 so far derived from your comments but if anyone is particularly thirsty 300% welcome should i open a ask box-ish thing just for this purpose? hmm

At last, thank you for reading.

Truly, thank you.
Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!