Your Touch

by freehugs9

Summary

Both Baz and a gremlin are driving Simon crazy, but as usual, there's so much he doesn't know. His problems are about to get a whole lot bigger. Lots of Snow/Baz. :) Thanks, Idonotinithatwordmeans for being my beta!
Penny would call it an obsession. (In fact, she has. A number of times.) But I can't expunge the image of Agatha and Baz from my mind. Holding hands like they were about to sing, or snog.

I don't blame Agatha for going through a rebellious stage. It's over now, and if I'm really being honest with myself, we were never that close.

It's Baz who worries me. I don't think he's made a move on Agatha - yet. But I don't know for sure. They keep giving each other these looks – and then looking away. I can't figure out if he's plotting something or if they really are secretly snogging each other behind closed doors.

The uncertainty is driving me crazy. I could barely concentrate on studying with Penny today, and now I keep tossing and turning in bed.

Sleep is an elusive beast that doesn't even have the decency to nip at my toes tonight. It's nowhere near.

I glare at Baz's still figure. The light of the full moon shining off his dark hair. His face in shadow beneath it, irritatingly elegant even in sleep.

This is all his fault. It always is. If he weren't constantly up to something, I'd have peace. But I can't ever seem to stop thinking about him and worrying about what trouble he's brewing.

"That's it," I growl, throwing off my covers and sitting up abruptly. A flash of anger surges through me and I only dimly register how cold the floor is on my bare feet. "Baz," I say sharply, "this has gone on long enough."

Baz's only reply is to groan and pull the covers over his head.

"Tell me. Now. What's going on with you and Agatha?"

"Fuck off, Snow." His muffled reply is groggy and when I glance at the clock, I belatedly realize how late it is. He must've been well and truly asleep.

I don't care. I won't be able to sleep until we've settled this. Better to confront him now and get it over with. "Are you using her?"

He throws the covers back a bit, pushing himself up on one elbow. "For what?" he demands.

"You tell me!" I toss back.

He groans and falls back onto his pillow. "Normally I'd refuse to answer on principle, but it's 1 a.m., for Crowley's sake. There's nothing going on between me and Agatha. Never was. Never will be. Now go to sleep, you fucking twat." He rolls over to face the wall. The wanker.

I take a deep breath, anger still coursing through my veins. "I see all the looks you keep giving each other."

He's still for a moment. Then he slowly rolls back over, the moon illuminating his glare. His gray eyes flash fire at me. "Snow. Allow me to work through your tortured logic for a moment. You want me to stop looking at Agatha?"
Without waiting for an answer he shakes his head incredulously, rolling his eyes and muttering, "Simon bloody Snow doesn't want anyone to so much as look at his precious ex-girlfriend - and he'll make damn well sure they don't sleep if they do."

"No!" I lean back a bit, my neck and shoulders throbbing from holding them so rigid while I fretted all day (and half the night) over this. "That's not it. You bloody well know what I'm saying."

He finally sits straight up and throws up his hands in exasperation. "Enlighten me."

Before I realize it, I'm shouting: "You're plotting something! You're always plotting something! And if you plan to use her-"

"I have no intention of using Agatha! I care nothing for her," he declares, shooting me a death glare. "The only reason -" he cuts himself off and I point at him.

"Aha! So there is a plot," I gloat at him. I knew it. And clearly bringing this up in the middle of the night was brilliant, because he's tired enough that he's making mistakes.

"I didn't say 'plot,'" he bites out.

"So what is it then? Tell me!" I insist.

"Why the hell should I?" There's no doubt he's fully awake now. And furious. His forehead is wrinkling with an intensity that should scare me off, but he can't bloody well hurt me in our room.

"Because I won't let it drop until you do." I cross my arms over my chest defiantly. I can be right stubborn when necessary.

His expression turns to ice. He scratches the side of his forehead, deliberately, before running a hand through his tousled hair. He rests his forearms on his thighs and looks up at me through strands of dark hair. "If I swear to do you a small favor, will you drop this and let me sleep?"

"Why would you do that?" I ask, becoming even more suspicious. He must really not want me to figure out his plan.

He sighs. "I'm too tired to fight you tonight." The light catches his eyes again. I realize that he does look bloody miserable. Exhausted, and pale.

I'm so surprised that I whiplash quickly from rage to concern. Suddenly guilt is pulsing through me, unbidden, and I find myself making a noticeable effort not to feel bad about bothering him. "Fine," I murmur.

"Do I need to swear it, or-?" He holds up his wand halfheartedly, looking like he doesn't have the energy to cast the spell.

I sigh. He hasn't looked right since he's returned. More pale than usual, even for him, and with a noticeable limp. (Well. Noticeable to anyone who watches him as closely as I do.) Whatever he'd been up to had really taken a toll. I'd feel bad for him if I weren't sure he'd been up to no good.

Fine then. I jut my chin out stubbornly. "If you really want to do me a favor, massage my shoulders," I hear the words come out and realize again how bloody brilliant I am tonight. He'll never do it. And then he'll have to tell me.

His eyes widen and his lips part slightly. I'm opening my mouth to call him on his false offer when he stands.
My mouth is dry as I cross the room slowly.

Simon Snow just asked me to touch him. Fuck if I'm going to say no to that.

I nearly flinch each time my weight lands on my bad leg, but I force myself to cross the room without a limp or a grimace. I can't show him any weakness. (Not any more than I've already shown, anyway.)

Luckily, his bed is only a few steps away and I'm able to manage them without looking pathetic. I ignore his gaping mouth and gracefully settle next to him. Then I grab his shoulders and forcibly turn him away from me. I can't do this while looking him in the eye.

I squeeze his shoulders roughly, his muscles rigid beneath my hands. "Crowley, Snow," I murmur. He feels like he's wound up tight enough to snap. And apparently, he has if he's asking me to massage him in the middle of the night.

His head tips forward a bit as he groans.

I squeeze my eyes shut and bite my tongue. He has no idea what that sound does to me. It's a knife in my heart and excitement rushing through my veins. Out of habit I school my expression, and I force myself to keep on with a steady, even rhythm. As if this means nothing to me. When really I'm bleeding painful passion all over his bed – feelings that only intensify with each stroke of my fingers against his muscles.

Crowley. I'm struggling to breathe. But I'd take this any day over nothing. Every sensation is still magnified after being locked in that coffin for so long – and that goes doubly so for all things Snow. That faintly golden skin. The waves of heat rippling off his body. His smell, smoky green magic and antiseptic shampoo – a shockingly appealing combination of scents that makes my mouth water.

I don't know what I'd like more. To kiss him or to bite into that lovely neck.

As if to taunt me, the moonlight illuminates the curve of his skin beautifully, along with a few freckles and a solitary mole. My enhanced vision could see quite well without the help, without this silvery light shining on him like a beacon.

I shouldn't be doing this while I'm so weak. I shouldn't be doing this at all. If I had any sense I would stop now.

But as I run my thumbs down the length of his traps, he moans – and I don't stop. Instead, I tug him closer (but not close enough), rising up on a knee and slipping my thumbs under the neck of his t-shirt, repeating my slow, even movements against his hot, bare skin.

Fuck. This is killing me. I want to bury my face in his bronze curls. I want to consume his hair, his mouth, his blood. Every single bit of him. I don't think I could ever get enough.

"There - right there," he whispers and I keep my thumbs where they are, pressing down while he sucks in a breath. I allow my lips to skim the top of his curls.

It's a shame I'll have to kill him.

No. I'll never kill him. We'll have to fight to the death, that's a given. But he's more powerful than anyone I've ever met, than anyone in the world. One of these days he'll go off – and he'll kill me without even trying.
The sick part is that I won't even be the final boss he battles. I'm not the Humdrum. I'm nothing but a warm up. A fucking half-dead vampire, who loves him more than life itself. And yet when the time comes I'm sure he'll kill me without a second thought. I know he doesn't think anything of me. Only about how to stop me.

He doesn't know he could stop me with one look. With one touch. With one kiss. It wouldn't be hard at all.

I press my lips together as my chest constricts, binding a sob to my ribs. I don't want it to end like that, in a fiery explosion. I want him to fight me with his bare hands. I want him to press them against my cold skin, warming me one last time. I want to bite him just once, just a little, so I could die with his taste on my tongue.

No, that could Turn him. I couldn't risk that.

I suppose I'll have to break his nose. Leave a permanent mark on his face so he'll think of me whenever he looks in the mirror. Maybe I'll fuck him up even worse and whisper, 'I love you' while tracing the moles on his face and down his neck. When the blood runs into his mouth I'll lick it off his lips. And then he can do whatever the fuck he wants to me. I'll already have died and gone to heaven.

And that's the only heaven I'll ever taste.

Simon's right. I am plotting now. Visualizing our last battle. Orchestrating the best way to die. But I suppose if I have a right to anything, it's composing my own death.

SIMON

"Promise me you won't go off," Baz whispers.

It takes me a while to process his words. My mind is blissfully blank for the first time in ages. I don't want to think or worry about anything right now. His hands are so strong. I had no idea he'd be so good at this. Then again, he's so bloody good at everything, why wouldn't he be?

"When we do fight, don't go off."

I wrinkle my brow, glancing back over my shoulder. "What are you going on about?"

He stops massaging my shoulders, but his hands rest where they are. He looks concerned about something. Actually, he looks like he's in another place altogether. His gray eyes search mine before he speaks again. "It can't be like the Chimera. Promise me you won't kill me that quickly."

It's late, sure. But Baz has lost his fucking mind.

At the look on my face, Baz shoves my shoulders away roughly and stands. "Forget it," he mutters, limping back to his bed. He tries to hide it, but I know his leg is still bothering him.

"No, seriously. What are you talking about? I can't kill you. The anathema," I remind him.

He's sitting on the edge of his bed now and sneers my way. "Not here!" He kicks his legs up under his covers and angrily falls back against his pillow. "Crowley, Snow, I ask you for one fucking thing!"

I throw my hands out. "I don't even know what you're talking about! Why are we killing each other now? Are you saying I really do have to protect Agatha from you?"
"Why are you so bloody dense?" he demands. "The prophecy, Snow! We have to fight and you're obviously going to win. So as a favor, all I ask is that you try to kill me a little slower than the Chimera. Is that really too much to ask?"

"Where were you?" I practically scream. "What happened to you?" My head is swimming. A moment ago he's massaging my shoulders and now he's asking me to kill him? Slowly? Something is seriously fucked up here.

"Forget it!" he yells back. "Kill me however you want, just let me go to sleep."

I don't like thinking about the prophecy at the best of times. It makes my stomach turn. But after him being gone for so long, and then returning injured and drawn, it feels especially wrong. I have to admit I was concerned about him while he was away. Mostly I was suspicious. But I was concerned as well. And I've never been as worried about him as I am right now.

I stare over at his bed and try to regain equilibrium. I want him to threaten me and bite my head off and call me a wanker. I'm desperate to know what he was up to and I need it to have been something awful – truly appalling - so that everything can make sense again. So that the prophecy is justified. I can't imagine killing him without a really good reason. I can't imagine killing him at all, but I know my magic might if lives were at risk.

I sigh. "You know I didn't mean to kill the Chimera," I whisper. "I don't have any intention of killing you - or anyone - unless I have no choice."

When he doesn't reply I sigh again, involuntarily rolling my shoulders. I realize I feel so much better – loose. "You didn't have to give me a massage." I wait a minute. "But I- I do- I mean my shoulders do feel better, so, umm-

"Go to sleep, already!" He yells in annoyance.

I fall back onto my pillow, cheeks heating with embarrassment. I never know how to talk to him. I should just tell him what he wants to hear.

"If I kill you, which I would never do unless I absolutely had to, I'll try to kill you slowly." I wince because that sounds like torture. "And painlessly."

He snorts.

"But I'd rather not kill you at all."

I try to get comfortable and find it's a lot easier now. Sleep is finally starting to nuzzle up against me when Baz whispers, "I'll never kill you."

I'm too tired and comfortable to puzzle through that. To figure out – or care – if all of this was just another one of his tricks. I fall fast asleep.
The Trouble with Gremlins

Simon

If I wasn't obsessed before, I am now. I study Baz carefully throughout the day. He won't look at me, but he doesn't look at Agatha either, so maybe that's an improvement.

I can't stop thinking about two things. The massage and the reason he asked me to kill him slowly.

Well, the second one is obvious. If I use magic, he'll be dead on the spot. If I'm trying to kill him slowly, he'll have a fighting chance. Odd of him to ask me outright, but understandable.

But surely, he didn't massage me just to shut me up.

Penny's no help at all. I asked her if there's anything evil someone could do while massaging you and she looked at me as if I was crazy. She wouldn't even supply me with a truth spell, other than Tell Me, Baby, which she told me not to use.

When I asked her why not, she simply replied, "Because he's likely to tell you his whole life story and his plans for the future. More hopes and dreams and less-"

"But that's perfect!" I insisted. "All of his plans? How could you keep this from me?"

"And," She raised her voice over mine. "It only works on lovers."

I sat back in my seat. "Oh, well, why did you bother telling me at all?"

She was only interested in studying and I didn't have the mind for that, so I wandered around the Wood for a while, hoping it would calm me.

Baz

I drain a raccoon on my way through the Wavering Wood. I sense Simon's presence a little while later and am intensely relieved that I've already fed. No need to give him anything else to hate me for.

I decide to stop. I ease down, resting my back against the hard bark of a tree. I wince at a sharp pain in my left leg and stretch it out a bit. Simon's not likely to spot me. He can't see worth shit in the dark and even in the afternoon the trees block out most of the sun here.

I take a deep breath, savoring his smokey scent on the light breeze. I feel my muscles relax, calmed by his presence. It's nice not to be alone even if we won't interact. I don't want to be alone again for a very long time if I can help it. I shiver.

I let my mind wander back to how alluring his muscles felt under my hands. He's thin, but his shoulders are still broader than mine. His chest would probably feel amazing. I wish I could call him over and trace his pecs with my hands, but I doubt he'd let me touch him now. I can't believe he'd asked me to last night.

I hear the leaves rustle to my left. My gaze pierces through the foliage to see a little creature with long pointy ears. It reminds me of the gargoyles on my bed and I'm fairly certain it's a Gremlin, even though I've rarely seen them. I've encountered a fair amount of their handiwork though. Had my keys nabbed a time or two. For a while, they amused themselves by stealing one of every pair of
socks I owned.

I pat my pockets out of habit, just to make sure it hasn't already pulled a prank on me. I gasp when I don't feel my wand. Of all the things it could have taken!

Actually, I didn't have much else on me. Only a peppermint and a few coins. Nothing I would have missed and somehow that little bugger knew it!

As tempting as it is to rush over there and nab it, I restrain myself. They are notoriously fast and if I scare it off, I'll probably never be able to spot it again.

I can't show my hand just yet. But I can't spell it still either, not without my wand.

I make a show of looking around the ground for it, trying to come up with a plan.

"Looking for something?" Snow asks, crossing his arms over his broad chest.

I hadn't been listening for him. That was obviously a mistake. I straighten and lean back against the tree. "Following me again, I see." I sneer up at him. I subtly glance to the right, to make sure the gremlin is still there. It appears to be laughing.

He glances around the wood. "Getting some air," He mutters, but I'm sure it's a lie. He's always stalking me, the wanker. I toy with the idea of asking Snow to cast the spell for me, but he doesn't have the best control of his spells. He'd muck it all up and I'd rather him not know I lost my wand if I can help it.

"There's lovely air by the pond." I've only taken my eyes off the gremlin for a moment, but when I glance back, I don't see it. "Shit." I mutter. I look back at Simon, just as the gremlin sticks a hand in his pocket. "Quick!" I yell, "Behind you."

Simon spins around and snatches at the thing. It barely evades his grasp, but undeterred, he yells, "Be Still!"

It works. I'm relieved. I don't know what I'd do without my wand. Probably get kidnapped again by fucking numpties. I would relax, but I find I can't move.

"This your wand?" Simon asks, plucking it out of the frozen gremlin's hand. He shuts at it. "Creepy little guy," He mutters as he turns towards me, holding out the wand. "Here, take it."

I'd reply with some snarky comment if I could. Obviously, that's not an option.

Simon comes closer. His knees crack as he crouches down. "Come on. Stop messing about." When I don't reply he reaches up and shoves my shoulder. I still don't move, but his touch burns through my sleeve. "Fuck." He mutters, sitting back on his heels. "Umm. Don't be still."

He's gorgeous blue eyes are fixed on mine. I take a moment to appreciate his proximity before the anxiety rushes in. He doesn't remember the counterspell, though he really ought to. We learned two our third year. I'd take either at the moment, though I'd prefer Move Along to Free At Last, because it's faster.

"Don't worry." He pats my arm a little gentler this time. "Penny will know what to do." He stands then hesitates. "Can't very well leave you in the woods like that." He bites his lip, then bends towards me. "Get up!" He shoves my shoulder. "Unfreeze." He shoves it again.

I try not to derive too much pleasure from his hand on my arm. After all, he's only touching me to
test the spells. He clearly has no idea what he's doing. "Be busy?" Even if that was a counterspell it wouldn't have worked as a question. He's as hopeless as he is lovely.

He waves a hand in front of my face and murmurs, "Hope you can't hear me right now." He sighs then slides one arm under my legs and the other around my back. When he lifts me I'm as stiff as a board.

"Blimey, you're heavy." He groans, straightening. He takes a few steps, then has to turn to make it between two trees, since my legs are sticking out. I enjoy the feel of his arms around me, the smell of him so close. I'm still breathing, and that's something. I suppose I should be thankful the spell didn't work on my lungs. Probably Simon's magic protecting me, wouldn't be the first time.

"I'll take you to Penny and you'll be good as new." He promises.

I wish he'd try the right spell now so I could wrap my arms around his neck and enjoy the ride a little more. But he's too clueless to do that, so he carries me clear back to the school. Only dropping me when I'm safely on school grounds. He makes sure I'm sitting straight up at least and not laying on my side.

"Lucky we weren't out walking too late." He says, before taking off.

I guess I am glad the bridge was still over the moat but I can feel myself growing impatient. Now that Simon's arms are gone, my discomfort is the only thing to focus on. Being rendered motionless feels way too much like being in a coffin, all alone. Panic surges through me with nowhere to go. When I get lightheaded, I realize I'm hyperventilating and focus on deep breathing.

Finally, he returns with Penny. She takes one look at me and says, "Move Along!" At least Simon has one competent friend.

I revel in stretching out my limbs, which weren't in too great a shape to begin with, and let out an embarrassing moan.

"Here." Simon thrusts the wand into my hand, his fingers stirring up a fresh round of tingles as they brush against mine. I shouldn't derive so much pleasure from a simple touch. It's unforgivably foolish of me. Anger surges through my blood at the hopelessness of my feelings for him and I have half a mind to spell him back. But he did carry me all this way. He could have left me there. Especially since I'm his enemy. Especially since he thinks I might kill him one day.

He offers me his hand. I glare at it and roll my eyes. I can stand under my own power. I stand, looking down at him. "Honestly, Snow." I mutter, spinning around to march off. I don't want him to see the blush rising to my cheeks at the thought of his arms around me, his muscles flexing against my shoulder and side. I still can't believe he'd carried me all that way. It had to be at least half a mile.

"You're welcome!" He yells after me.

I squeeze my eyes shut tightly. I have half a mind to spin around and tell him it was his fault in the first place. Or that he should bloody well know a counterspell if he's going to curse someone, but I don't. I can't bring myself to say anything scathing. So I don't say anything at all.
My heart beats for you

Simon

I stayed out with Penny as long as I could, forcing myself to study after we freed the gremlin. (Baz probably would have been perfectly safe in the woods if that little bugger was.) But I can't put it off any longer. I have to climb back up to Mummer's house and get ready for bed. I steel myself for Baz's rage as I climb the steps.

Luckily, Baz is already in bed when I sneak in and grab my pj's. I quietly creep to the bathroom to change.

I flick the light switch off before easing back into the dark room. I blink a few times waiting for my eyes to adjust, then gaze over at Baz. Something about his posture makes me think he isn't sleeping. Probably can't while I'm still up making noise.

I feel a wave of guilt wash over me when I think about how long he'd been trapped by my spell. That couldn't have been comfortable, especially with his bad leg and all. I wish, for the millionth time, that I was able to use a wand normally. That my spells worked the way they should. What's the point of having all this magic when I'm always mucking things up? You'd think the chosen one would be competent at the very least. I hope, and not for the first time, that everyone's got it wrong and I'm not the chosen one at all. I'm just some bloke whose shit at spells.

Then I won't have to fight Baz, or the humdrum, or anyone else.

I don't know how to apologize. I guess the least I can do is return the favor and try to work some of the tension I caused out of his muscles. I creep over to his side of the room and decide to start on his shoulders. I lower the covers slightly, to massage them.

When I touch him, he turns over almost instantly. "What the fuck are you doing?"

Heat floods my body. I'm glad it's dark because my face is so hot, I know I'm blushing. "N, Nothing," I stammer, hurrying across the room to bed.

"Were you trying to choke me?" He demands.

"The anathema wouldn't allow that!" I insist, burying myself in covers. The truth is somehow worse.

"Then what?"

I let silence consume the room. Finally, I can't take it anymore. "Look, I feel bad about earlier. Your bad leg and all."

"My leg's fine." He growls.

"Yeah, of course. Why wouldn't it be?" I'm too embarrassed to say more. I can only hope he'll forget all about this in the morning.

Baz

I'm too alarmed for it to register at first, but I slowly work out that he had been trying to massage me. That if I hadn't spoken at all his hands would be all over me right now. And I feel like the biggest twat alive. What I wouldn't give to have him come back.
I take a deep breath. "You took me by surprise is all."

"Sorry." He mutters.

I clench my eyes shut. I'm fucking this all up. Just like always. "Go on then," I say, with more bite than I mean to.

He doesn't reply for a while and I think I've lost him, until he says softly, "You want me to?"

"It wouldn't hurt." I snap. I wince at my own tone. "The least you can do, really." Guilt never hurts when it comes to Snow.

I don't think he's going to come. He takes so fucking long. But I hear his breath nearing me a little later. "Which leg? The left?"

"Yeah," I say, throwing the blankets aside. I'm surprised he knows. I tried to hide it so well.

When he places his hands on my ankle I try to keep from making a sound, but it's hard. I press my lips together as he works his way up my leg. He doesn't use nearly enough pressure to work out the kinks, but Crowley it feels good. I think he could truly be choking me and I'd still enjoy the feel of those deliciously warm hands on my skin.

"More?" He asks. I nod to keep from speaking. He increases his pressure and a moan escapes from my lips. I can't bear to look at him now. It hurts so good. He caresses up my inner thigh and I'm a little disappointed when he makes his way back down. He thoroughly kneads my leg, then starts on the other.

I'm paralyzed again, but this time I can't breathe. I can't think. It's all so pleasant. I can't remember ever feeling this good before. And he volunteered! He fucking volunteered to massage me. Is it possible that he has feelings for me too?

After a few minutes, he pulls back. "Better?"

I nod. It's all I can manage. He starts to turn, but I grab his shirt. He turns so I can stare up into his beautiful blue eyes. "Thanks, Simon," I say softly.

He shrugs.

"You carried me all that way." I sound like a smitten idiot, but I can't stop myself.

He shrugs again. "Couldn't leave you there."

He could have, but I don't mention it. I let go of him quickly.

He reaches down and squeezes my shoulder, and my heart stops dead in my chest. "Sleep well."

I don't. How can I when I'd rather replay his words, his massage, the way he carried me, over and over in my head.

Simon

I think Baz might make a good friend. I'd never given it any consideration before. After all, one mustn't get too attached to someone who's been prophesized as the enemy but if we're not at each other's throats and we could do favors for one another instead, this arrangement might be somewhat tolerable.
I glance over at him to find him staring at me. He quickly closes his eyes, but he could be thinking something along the same lines. Might as well state it out loud. "We could help each other, you know? We don't have to be enemies."

"I think we do." He mumbles in reply.

His eyes are still closed, so I allow myself the luxury of staring at him. He looks like some beautiful, otherworldly creature in the moonlight. I suppose he is, but vampires aren't supposed to look that lovely. They're supposed to look dangerous and forbidding. Because they suck the life out of things.

Crowley, what am I thinking? I can't be friends with him or admire him. I've utterly lost my marbles.

Baz

I wish Simon wouldn't torture me like this. If he had a lick of sense he'd know we couldn't possibly be friends. But he obviously hasn't got any sense. Sneaking up on a vampire in the middle of the night. You'd think he had a death wish.

He's so brave.

I sneak a peek and see that he's rolled onto his back. I stare unabashedly at the side of his face. I memorized it long ago. I can see it when I close my eyes, but I much prefer the live version.

I can feel my heart fluttering in my chest and I suppose that's part of the appeal. It's times like this that make me feel more human. It reminds me that I still have a heart. I have to because it beats for him.
Simon

Baz must have heard me growling in frustration, because when I emerge from the bathroom, he asks, "What's the matter with you?"

"It has to be that gremlin. That's the third toothbrush I've lost this week!" I point toward the bath, but Baz only shrugs.

"Of all the creatures you could have pissed off, a gremlin's probably the least trouble. A bother to be sure, but it won't be killing you any time soon. Here," He digs a box out from under his bed and pulls out a sealed toothbrush before holding it out towards me.

I hesitate before taking it. He's been a right prick to me all week after I'd suggested us being friends. I can't help but think this must be some sort of trick. "Haven't put a spell on it, have you?" I ask, hesitating with one hand outstretched.

He rolls his eyes. "I can smell your breath from here."

I snatch it out of his hand while glaring at him. I can feel my cheeks heating and that makes me angrier than the comment. Still, when I return to the bathroom I do an extra good job of brushing my teeth. Not to please him, of course. Just because I don't want to be a rotten smelling chap.

I emerge from the bathroom to scan his lounging figure. He's so prim and proper. He doesn't belong in a dorm room, classing up a lumpy mattress. He belongs in a mansion on a velvet chaise.

How he can possibly read when there is a beast on the loose wreaking havoc and class in a few minutes, I'll never know. "What can we do about it? You saw it before."

He reaches for his wand without looking up from his book and casts, "You're uninvited."

I hear the door open and close, but I don't catch sight of the thing. Baz must have only spotted it in the woods because he's a bloody vampire. "Show off," I mutter.

He levels me with a stare over the top of A Tree Grows in Brooklyn. "Would you like me to let it stay? It's messing about with your shit, not mine."

I glance around the room and quickly deduce that wasn't completely true. I walk over to the door and I nudge one of his sneakers with the toe of my shoe. "Oh yeah? Then why is one of your shoes missing its laces?"

He frowns at me before inserting a bookmark and setting his book down on the bed. He's by my side in an instant, crouching down beside me. "Crowley, Snow!" He groans, picking up his shoe.

I have an old pair in the closet, so I open the door and start unlacing one. I throw the lace over to him. He stares at it for a moment, before raising an eyebrow at me. "It's red."

I raise an eyebrow in return. "So?"

"So, the other is white. I'll look like a naff plonker in that!"

Leave it to Baz, to be worried about something so insignificant. "You're right." I take it back and toss it and the shoe back into the closet. "Better that you go stumbling about without one. And what with
your bad leg, you'll probably fall down the stairs."

"That miscreant probably thought this was your shoe, and there's nothing wrong with my leg!" He yells back.

"No, certainly not! You limp for the fun of it!"

He stands angrily, "I don't limp." He growls, his gray eyes flashing.

I have half a mind to take a step forward and argue, but we both know he limps. Doesn't matter if he ever admits to it. Besides, I have class to get to.

I growl in exasperation and storm out the door. I jog down the steps, knowing I'll only get a brief reprieve from him. We have potions class together first thing and the bastard sits right behind me.

Baz

I stare at Simon's bronze curls, longingly. I want to wrap my pencil around them and pull him closer. I wanted to brush them with my lips again and breath in his scent. He's the sun radiating heat and light and I want to lean into him more than anything. It takes every ounce of control in my body, to keep from touching him. I don't have any attention to spare for class, but it hardly matters. I've already read and memorized the chapter. Class time is best spent admiring Snow.

I have had to be an exceptional tosser this past week, to keep him from finding me out. Everything he does lately seems seductive. Every time his eyes flash with anger I want to fan the flames. I keep hoping he'll come over and massage me again, but he hasn't. Probably won't. Even if he did, I know it doesn't mean anything to him. He still hates me. Not that I wouldn't love a hate massage. I wouldn't object to it by any means.

The lights flicker a few times during class. I spare a couple of glances up at the pair of golden chandeliers above our heads. I've heard of gremlins messing with electronics, but I've never seen it done before. Still, it's as good an excuse as any.

I lean forward, letting my lips lightly brush Simon's ear when I whisper. "You've created a formidable enemy, Snow. First the toothbrush, now a light show. Whatever will we do?"

He snaps his head away from me and glares back. I can feel myself grinning at the attention against my will. "I thought you spelled it away." He bites back.

Crowley, he's so easily provoked. I would say it's not even fun, but staring into those crystal blue eyes is always a treat. "I spelled it out of our room." I correct him. "I don't have the authority to spell it out of school."

His nostrils flare.

"You can ask the mage if you'd like. I know you two are like this." I entwine my first two fingers, then let one slip away so only the middle finger remains.

When he turns back in a huff, I have to bite my finger to keep from laughing out loud.

His head shoots back around and I quickly control my mirth. "Fantastic, now my pencil's gone. I hope you're happy!"

I'd heard it hit the floor a minute ago so I nod towards it. "That's just you being clumsy as always, Snow."
He glances down then leans over to pick it up with a grunt. Magic is rolling off of him in green smokey billowing clouds, so I'd better not rile him further. That boy has less control than a dropped bomb.

Simon

I wake up shivering under my blanket. I'm rarely cold and never when I'm sleeping. I get up and close the window, figuring that it must be cold outside, but the numbers on the alarm clock are dark and I realize we've lost power. No wonder it's so cold in here. It's partially my fault for always wanting the window open. If we'd left it shut, as Baz wanted, Mummer's house would have held the heat better.

I settle back into bed, but I can't get warm. There aren't enough blankets. I can hear Baz's teeth chattering across the room, which doesn't help matters any.

It suddenly occurs to me that this could be the work of that infernal gremlin. He wouldn't need to get into our room to wreck the electricity.

Either way, it's my fault. I'm starting to feel like everything is my fault and I don't know if I can fix it all.

Baz

I feel cold often enough that I've gotten used to it. I don't think my inner thermostat works right anymore, but tonight is the worst. My leg is throbbing and my teeth won't stop chattering. I don't remember it ever being this bad. I start to wonder if I'm finally turning all the way. If the evil inside of me will fully take over and my heart will shrivel and there won't be anything left of me at all.

But Simon closes the window and I realize it's simply the temperature. If Simon's cold enough to do that, it must be freezing outside.

"Baz?" His voice echoes across the room, but I don't answer. There's no point. I'm obviously here and he'll say whatever it is he has to say. Likely he'll accuse me of making it so cold.

"Baz, we've lost heat. I'm sorry." His voice is closer this time and I feel him throw another blanket over me. It has to be his, I already have the spares on my bed.

"Budge up." He says while pressing against my back. I move over, onto a chilled bit of sheet while he crawls under the covers next to me. My heart is going to beat its way out of my chest.

His fingers are suddenly warming my cheek and I force myself to stay perfectly still so as not to scare him away. "Crowley, you're cold." He mutters.

I close my eyes as he places his hand on my arm and briskly rubs it, burning into my skin with his warmth. I clench my jaw to keep from making a sound.

His body presses up against mine, searing me with warmth, and I squeeze my eyes shut as well. His hand massages down my leg and I lose control over a certain part of my body. Crowley, his hand is so fucking hot.

"Are you alright?" His warm breath caresses my neck.

I can't respond. Alright is not the word for it. I'm burning to death in a cauldron of bloody passion. I always assumed I'd die by fire, but not like this. I'd die a thousand deaths like this.
My chest constricts. I don't know why he cares. Probably feels responsible for the cold, like he feels responsible for everything else. I know he thinks that the world of magic rests on his shoulders. Crowley, I can't imagine being under that sort of pressure all the time. No wonder his shoulders were so tense.

"Baz?" His voice burns a permanent hole through my heart. The edges don't bleed they're cauterized immediately. His shape will forever be embedded inside of me.

I swallow loudly.

"I'm sorry, this is all my fault. It's either the window or that gremlin, and I am sorry."

It's hard to concentrate on anything he's saying when his hand is working its way up and down my leg. I imagine turning over and pulling his lips to mine. I'd whisper, I love you, against them. Once, twice, a hundred times, because those words won't stop looping in my mind and if I ever let them go, they'll likely be stuck on repeat.

I'd tell him that it's not his fault. Not the gremlin, who he stopped from stealing my wand. Not the way the world is, not the way his magic is. He can't help any of it.

His hand comes to a rest against my thigh. "Thank you. I can't believe you haven't killed me already."

I honestly don't know what he's thanking me for. I haven't said or done anything.

I can't stop myself from rolling over then. I can't keep from tracing his warm face with my hand. His freckles are a temptation on their own, but his gorgeous blue eyes are my undoing. "I told you, I'll never kill you. Never, Snow. I'd sooner die."

I'm staring into his eyes now, but his hand has fallen away. "Why?" He whispers searching my eyes.

I quickly remove my hand. I've afforded myself enough luxury. I'm not delusional enough to convince myself I'm helping him in return. I can't warm him. I'm always colder.

I clench my jaw. So many words are fighting to make their way out of me and that I can't respond at all. I can't tell him that I'm already half dead, or that he's better than me in every way. I certainly can't tell him that I'd never want to live without him.

He grips my upper arm and I envy the way he can abandon all sense of propriety to touch me. I couldn't have crawled into his bed, not without dying of embarrassment. "I couldn't kill you either. Even if I should. I know you too well." He lets me go, then turns onto his back to stare at the ceiling.

"I'd think that would make it easier," I whisper. "You know I deserve it." As much as I've tried to hide it, I'm pretty sure Simon knows what I am.

He turns his head to frown over at me. "You don't deserve death!" He exclaims.

I admire that way his curls fan out on the pillow for a moment. "Thank you." I finally whisper, closing my eyes. A lot of people would say any vampire deserves death. Not Snow. Maybe the daft wanker still doesn't know.

His warm hand cups my cheek and I take a shaky breath. He takes it away to pull the covers half over our heads. I don't feel cold anymore though. I've stopped shivering.

"I was worried about you, you know?" He whispers. "Please don't leave like that again. If you were
plotting." He lets his voice trail off.

Part of me wants to tell him the truth, but I can't take the humiliation. He wouldn't need a wand to defeat a few fucking numpties. He'd go off. No one could kidnap him.

I'm weak and pathetic and while I'd be ashamed to tell anyone, I'd be absolutely mortified to tell him. "I wasn't plotting against you." I finally manage. "It's not all about you, you conceited git." I roll away from him.

He was worried about me? That bit didn't register at first. I know he'd wanted to keep tabs on me, but him being worried about my safety and well being doesn't seem likely. Then again, he did just cover me with his blanket and rub feeling back into my leg. No, it's all guilt. That's all it is and I'll put an end to that.

"None of this is your fault, Snow. Not the gremlin, not how your magic works, and not the cold. You don't have to come over here and make things better. You're not responsible for me." I bite out the last bit. I don't need his pity or protection.

I hear him turn his back to me, but he doesn't leave. A moment later he's sound asleep. His breathing is even more appealing when he's right beside me. I close my eyes, then scoot back until our backs are touching. I enjoy the feel of his warmth for a good hour before I fall asleep.

In the morning, when he's gone, I find myself wishing I hadn't fallen asleep at all. That I had enjoyed his breathing and warmth and closeness all night instead.
Simon

I open my eyes to a flashing alarm clock, so I know the powers back on. I open the drawer and dig out Baz's watch to reset it for him so he won't be late for breakfast. Then I get ready and leave as quickly as possible.

Baz was too cold to kill me for sleeping in his bed last night, but there's nothing to hinder him from offing me this morning. He would probably rather have frostbite than have me warm him, the stubborn wanker.

I take my seat at the table and start downing scones like they're going out of style, my leg bouncing up and down with nerves.

"What's the matter with you?" Penny asks, making me jump as she falls into the chair beside me. Her plate only contains one scone. I don't know how anyone could bear to eat only one.

"Nothing." I quickly rinse the lie down with some coffee.

She rolls her eyes at me then pulls out a textbook. The table shakes as she drops it above her plate and flips it open. "I don't have time for your drama, so I'm glad you won't tell me." She mutters.

Neither of those things is true, but I'm too relieved to call her on it. I don't know how I'd ever explain sleeping with the enemy.

My heart stops when Baz strolls into the room, looking dapper as ever in his uniform. The lights from the chandeliers flash off of his slicked back, black hair. He flashes me a quick glance that sends my heart into overdrive, before gathering a small plate of food.

"Did he look angry?" I ask myself. It's hard to tell. Baz has bloody well perfected emotionless looks.

"Who?" Penny asks, reminding me that I have an audience.

"Baz," I reply.

She watches him slide elegantly into his chair and smile at his best mates before she turns back to me. "No, why should he?"

I fill my mouth with scone to buy myself a second to come up with a plausible reason. "That gremlin knocked out our electricity last night. I've really pissed it off."

"Surely, he doesn't blame you and don't let it bother you if he does. Why, my family has had our share of run-ins with gremlins and not one of them was provoked. They stole two of my best necklaces and my mother wouldn't believe it was gremlins until her jewelry started going missing as well. We found them months later next to our gazing ball with half a dozen keys and more coins and trinkets than I could count. Seems they were starting a collection."

"How did you get rid of them?" I ask, raising an eyebrow.

"They got bored and moved on. Other than the necklaces, we'd assumed we lost everything else and I think they were wanting a better reaction."

"But they couldn't even see my reaction!" I insist. "Baz spelled them out of our room."
She just shrugs, getting sucked back to her book almost immediately.

Surely, there is something more that can be done about them. I'll have to ask the librarian later if there are any books on it.

Baz

Dev is running his mouth when it suddenly occurs to me that our alarm went off this morning, which means Simon set it for me once we regained power. He'd thought to do that before leaving for breakfast.

Warmth rushes through my veins. I find my eyes glued to Snow, wondering why he would bother. Why he's suddenly taking so much interest in me.

Then I'm utterly drenched in guilt because I don't deserve his kindness. I've been a complete tosser for years, especially to him. I've done nothing to deserve the favor and I can't remember anyone ever paying me that kind of consideration. It's overwhelmingly misplaced.

My heart soars for a moment, as I allow myself to bask in his thoughtfulness. Then tears prick at my eyes a moment later, because I am a horrible vampire who wouldn't deserve Simon if I was the last person on earth. He'd be better off with anyone else than me. I fantasize about licking blood off of his face. I drain animals to keep breathing. I am a wretched, unlovable monster.

His kindness really doesn't add up at all. Maybe he knows I have feelings for him and he's leading me on so he can mock me later. The massages, the cuddles, he's setting me up! Exploiting my biggest weakness.

I glare over at him as a wave of anger surges through me. This is a new kind of low.

"Baz, Baz!" Dev calls my name, so I turn my glare on him. "I asked if you wanted to come over to our dorm tonight. We're going to watch a movie on the ceiling, there's this new-"

I can't think straight at the moment so I stand, whisking up my plate. "No," I grumble while marching away.

If Simon thinks he can set me up, he has another thing coming.

Simon

The books that I find after school claim that the best thing to do about gremlins is ignore them. That seems pitifully insufficient.

I march into the room. Baz's focus immediately lurches to me. "Well, we're not going to ignore it, I can tell you that much!" I declare, removing my jacket and throwing it onto my bed.

Baz's eyes widen, his lips parting. His arm drops, his book settling against his leg. I'm surprised he's giving me his whole attention. I don't want to let it go to waste.

I walk over to him, pointing in his face. "Don't you tell me to ignore it. Not you too. You've seen what it's done."

A look of confusion twists his perfect features for a moment. "Wait, what are you talking about?"

I throw my hands out dramatically, "The gremlin!" I exclaim. What else could I possibly be talking about? "It's stolen my things, your wand, tried to freeze us to death. We can't simply ignore it and
wait for it to come up with some other way to kill us, can we?"

I know I'm being a bit melodramatic, but I have thought of little else today. "It's become my greatest enemy, Baz-" I realize how ridiculous that sounds as soon as it's out of my mouth. The humdrum is creating dead spots and I'm claiming a pest is worse?

I take a few steps back and sink down onto my bed. "It's driving me crazy." I mutter into my hands. I take a deep breath. It smells nice in here. Baz must be wearing some sort of cologne. He rarely wears any, too hard to hunt with a powerful scent.

I glance up. He's staring at me like I've lost my mind. "Great, we're in the middle of a crisis here and you have plans." I gesture over at him.

His forehead wrinkles, as he turns to place his feet on the floor. "I don't have plans." He assures me.

I sigh. He's a pathological liar. I don't have a limp. I don't have plans even though I'm clearly wearing cologne for someone. What a load of shit. "Fine, then you won't mind helping me hunt that miserable gargoyle."

He shakes his head and stands, motioning towards the door. "After you."

He's being entirely too agreeable about this, but I'll worry about that later. Right now, I have a menace to catch.

Baz

We're deep in the forest and I have no idea how Simon plans on catching something too fast for him to see, but I don't worry about that. I'm trying to work out my own plan. I have to be extremely cautious or I'll ruin everything.

The first step is obvious. Kill him with kindness, that's what he'd done to me. But I'm not just going to cozy up to him a bit. No fucking way. I plan to take this a whole lot further. He's going to pay and I am really going to enjoy it.

I tap my wand against my leg absentmindedly. I'm not letting it out of my hand this time around. "Let's sit," I suggest.

Simon glances over a challenge in his eyes. "Tired already?" He teases.

I sneer back. "No, you gormless git, I was sitting the first time I spotted it." So much for killing him with kindness. I'll probably have to skip the first step.

He sits and leans back against a tree. I take shallow breaths of his scent my heart pounding in my ears. I draw up my legs, resting my wand against them. I can't concentrate on anything but his proximity.

He fidgets and his arm sends a shiver of tingles through mine with a single involuntary brush.

This is a stupid plan. It's bound to backfire.

"Well, what do we do now?" He asks after only a minute.

I can think of several things that would pass the time nicely. I glare over at him. "We wait."

"Well, that's-" He shakes his head, picking up a fallen leaf and twirling it by the stem.
"Haven't you ever hunted before?" I demand.

He shakes his head. "There must be some spell that would speed this all up."

I guess it wouldn't hurt to try. I raise my wand. "Lost and found." A dozen things appear before me. Several toothbrushes, my shoelace, coins...

My eyes fall on a pin that was once my mother's. I rarely looked at it, but I kept it in a drawer because I didn't like being without something that once belonged to her. I snatch it up quickly, as Simon does the same for some other object I don't see. We both keep our mouths shut about it. I take my shoelace and sweep the rest of the items over to Snow with my shoe.

He frowns at the toothbrushes. "Can't very well use them now."

I pick up a fuse. "I know how it shut down the power."

"That wasn't very helpful," he murmurs back. "Don't you know some other spell."

My nostrils flare. He has no patience whatsoever. "Sure, I know a perfectly good gremlin spell that I'm not using," I say between clenched teeth.

He huffs and looks away.

I should do it now. Right now. He'd never expect it.

I hear something to my left and freeze, my eyes seeking it out. The gremlin is watching us from the bushes and he's not laughing anymore. He looks angry.

I reach out and touch Simon's arm lightly with the back of my hand. "Don't look," I whisper. "But it's just there in the bush."

He places his hand on my shoulder and I feel a connection to him. I'm filled with magic. No, it's more like I'm tapping into a very deep stream of magic, an unlimited supply. I raise my wand, "Gilded cage!"

A golden cage forms around the gremlin. Which isn't unusual, that's what's suppose to happen, but this cage is more beautiful than anything I've ever seen in my life. It's covered with gemstones in various shapes. There are gremlin faces and fairies and flowers. It sparkles in the sun like a priceless work of art.

I take a deep breath, closing my eyes, because Simon's touch, his hand on my shoulder, and his magic are all so unbelievable. I feel light headed, light-hearted, and I want to bask in that flow a little longer.

"Now what?" He whispers. His breath on my ear causes me to take a deep trembling breath. Crowley, he's sitting close.

"I can send it halfway across the world." My voice is breathless, so I swallow again, concentrating on Simon's flow of magic and the next spell. "From whence you came," I order. It vanishes. Gremlins were originally from Fiji, so it shouldn't be returning any time soon.

"Will it be trapped in that cage forever?" Simon sounds concerned about it now that it's out of his hair.

"No. That's the brilliance of it. The gilded cage has no bottom, it simply hypnotizes it's captive with
its beauty. As soon as the gremlin tries to get out, it'll find the cage easy to overturn. Though, I've never seen one so lovely. It might take a while to decide it wants to leave."

Snow removes his hand and takes all his magic with it. "Good."

I immediately miss his touch. I turn, raising an eyebrow at him. "Now you're concerned for it?"

He shrugs. "I don't want it to die!"

I stand, dusting off the seat of my pants and Simon follows suit. It really is now or never.

He's looking at the ground, which makes it a good deal easier to work up the nerve. I grab his strong shoulders and rotate so his back is to the tree. I push him forcefully into it and he looks up with wide blue eyes. He's such a bloody fool. He'd be dead by now if I'd wanted to kill him.

I take his face in my hands and mash my lips against his. I pull on his bottom lip with mine fully expecting to be pushed away so I can shout my scathing accusation.

But he doesn't push me away.

Crowley, lips are sensitive. My nerves are all on edge, tingling with pleasure. It's almost too much to bear. His face is smooth against my hands as if he's just shaved and he still smells like smokey magic. I could consume that smell.

I switch to his top lip, savoring it, tasting him. A little bit of mint, but mostly smoke and mirrors and magic.

I've never kissed anyone before and I have no idea what I'm doing, but my mind shuts down so I can't worry too much about technique. His hand is suddenly in my hair, pulling gently. It feels divine.

My hands trace down his neck, as he pulls me tighter against him and thrusts his tongue into my mouth, causing my hands to grip the back of his neck.

Pleasure explodes through me. His tongue is playing with mine and I try to emulate what he's doing, but to be honest it's all instinct at this point because my mind is completely blank. I can't think, I just feel every part of his body pressing up against mine. His hand in my hair, his soft skin, and Crowley, those lips.

He grabs my hips forcefully and I moan, "Simon," into his mouth. It takes everything in me not to pull back and tell him I love him. But I can't and even if I could I wouldn't want to stop kissing him long enough to say it.

Simon

I've never cared about my name before. When I was a kid I didn't like it because people would tease me about the game Simon Says, but I haven't cared either way for a really long time.

But when Baz moans my name it makes me weak. It's as if he's picked it up out of the dirt, polished it off and handed it back, sparkling, shiny and brand new. Crowley, I love my name when he says it.

I've never been kissed like this before. I never cared too much for Agatha's kisses, but this is completely different. I feel like I've come alive for the first time in ages. I'm positively burning with passion. My mind is gone, burnt up in a cloud of smoke and I don't miss it at all.
Baz smells absolutely delicious and his hair feels so much softer than I thought it would. And his lips are so refreshingly cool that I feel I could drink from them forever.

I don't know how long it takes for me to realize that I'm kissing a boy and my enemy at that. Even then I push him back reluctantly a hand to his strong chest that I wouldn't mind trailing my fingers down if I'm being completely honest.

We're both breathing hard as I stare into those expressive gray eyes. Storm cloud and electric lighting, flashing up my insides with fire.

I swallow, "Baz."

His laughs softly, shaking his head. He licks his bottom lip then bites it. "I know what you're doing."

I frown up at him because his eyes are full of accusation. "Kissing you?" I ask doubtfully.

He leans closer. "The alarm clock, the massage, the snuggling for warmth." He bites out.

My mind is still shot so I only manage to murmur, "What?"

He raises his eyebrows, his eyes widening. "But I got you first." He shoves a finger into my chest. "You wanted me, Simon. I felt you harden against me. You wanted me. Don't forget that." He turns away and marches off, and I'm left completely puzzled as to what just happened.
You wreck every part of me

Baz

I stroll out of the woods, wondering how I'll ever face Snow in our room, but I get to put that off for a while because the bridge is up. I hadn't even noticed the sun setting. Stupid night vision.

"Shit," I mutter. I know of a few places I could go, but I can't bring myself to leave. Protectiveness smothers my need for privacy and all but kills it. I'm not going to leave Simon alone no matter how awkward it's going to be between us. I sit and wait.

Several minutes later he emerges from the woods, staring at the moat.

"Your gremlin held us up a bit," I complain as I stand. His bronze curls are a mess, probably from my hands, and his eyes are not amused.

"You're the one who was snogging me for a good ten minutes!" He exclaims.

It couldn't have been ten minutes. Actually, I suppose it could have been. I have no idea how long we were kissing. The fact he can spout a number suggests he wasn't nearly as consumed by it as I was. "Follow me." I sneer at him, before making for the underground bunker.

I only know of the place because of a tome in my parent's library, and I only discovered it after many years of seeking. But it's as good a shelter as any out here.

I march over the hills next to the school, acting like I know exactly where I'm headed. In all honesty, it takes me about 15 minutes and I'm relieved when I finally stumble across the small rose quartz stone. I raise my wand and declare, "Open Sesame," over it. A circle of sod moves aside with a quiet rumble.

I trudge down the stone stairs, magical lamps lighting my way as Simon calls after me, "What is this place?"

"A secret, so don't go blabbing about it." I toss back in return.

The stone hallway illuminates our way with harsh white light. Overhead fixtures flicker on one at a time as I stroll forward giving me the illusion that they're obeying my every whim, when in fact they have motion sensors to conserve electricity.

I've only been down here once a few years ago. After determining there were no rats or other creatures I could suck the life out of, I haven't been back.

I do remember where the pantry is so I head that way and point to the nonperishable boxes and cans. "I know you're hungry. You're always hungry." I say it in a derogatory way that kills a small chunk of me. I'm regretting that kiss now because I'm going to have to be so cruel to him. How many other pieces of myself am I going to lose? And all to save face. Maybe I should lose my face instead and keep my heart.

He flashes me a scathing look before his gaze flies to something on the shelf. "Wizard Crunch!" He exclaims. "I saw the commercials, but we never had this in the shelters!"

My heart compresses with the statement. He was nearly starved in the shelters and it's hard for me to imagine anyone treating him that way. I want to go back in time, sneak out to wherever he was and
smuggle food into him. I feel guilty for not being there for him when he needed someone most.

But I can't turn back time. I can't fix all the errors I've made. All I can do is secretly enjoy his excitement now.

Simon

I wish I'd known about this place when I was trapped outside a few years ago. It's an absolute luxury. I spot several things on the shelf that I can't live without and clutch them against my chest like a starving man.

I know Baz is judging me for my gluttony, but I don't care about that. "What else is down here?"

"Beds, better than our dorm ones. Bathrooms, libraries, a music room, an underground garden..." His voice trails off, as I stare at him in wonder.

"Seriously?" I gasp. I can't believe all of this was right under our feet all along. "What is it, a bomb shelter?"

He shrugs. "According to what I've read, it would stand up to bombs, but it's more for hiding in case of emergency. I think bombs were the least of their worries."

I should probably wonder what they were really concerned about, but all I can think about is the fact that Baz snogged me in the woods. Why would he kiss me, and why would he show this secret bunker to his enemy? None of it makes any sense.

I shouldn't have enjoyed it in any way, but Baz is an amazing kisser and he'd smelled so good. He still smells good.

I find myself admiring his posh looks in a whole new way. My mouth waters with hunger for him. He's more appealing than anything else down here and the desire -the need- to taste him again is overwhelming.

He's sucked me in for some nefarious purpose and I've fallen for it so easily. I should be ashamed of myself. I feel like even more of a moron than I usually do and his hasty explanation did nothing to satisfy my curiosity.

I didn't know vampires could seduce just anyone like that. No wonder so many people ended up dead. He was so much more dangerous than I ever imagined.

And now we're not in our room and there is no anathema, and I'd like nothing more than to be pinned against the wall, completely at his mercy. If I don't get a grip, I'm going to end up dead, or he will if my magic decides to protect me. I don't want tonight to be the night it all ends. I don't want that night to ever come, but tonight is much too soon.

But he could have attacked me in the woods if he'd wanted to. So he's toying with me, but why? All I know is that he'd been every bit as turned on as I was.

I study him carefully, wishing I could read his mind. If I don't get to the bottom of this, it is going to eat me alive.

Baz

"Let's pick out our rooms shall we?" I lead him down the hall and gesture to the small rooms with comfy beds that light up as we pass them.
I spot one with an enormous bed and immediately choose it for myself. The walls are concrete with a layer of magic over the top that makes it look as if we're in the middle of a jungle. "This one will do nicely for me. See you in the morning, Snow."

"Wait." He grabs my arm, filling it with a pleasant heat. My heart flutters in my chest. I turn to look at him. "If it was all a trick, why did you wait for me, Baz? You could have come here on your own."

I suppose I could have, in theory. I wouldn't have abandoned him, but he needn't know that. "I didn’t want you to die." I bite out.

He shakes his head while digging out a handful of Wizard Crunch cereal. "You know I wouldn't have died." He insists, before cramming it into his mouth and chewing loudly. I don't find it a turn off in the least. I wouldn't mind eating it out of his mouth.

"You give yourself too much credit," I say, backing into the room. "Find your own bed and goodnight." I start to shut the door, but he sticks his foot in the way.

"So we're not going to talk about it?" He raises his eyebrows at me.

I pretend ignorance. "About what, Snow?"

"You called me Simon while you were snogging me." He growls sexily.

I squeeze my eyes shut. I can't talk about this right now, or ever. I put up a thousand shields against him. Because he doesn't like me and he never will. "Slip of the tongue."

"Not the only slip of the tongue." He mutters. Pretty sure I wouldn't have heard that if I wasn't a vampire.

I place my hand against the door. "What do you want, Snow." I apply pressure, but the door doesn't budge.

"Why did you kiss me?" He asks bluntly.

I don't know why I didn't anticipate this inescapable conversation. He was bound to talk to me about it, and I have no lecture prepared.

I study his blue eyes, my gaze flicking rebelliously to those tempting moles. There are a dozen things I want to say, but I force them all down.

He swallows and presses a finger against my chest. "You wanted me." He accuses.

My nostrils flare. "I wanted to get back at you, sure." I wanted his lips, his mouth, his body, his soul. I've wanted all of him for a very long time. I look away so he won't see the desire burning behind my eyes.

He frowns. "For what?"

I'd already listed everything back in the forest. "I said goodnight," I growl.

He grabs the back of my head and nudges the door open enough to pull my lips to his. The boxes he was holding fall to the floor with various thuds. I'd like to think he'd rather snog me than eat, so I imagine that for a few moments.

He tastes sweet like Wizard Crunch and my hands violently grab his face. I trace the soft skin of his
cheeks while my lips eagerly explore his again.

The door gets out of our way, the cereal crunches under his shoe and suddenly his body is against mine, his hands wandering my hair. His tongue playing in my mouth. I don't think I could ever get enough of this. I pull him back towards the bed, my mouth tangled in his.

I only have one plan now and it involves straddling him in bed. When I pull him back another step, my calves bang into the footboard. I'll work my way around it.

His hand traces down my chest, over my stomach, below the belt and I moan shamelessly into his mouth. Crowley, it's everything I've ever hoped and dreamed. I can't get enough of him. And I don't know how I'll make it anywhere away from here. I can't move, can't speak, can't breathe.

He squeezes me gently and I pulse against him, "Mmm." I purr, racing my hands down his chest. If my excitement was visible it'd blind us both. If it was audible, it'd blow our eardrums. I've wanted this for so long, but I never imagined it would actually happen.

His hand is only over my trousers for a second before he pushes me away. His blue eyes are hot, blazing fire. "You wanted me." He insists, poking a harsh finger into my chest. I can't take any steps back but I fold a little over of the footboard. "Remember that." He growls out.

I can't let him leave. I can't let this end. I grab him before he can two steps away and fall back onto the bed with him. I roll over on top of him, slip my hands under his armpits and slide him up to the top of the bed like he weighs nothing. I grab his wrists and pin one between the pillows, and the other on top of a pillow. I kiss the moles on his cheek, that have been tempting me for years. I suck at his jaw.

I can hear the blood rushing through his veins. I don't know if he's frozen in anticipation or fear, but he doesn't fight me. There would be no point really, I'm so much stronger than him. He'd need to go off to stop me.

I stare at his neck for a moment, but I don't kiss it for fear of further freaking him out. Instead, I loosen my grip, lightly brushing his wrists with my thumbs. He feels so amazing underneath me, but I can't force him to stay. It wouldn't be right. It wouldn't even be satisfying. Not if he wants to leave.

"You're not going to be happy until you wreck every part of me." He whispers brokenly, his eyes shining with tears.

I squeeze my eyes shut, pressing my face into his shoulder, bleeding internally. I don't want to wreck any part of him. It's the last thing I want, but I can't seem to stop.

He pushes me harshly then, and I willing roll out of his way, letting him scramble to his feet and stare down at me with haunted eyes. "I don't know what you're up to this time, but you've taken it entirely too far."

I shake my head. "No." I swallow, grasping at any reason to give him that won't leave me vulnerable. If he knows my heart and he doesn't reciprocate my feelings, it will break me. I won't be able to live with him or myself or anyone.

He turns on his heel and strolls towards the door, taking my heart and soul with him. He crunches past the cereal, leaving all of the boxes on the floor. Leaving everything in shambles, a sordid mess.

I crumple against the bed, an empty man.
Chapter 7

Baz

I'm not cruel to Simon. I'm not anything to him. It's been at least a week since we kissed and I've stayed out of the room and out of his way as much as possible. I think that's what he wants.

I sneak into our room after he's gone to bed and he leaves before I wake. We didn't discuss it, we've just adjusted.

It's fucking ripping me apart.

I miss teasing him. I miss seeing anger flare behind his eyes. I miss his cutting words. But I get more than I deserve. I get to watch him sleep and hear him breathe. I'll take it. I'll always take that over nothing.

But I simply can not cause him any more pain.

Simon

Baz won't talk to me. I still have no idea what he wanted from me, but I'm sure I've screwed up his vile plans somehow. Not that it makes it any easier to endure his absence.

I either want to eat way too much or nothing at all. Nothing healthy anyway, if I skip meals I fill up on junk. It doesn't help. Nothing helps.

I'm shamelessly replaying our kisses in my mind and trying to consume every single cherry scone in the dining hall when a girl walks up to me. Even the flaky layers of scone are nothing compared to Baz's lips. Nothing will ever compare to them. I'm probably doomed to a lifetime of disappointment from here on out.

My mouth is full when the girl sits takes a seat across the table and leans towards me. Her long blonde hair brushes the table as her blue eyes smile into mine. "Hi, Simon."

A sharp pain reverberates through my chest when I hear my name. It will never sound as sweet as it did from Baz's mouth. He's ruined kissing, and hunting, and magic, and now my bloody name.

I swallow, "Hi." I don't recall her name at all. I certainly won't ruin it.

"Gina," She offers.

I nod.

"We have history class together." She reminds me.

I shrug noncommittally. She doesn't look familiar.

Her eyebrows narrow for half a second before she shrugs it off, "Anyway, I was wondering if you'd like to take me to the football game this Saturday?"

Baz plays football, and I can't bear the thought of seeing him there, even if he is sitting the bench. I'd sooner run needles through my skin. "No, thanks. I don't care for it." I mutter. He's ruined football too.
"Oh well." She shrugs and tilts her head in a saucy way, her blue eyes sparkling. "In that case, you should come to my room. Everyone else will be at the game."

For some reason, my eyes snag on Baz's table. His gray eyes are already trained on me, radiating anger. I can't figure out why he's angry. Maybe he thinks Gina will make me happy and he can't stand the thought.

I can feel my eyes narrow in his direction, my chest filling with rebellion, "Alright, that sounds lovely." I reply towards Baz.

His frown deepens for a split second before he glances away.

"Fantastic." I jump when she touches my arm and my attention reverts to her. "See you then."

Baz

I pick up my tray, ignoring whatever Dev is saying. I march over to the trash and angrily dump my scraps. I shouldn't have heard everything they said. Normal people aren't tortured by this much knowledge.

If she kisses those lips. No, if she touches that hair. No, if she so much as admires those moles. No, if she even basks in the glow of those blue eyes, I will hunt her down.

I bend my tray a little unconsciously, before placing it with the others. It doesn't sit right, so I quickly leave the scene of the crime.

He was with Agatha before. He clearly fancies blonde girls. I'm about as far from a blonde girl as a person can be. I'm the opposite of everything he likes, everything he wants. Why did I ever think I could turn it all around on him? What was I hoping for? That he would say, "These past few days, the massages, the snuggling, I've been trying to seduce you." And then I could say, "No need, I've wanted you for years." Crowley, I'm a total plonker.

Even if he had come up to me and blatantly said, "I fancy you and I'd like to kiss your face off," I wouldn't have believed it. I would have pushed him away. He couldn't convince me it was true. Not with a thousand words.

I'm not in the same league as Snow. I'm not worthy of his admiration. I could never earn his love. It was always a fool's quest, his heart.

But if I'm not good enough for him, there's no way in hell she is. It's time I find out more about Gina Hepburn.

Simon

Penny gets me into the girl dorms, where I'm not allowed to be, and I wander aimlessly around for a bit. Probably would have helped if Gina had told me which room she was in. I'd be terrible company anyway, I should go hang out with Penny instead, but I don't have the energy to pretend I'm okay.

I sink to the ground in the hall, my head falling into my hands. A couple of girls pass by and I hear them whispering to each other, but I don't care what they think. I should definitely leave, but the thought of going back to Mummer's alone is like a punch to the gut.

"Simon." I look up, spotting Gina standing in a doorway, across the hall. "Are you going to come in, or what?"
It takes a monumental effort to push myself to my feet. I stroll into a room so pink it almost hurts my eyes. I want to leave immediately.

She trails fingers down my arm, smelling like fresh roses. Probably the closest scent she could find to pink. "I'm glad you came."

That's funny, considering how much I'm regretting it.

"Here, have a seat." She pushes me back a few steps until I'm sitting on her bed. "You can take your coat off."

I don't. I'm trying to figure out if I even like girls. I'm not really attracted to them, but I'm not attracted to boys either. Maybe I only fancy vampires. Crowley, that would be a disaster. Trying to snog every vampire I see until one of us inevitably dies.

She waves a wand over a teapot. She purrs, "Some like it hot," in such a suggestive voice that I'm surprised the teapot responds. It doesn't seem to mind, because a few minutes later she's pouring us both steaming cups of tea and forcing a heart covered mug into my hands.

I don't want the tea. It smells like odd herbs and nearly burns my hands. I lean over to set it on the floor, making a mental note not to kick it over later.

She frowns down at it, giving me the impression that she finds my behavior repulsive. "Perhaps you would like some biscuits instead." She offers me the plate, but if I take one if will only prolong this visit. I shake my head.

She throws out her hands, causing one of the biscuits to fall to the floor. "What? You don't trust me?" She erupts in a shrill, high voice.

The last thing I need is more drama. I stand abruptly, accidentally upsetting the teacup. I hesitate as the brown liquid spreads across the carpet, more steam pouring off of it than seems possible. I'd spell it away, but I'm sure that would backfire. Better let her deal with it. "I have to go."

"You just got here!" She declares, blocking the door.

I take a deep impatient breath. "I have homework." It's not a lie. There are quite a few things I've been putting off doing. It's hard to concentrate when I'm being eaten alive by regret.

She glances around the room quickly. "Then we'll do it together." She focuses on her backpack. As soon as she moves towards it, I open the door and escape. I step gratefully into the cooler hallway. I didn't want to be in that room a moment more.

It's not her, honestly. I just want to be alone. My head is too full of taunting memories and unanswerable questions to function properly. My heart is too twisted with pain. I'd be piss poor company around anyone.

Baz

The Hepburn's are an old magic family. It's not hard to find history on them, but the more I read, the more concerned I grow.

Over a dozen years ago, they were in a coven with my family and 10 others. They had clandestine meetings to discuss what could be done about the destruction of the old ways. The group supposedly disbanded years ago, but it wasn't hard to read between the lines. They disliked the mage and would do whatever it took to stop him. I wouldn't be at all surprised if that also meant stopping Simon. I had
to warn him.

I hurry back to Mummer's house, hoping I'm not too late. I burst into the door with such force that Simon's eyes go wide with surprise. I'm insanely relieved that he's still here. "You can't see Gina tonight," I exclaim dramatically.

He frowns slightly, standing from his bed, "Why is that, Baz?"

He adds enough disdain to his voice to turn my name into a weapon. I walk over, grabbing his shoulders, "I think she might be trying to kill you."

He breathes a derisive laugh, as he knocks my arms away. "Wouldn't that just save you the trouble?"

"No." I straighten, "You're not listening, her family is in a group that's against the mage."

"As is yours," He points out.

I nod, "Well, yes. But-

"Stop." He holds up his hands. "Whatever you're doing, just stop. I can't take any more." His eyes narrow. "That's your goal, isn't it? Can't kill me so you drive me to suicide? Is that it?" His voice raises with the accusation.

"What? No! I'm trying to warn you, you git! Please, for once in your life listen to me!" I plead desperately.

"Can't imagine why you'd want to keep us apart. Does she know something about you, Baz?" He circles me, staring at my face with a calculating gaze.

I take an exasperated breath as his eyes fly to the clock.

"Must be something pretty condemning if your willing to miss a football game for it."

I lean around him to see it's after seven. The game started over an hour ago. "Fuck!" The coach will be furious, I'm already on thin ice after getting back 8 weeks late.

I start to the closet for my uniform but stop myself. It's too late now. I slam the closet door shut. "Shit!"

My heart is pounding. I might get kicked from the team. I haven't missed a game since I've been back. Then again, one less person sitting the bench isn't going to kill them.

I hear Simon fall back onto his bed with a sigh. "I've already been and she didn't try to kill me once."

I glance back in confusion, "You've already been?" But I'd been certain she was plotting something. I sit on the edge of my bed, staring at the door. I'd missed the game for nothing. I'd humiliated myself in front of Simon for nothing.

"Look." He says softly. "I don't plan on talking to her again. Your secret, or whatever," He waves his hand through the air, "Is safe. I don't care what you're plotting, Baz. I don't have the energy to care anymore." He falls back against the bed, his feet still resting on the floor.

I wish I felt relieved, but he's just given me something new to worry about. "What do you mean, suicide?"

He sits up and glares at me for a second, before pushing off the bed and strolling to the bathroom. I
stand, but he closes and locks the door before I take a step.

I march over to it. "What do you mean, Simon?"

He flings the door open and takes a step forward so that he's glaring directly into my eyes. "Don't call me that." He growls through clenched teeth.

He's radiating anger and green smokey magic, probably seconds from going off, but it's so much better than the depression. I'd rather he take it out on me than do something stupid. I don't know what he's angry about, though. "Your name?"

"You ruined it." He claims, poking me in the chest. Crowley, I missed those flashing blue eyes. His bronze hair is backlit by the light in the bathroom and he is absolutely striking.

But I'm more confused than ever. I think he's gone mad. "How? Pretty sure there's only one way to pronounce Simon."

"You ruined everything!" He accuses hotly.

That doesn't seem possible. I throw out my hands. "You already went out with her! How am I ruining it? Seems like you did a pretty good job of that on your own." I wince. That was exactly the kind of accusation I was trying to keep from spouting. I should be at the football game right now. I should still be ignoring him, not making things worse.

He shakes his head. "You're a tosser."

"I know!" I yell back. "Excuse me for spending my afternoon in the library, completely missing the game, trying to keep someone from killing you. Excuse me!"

Simon pushes me then and I stumble back in shock. "The anathema!" I yell, hoping a little shove won't set it off. It doesn't seem to.

His blue eyes are pure fire. "Tell me the truth!"

"About what?" I demand.

He steps closer, inches away. "You're a vampire and you can make people feel things that no one else can."

I freeze. I was pretty sure he knew I was a vampire, but I didn't think he was going to throw it out there in the open and I don't know what powers he thinks I have. "What things, Snow?"

"That's how they get their victims, isn't it? But it doesn't matter for them, because then they're dead and they don't have to live with everything being ruined forever!" He points to his chest. "But I do. You knew that, didn't you? And you did it anyway. Scones don't even taste that good anymore, Baz. Scones!"

"I don't have any powers like that, Simon! I can see in the dark. I have an increased sense of smell and hearing, but I can't make you hate scones!" Only after I say it do I realize that I basically admitted that I am a vampire and if he told the wrong people I could be expelled or even killed for it.

But I find I'm not terribly concerned about either of those things because he has feelings for me. He has to. Very strong feelings apparently.

He's standing so close, I can feel the heat radiating off of his body. I can feel the angry breathes he's
taking. He starts to reply, but I don't hear the words. All I can hear is my heart pounding. I'm lost in those blue eyes and I can't keep my hands off of him for a moment more.

I lean forward, grab his face and press my lips to his.

He pushes me back a step and wipes his mouth off with the back of his forearm. It's devastating. It's exactly the reaction I expected of him the first time around but I was prepared for it then. It kills me now. "I'm not falling for that-"

I take a step closer, "I'm not-"

He shoves me away harder, leaving one hand burning against my chest. "No."

My heart is breaking and I don't know what to do about it. I don't know how to fix this. I press my lips together, leaning into his hand. "Simon."

"No." He shakes his head and takes a few steps back, leaving his hand outstretched to keep me away. Like I'm some sort of monster.

I am some sort of monster.

Simon

All I've wanted for days was for him to kiss me, to talk to me. But as I stare into his devastated gray eyes, I know I can't allow it. If I keep kissing him, I'll keep getting sucked back into whatever this addiction is. If I keep him at arm's length, there's a possibility it'll wear off. That I can go back to not needing him. Not craving him. But I have to be strong now.

"No." My arm is trembling. This is by far the hardest thing he's put me through.

Finally, he nods focusing on the floor. "Okay." He says softly.

His tone makes this even harder. It's much easier to fight off an attack. It's hard to fight the urge to comfort him. (Or simply give in and snog the living daylights out of him). He looks so sad like he's lost his only friend.

But I'm not his only friend. I'm not his friend at all. I'm just his victim, his mark. It's all an act and I refuse to fall for it. "Don't ever kiss me again." I don't know how I get the words out. They skewer me, like swords to the chest. But if his stupid vampire kisses can drive a person mad with lust, I have no choice.

He closes his eyes tightly, his face a mask of pain. He heads to the door, throws it open and flees.

Momentary doubt washes over me. What if I have it all wrong? What if he really does have feelings for me? What if everything I feel for him is real?

I spend the night replaying all of our memories in my head, but his actions are too inconsistent for me to draw any conclusions. I don't love Baz, that's ridiculous. I can't really love him and he certainly doesn't give a damn about me.

But why would he miss his game to warn me about Gina? The only answer that makes any sense is that she must know secrets about him that he doesn't want her to share. They must be pretty dark secrets.

I'll have to get them out of her.
Chapter Summary

The spell in this one is based on the song, "I'll Keep You Safe" by Sleeping at Last. You can read it without hearing the song, but it'll be better if you give it a listen. All credit for the lyrics in the spell and the title go to Sleeping at Last.

Baz

For years, the prophecy seemed impossible. I could never picture Simon killing me, until now. I may have inadvertently pushed him past his limit, reeling the prophecy in like a shark on the line, it's sharp teeth eager to consume me. Hate and love are similar emotions and now he hates me for sure.

His accusations were insane to me at first, but the more I think about it, the more unsure I grow. I know fuck-all about vampires. What if we really can seduce our victims? What if I can? What if I did and now Simon only has these feelings for me because of my twisted saliva? It makes more sense than him actually liking me for me.

Crowley, that's fucked up.

I don't even know if he has legitimate feelings for me, but I do know Snow. There are certain things he can't resist.

Simon

Baz didn't sleep in our room last night. I hardly slept, but at least I was there. Who knows where he was.

I feel him enter the classroom and plop into the seat behind me so I spin around, glaring into his stormy gray eyes. His hair is slicked back and he looks impeccable as always. He must have been in our room to change during breakfast. "Where have you been?"

His jaw flinches, but he doesn't answer.

"You should have come home."

He stares at the floor, refusing to look at me. I realize I sound like a mother and only just stop myself from saying I was worried sick. I shouldn't worry about him at all. I turn back around facing the front, but I can feel him behind me. I'm hyper-aware of every sound he makes. Every breath he takes.

He isn't at lunch at all. I feel a mix of anger and worry about it, fretting myself into such a state that I can't take more than a bite of my sandwich. At least Penny is in the library so she can't see how fucked up I am right now.

Gina decides to disgrace me with her presence a few minutes before the bell rings. "I'll forgive you for last night, but you're really going to have to make it up to me." She says.

"What do you know about Baz?" I don't mean to start the conversation that way, but I can't help
myself. It's the only thing I want to hear from her. It's the only thing I want to hear, period. I don't think I'll be able to concentrate on anything else until I get to the bottom of this.

She tilts her head flashing me a smile. "What will you do for the information?" She asks in a sexy voice.

I'm not her teapot and I don't warm to her tone in the least. "Please, it's important."

She rests her chin on her fist and tilts her head. "So important that you'll meet me on the ramparts tonight?" She pouts.

I flare my nostrils. "Fine. What part?" The ramparts run the circumference of the school.

"Right above the bridge. Ten o'clock." It'll be up by then.

"Fine," I mutter in return.

She smiles back at me. "It's a date." She rises gracefully to her feet and struts away. I roll my eyes.

Baz

I don't want Simon to have to look at me, so I don't sit at my table at lunch. I'm a ghost, a phantom, invisibly watching over him.

He doesn't eat, so I ask the cook to send a sandwich and a couple of scones to our room. He'll appreciate it later even if he never says so.

Then I try to decide which side of the moat I want to be on for the meeting. No way am I going to let him go alone. I still don't trust Gina. She either wants to seduce him or kill him and both are almost equally as disturbing.

I finally decide to be on the far side of the moat. I don't want to have to sleep in our room if he does snog her and I don't want to kill them for making out. But if she is trying to kill him, I'll still be able to help. I just needed to scout out a place that I can see them from.

Simon

It's after ten when I finish climbing the stairs to the ramparts. I only know because I stole Baz's watch. Not because I needed it, but because having something of his comforts me and I decided to indulge myself a little. It's easier than going cold turkey and a watch seems safe.

I know the food was from him. I devoured it before I thought too much about it because I was starving. But it bothers me now, that once again I can't figure out his motives. Maybe he's trying to drive me insane. Pretty sure it's working.

I spot Gina from the stairs and stroll towards her. The wind is whipping her blonde hair into her face, so she grabs hold of it and twists it around her hand.

"You came."

I'm only five minutes late so I don't know why she sounds so surprised. "Yes, so tell me what you know about Baz."

She smiles and tilts her head to the stone wall, "Come, sit."

I stride over and rest my bottom against the low wall. "Go on."
"His parents and mine are in the same group." She begins.

I nod. He told me that much. "Go on."

"He wants you dead."

For some reason I can't fathom, I can feel protectiveness rising up inside of me. "He's had plenty of opportunities to kill me."

She snorts. "But he can't really. You'd find a way to survive."

"Maybe."

She pierces me with intense blue eyes as she runs her fingers down my chest. I'm so stunned that I jerk back a little and flick her hand away. I realize a second too late that it was an odd thing to do, but so is touching a stranger's chest.

She frowns over at me. "You and Agatha aren't together anymore."

My forehead furrows. "What's your point?" And how does she even know that when I've never noticed her before.

She starts to reach out again but I raise my eyebrows at her hand and she pulls it back. "You and I could have a lot of fun together."

I've never had a girl come onto me this way before, and while I'll admit it's a little flattering, I mostly feel confused. "You don't even know me."

She shrugs, "We could easily change that."

I'm not interested in changing that. "If you can't tell me anything more about Baz-"

"Oh, I can tell you more." She says as the wind whips her hair back from her face. "He has a powerful amulet that he smuggled into school. In the wrong hands, it can cause irreparable damage, and his are definitely the wrong hands."

I could picture his hands when she said it, and they didn't look wrong to me. Hadn't felt wrong either. Then again he was probably still my enemy. My judgment was clearly clouded. I couldn't trust Baz, but I couldn't trust her either. "What does it look like?"

"It's a small pin, gold on the outside, red in the center."

I shrug, "If I see it, I'll turn it into the mage."

I start to stand, but she leaps up and pins me down by my shoulders. "You can't turn it into the mage!" She insists, her eyes wild with outrage.

I frown up at her, "Then what am I to do with it?"

"You give it to me!" She insists. "I can turn it into the proper authorities."

I scoff. "I don't know you and I'm certainly not going to steal something for you. Now if you'll excuse me..." I go to stand, but she kicks me in the chest and I go flying back.

I feel myself falling towards the moat. The weightlessness is disconcerting. My stomach drops and I'm abso-bloody-lutely sure I'm going to die.
I windmill my arms frantically. My fingers crash against the stone, but it's more painful than helpful. If there's anything to grab onto I don't feel or see it.

"Float like a butterfly!" The words surround me, driven by the wind and suddenly, I'm floating. I take a second to catch my breath.

I'd recognize that voice anywhere, but I still don't believe it's him until I turn and take in his dashing features. I'm ashamed to say that a wave of pleasure washes over me along with the relief. He's just so bloody fit.

I kick my legs in the air and make for the edge of the moat where Baz catches my hand and pulls me onto the grass. His cold hand in mine makes my heart slow to a more normal pace. I'm so relieved to see him that I can't stop staring at the side of his pale face. He's absolutely breathtaking with the wind whipping his long dark hair about. His gorgeous gray eyes are protective as he glares back up at Gina.

Oddly, I feel safe with him next to me. I feel like we could bloody well take on the world together, him and me.

He looks very debonair with his wand in his hand, his uniform clinging to his body in a most appealing way. I still don't want to be attracted to him, but he looks amazing. And he did just save me.

I've barely stepped ashore when Gina's angry voice roars. "If you're not my ally, then you're my enemy" She starts muttering something neither of us can hear, raising her wand. The wind blows her hair around her, making her look every inch a witch. And not the good kind, either.

"Oh, fucking hell." Baz murmurs, grasping my hand tighter and dragging me back. I glance down and see something gray and slimy plop onto the shore. I stumble back as Baz pulls me along. The hideous heads emerge and I realize that the merwolves are climbing out of the moat and flopping towards us. Their bodies are grotesque and unnatural. They smell swampy, nauseating.

"They can't do that!" I yell. It has to be magic.

"They are." Baz raises his wand at them, "Stay back!"

They hesitate, then keep coming, their reek creeping up on us. It's not going to work.

The sky darkens above us and I look up to see a thousand bats, birds and other creatures I don't recognize. Anything possessing wings it would seem is after us. Seems like overkill to me, but I suppose they'll get a feast after the merwolves finish us off.

Or not. My magic is beginning to overwhelm me. I'll probably kill them all at once, even if I don't want to. Maybe even Gina.

The thought of killing a human being nauseates me and I try to figure out a way to clamp down on my power.

Baz's hand squeezes mine. My eyes meet his and I push my magic towards him as I did in the woods. He turns and clamps his free hand over my eyes. The sudden darkness briefly increases my terror. I don't know what he'll do with my magic. I just know it will be more controlled than anything I could accomplish.

His breath is soft on my ear as he passionately whispers with magic, "I'll keep you safe."
I drop Simon's hand and hug him to me with my free arm, as blinding white light stuns the creatures around us. I can feel his magic filling me.

When I'm sure he won't be blinded, I let my hand fall from his face. I clutch both of his hands in mine, my wand between my right hand and his left.

Wind is whipping around us now. I can smell the merwolves, the birds and bats and Simon's magic, but I concentrate on his blue eyes. On the spell, "Hold out your hands, can you feel the weight of it, the whole world at your fingertips." I extend our arms to our sides. He threads his fingers through mine. It's hard to concentrate on anything but his touch. But I know I need to.

"Don't be afraid." I felt protectiveness take over my body. I'd never let anything hurt him. "Our mistakes, they were bound to be made, but I promise you I'll keep you safe."

He takes a step closer and our chests touch. I drop my forehead against his. The spell is designed to let me create anything around us to protect him, but I'm not creating alone. Simon's magic is rippling through me, protecting me right back. Our minds seem to bind together and we're constructing a quartz barrier around us. My eyes are squeezed shut, but somehow I can see what we're creating in my mind's eye. We're surrounded by love and light. Nothing can touch us.

I find I don't even need to speak the words of the spell anymore. I just think them and pearls rise from the moat, attracting the merwolves with their glamour. They plunge back into the water as the pearls sink to the bottom, drawing them down with brilliance.

I clutch Simon's hands tighter as trees rise up out of the ground, shielding us further. Insects burst from the ground blocking the bat's sonar. All the flying beasts feast on the newly raised crop as I wrap my arms around Simon clutching the back of his head. Fanning my fingers through his blonde curls.

I breathe the last part of the spell against Simon's ear, "You are an artist and your heart is your masterpiece, and I'll keep it safe." I feel like he can see everything inside of me, my love, my desires, everything. But I leave myself exposed to him. It hardly matters now. I'd do anything to protect him. Even this. Even making myself completely vulnerable to him. Even if he doesn't love me back. Even if he never does.

I can feel his appreciation and relief. But he still doesn't completely trust me. I can feel his fear and doubt. I can practically taste them. They're like poison to my soul, but I'm willing to spend a lifetime proving my love if that's what it takes.

Time seems to stop around us. He hugs me tightly to him and I hug him back with everything in me.

Finally, he pulls back and glances at the quartz that completely surrounds us. It throws a rainbow over his features. I didn't know he could look any more beautiful to me, but bathed in rainbow light, my heart bursting with love for him, he's never looked more handsome.

Simon takes another step back so that our arms fall to our sides. He throws me a playful grimace widening his eyes, "Do we want to see what we've done to the world?"

I would be perfectly happy staying here and staring at him forever, but it would be awfully hard not to kiss him and he'd specifically told me never to do that again.

My heart sinks, bringing me back down to reality. No matter how much I love Simon, he doesn't want to be with me. I know that. I felt that and I can't blame him. Who would want to be with a
The weight of my unrequited love threatens to deflate my lungs, but I manage a small nod and say with magic, "As you were," to the quartz around us.

Simon

The quartz shrinks into the ground revealing a brand new forest of ancient trees, kinds I've never seen before, higher than the ramparts. Higher than the school. If it wasn't for the lights from the wall shining through them, I'd think we'd been transported to a different world. It's wild and beautiful.

I follow Baz cautiously to the moat, where the merwolves are excitedly swimming around humongous pearls.

I glance over at him, but his eyes are on the ramparts. "Where did she go?"

I shake my head. "I don't know, but it doesn't matter. She lives here. We'll tell the mage and he'll put an end to it. She can't go around trying to kill people."

He glances over at me and worries his lip with his teeth. Crowley, I missed him.

I glance up at the sky. I can only see a bit of light through the leaves, so I don't know where all the bats are, but they're not attacking so I don't complain.

I take a deep breath. "Think we can still find the bunker?"

He hasn't taken his eyes off of me. They're smoldering with passion and desire. I feel like they're going to boil me alive.

Before they turn my insides to complete mush, he glances out through the trees. "Yes, this way."
Simon

Baz leads me directly to the pantry. When he turns to face me I raise my eyebrows at him. "I'm not always hungry," I complain.

He smirks then pulls out a box of Wizard Crunch and tosses it to me. I catch it and wrinkle my nose at him. "The commercial makes it look better than it actually is." I walk over and slide it back in. "Besides, someone sent a feast up to our room."

He smiles and I find myself admiring his bright white teeth. He really does have a gorgeous smile. "I have no idea who would have done such a thing."

I breathe a laugh. "Right." His intense stare is warming my entire chest. I don't know why I'm so attracted to him. Yes, I do. He's bloody gorgeous, every inch of him, and he exudes sexuality.

He swallows and turns to leave, but my hand shoots out and latches onto his arm. When his eyes meet mine again, I feel my face flush. "Thank you."

He presses his lips together, searching my eyes.

"For saving my life." I let my hand fall away.

He nods, taking a step back and tucking his hands into his pockets. "Anytime." He doesn't speak the word casually. He says it as if he means it with all of his heart.

Baz

Simon has no bloody idea how much restraint it takes not to attack him right now. Not to pin him against the wall, rip open his shirt, and run my hands down his chest while my tongue explores his mouth.

I want him more than blood. I want him more than anything. I think he's thanking me for not killing everything, but it's hard to concentrate on his words when I'm so entranced with the way his mouth moves.

"Baz."

My attention shoots back up to his gorgeous eyes. I'm happy swimming around in them for a while, so blue, so warm, so kind. Crowley, he has the best eyes. "Yeah," I answer softly.

I keep my hands firmly in my pockets. I bite my bottom lip for good measure. So far my hands and lips have been surprisingly well behaved and it's taking everything in me to keep it that way.

He takes a step closer. "Are you listening to anything I'm saying?" His lips tip up in amusement and my gaze slides back to them.

"Not really." It comes out soft, drenched in desire. I couldn't work up a decent sneer if my life depended on it. I don't bother trying.

He slowly reaches up and brushes back a strand of my hair with his fingertip. I close my eyes, enjoying the small touch more than seems possible.
"I love your hair like this."

I don't know what my hair looks like, but I'm tempted to find a mirror. I'll do it this way every day if there's a chance he'll touch me again.

He traces a finger down my cheek and I whimper. I'm immediately ashamed and hoping he didn't hear the slight noise.

"Look at me." He says softly.

I open my eyes. He's standing even closer than he was before. He's inches away. "Crowley, Snow. Are you trying to make it impossible?" I complain, taking a step back. A shelf halts my retreat.

"You do feel this, don't you? I didn't think- but," He swallows.

I frown at him slightly, "What are you trying to say?" My heart is carving a hole in my chest trying to get to him. I'm incapacitated by fear, because he holds my very essence in his hands, in his words, in his mouth. He could crush me so easily. One bite and I'd be destroyed. No one should hold this much power, but it only makes sense that he does. He possesses all the power in the world, why shouldn't he possess all the power over me.

His hand cups my cheek. I lose every other sense. Every bit of me is intensely focused on the feel of his hand on my cheek. His thumb stirs up a wake of tingles as he caresses my skin. I take a shaky breath.

He takes a step closer. I have nowhere to go. He knows that. "I was wrong, wasn't I? It was never a trick."

I stop breathing altogether.

"It's not a vampire power. This is real."

I lick my lips and his eyes fall there.

"Yes?" He guesses. When I don't reply he whispers my name, caressing that one syllable with his mouth in a way that makes me come undone.

"What if I said-" Simon cuts his words off and closes his eyes when my right hand escapes it's pocket and tangles itself in his curls.

I freeze, terrified he's not going to finish his sentence. That he's going to back away from me. But he quickly recovers, his eyes opening to drown me. "You can kiss me whenever you like?" His voice is shockingly vulnerable.

"But you don't trust me," I whisper softly. I'll give him a way out. But only one. And he better not take it.

"Not completely."

My chest explodes with crushing pain.

"But I want you." His lips brush over my cheek. "Completely." He whispers against my lips.

My other hand is against his cheek now and I'm pulling him closer, my lips digging into his with all the desire I've clamped down for years. I spin him around, shoving him into the shelf so hard several cans fall off.
I'm worried I've crushed him. "You okay?"

He answers by plunging his tongue into my mouth, by grabbing my arse and pulling me closer. He's never touched my butt before, and I find myself overwhelmed with joy at the sensation.

I sneak my hands between us, find the gaps between his buttons and rip his shirt open. My hands are massaging his chest, which is radiating heat like a furnace. "Crowley, you're hot," I whisper against his lips.

"I'm going to warm every inch of you." He growls back. I couldn't be any harder at this point. I've never heard a more appealing sentence in my life.

He rips open my shirt, taking the extra effort to pull it down my arms. I have to move them aside so he can get it off, but our bare skin touching is worth it. As soon as it falls to the floor, we race to touch every inch of newly exposed skin.

He explores my chest and then in unison, we massage each other's backs pulling each other closer. My hand hits one of the shelves reminding me that he's probably in an uncomfortable position.

I take a step back, pulling him with me and open my eyes just enough to lead him into the hall. I shouldn't have taken him into the pantry. I should have led him straight into a bedroom. Now we're stumbling along, trying to kiss and walk at the same time like drunk sailors.

I'm headed down the hall, when he pins me against the wall and shrugs his shirt off the rest of the way, his mouth still kissing mine.

He presses against me and I moan, "Simon" into his mouth. His increases his pressure and rhythm in response. Oh my god, the sensation is amazing. But it would be better without all the metal in the way.

My hands trace the top of his pants until I find his belt. I quickly pull the end free and slide the pin out. I pull it apart. My fingers fall to his button, but he pulls back, breathing deeply.

His hand is pinning my shoulder to the wall. "Baz, wait."

Fuck, the belt was too much. I stop what I'm doing and rest my hands on his hips.

His blue eyes soften. He leans forward and kisses my jaw softly. He teases it with his teeth and I groan as his body settles back against mine. "We probably shouldn't." He whispers against my skin.

"Whatever you want," I whisper, massaging up his back. I'm completely fine with exploring his back and chest all night. It's so much more than I'd hoped for as it is.

"Oh, I want," He pulls back, his blue eyes sparkling mischievously, "An awful lot of things."

I can't help but smile back. "You can have them all," I promise emphatically, laughing, happiness bubbling up inside of me. I feel intoxicated by his words. They've turned me into a love-struck fool.

"You sure?" He whispers, leaning forward to lick my earlobe. He rests his forehead against the wall, his body still pressed against mine, his lips against my bare shoulder. "Tell me where you were."

I freeze, my body tensing against the wall.

He leans back, searching first one eye, then the other. "I want in." His hand cups my cheek, "I want you to let me in."
He was already inside every part of me. Why did I have to tell him my most embarrassing moment too?

I shake my head, "It's not what you think."

"Okay." He says softly, not letting up on his stare.

I push away from him, taking a few steps back. "It's embarrassing."

His forehead wrinkles slightly. "How?" He asks in confusion.

I bite my lip and look away. I can't tell him. I simply can't. I don't know what he likes about me, maybe my strength. Maybe my abilities, I don't know. But I do know that this makes me look like a pitiful loser and even if he's glad I told him, he'll never look at me the same. I can't bear it. "You're right." I swallow, "We shouldn't do this." I quickly turn and stride down the hall.

"Baz!" He calls after me.

Shit! I can hear his footsteps echoing down the hall, coming after me. I quicken my pace.

"What did you think?" He shoots past and spins to face me. I almost run into him. "That I wouldn't mind you keeping secrets from me as long as you stuck your tongue down my throat?"

"Fuck, Simon." I glare back. "You're the one who kissed me!"

His eyes widen, "You saved my life. You acted like you really cared about me." He yells, placing a hand against his glorious chest.

"I do!" I proclaim loudly. It echoes off the walls. Normally, I'd be horrified I just admitted that, but right now it's the least of my concerns.

"Prove it." He growls.

I shake my head. Out of everything in the world, why did he have to be hung up about that? "Ask me anything else."

"Does your family expect you to kill me?"

"I don't." I hesitate, wanting to answer honestly. They never specifically told me they wanted me to kill Snow, I assumed that myself. "I don't know."

His nostrils flare. "Do you have a pin that's gold and red?"

I frown slightly. How does he know about my mother's pin? "I don't see what that has to do with anything."

He studies my eyes a moment more before leaning against the wall and folding his arms over his chest. I couldn't help but admire his biceps. Crowley, he was gorgeous. "I think that's what Gina's after."

"That doesn't make any sense." I shake my head. "She was after you!"

"No. She wanted me to steal it from you. I told her no."

I focus on the wall, my mind spinning. How did she know about the pin and why would she want it? "It was my mother's. I like to keep something of her's with me." I admit softly.
"Do you know what it does?"

I glance back at him, trying not to let his chest distract me. "It doesn't do anything. It's ornamental."

He studies me a moment more. "She seems to think it's powerful, dangerous."

"But-" I shake my head. "I-" I try to think back to when I first brought it to school. My dad had acted like he didn't want me to take it with me, but he finally relented. Could it hold some sort of power?

I'm tired of standing so I stroll into the closest room and sit on the bed, resting my chin on my hand. Simon moves down the wall, but keeps against it, staring at me through the open doorway. "I thought it was simply a pin, but it could be more. I can ask my father when I see him this weekend."

Simon nods, before pushing off the wall. He's almost out of sight when I call after him. "You could come with me."

He hesitates, then nods before walking away.

I sigh and run a hand through my hair. I freeze halfway through and carefully pull it out, before running for the nearest bathroom. I gaze into the mirror. Fuck, my hair is a mess now. I'll never know how Simon likes it.

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