The Fault Of A King

by phantomthief_fee

Summary

David knew his son. He just wished he didn’t have to watch him die.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

So, I still have a lot of feelings about Doctor Roman, and I saw a bunch of @secondmagic’s Fate artwork, especially this, and I wanted to write something.

David had known from the moment he’d met Romani Archaman that the doctor was his son.

Although he hadn’t spent as much time with Solomon as he likely should have, he knew his child. He saw Solomon’s wisdom and compassion in this man, in the way he interacted with David’s Master and Mash. Roman could try to hide his true capabilities all he liked, but David could see through his bumbling act in an instant. Still, one thing struck him about the man calling himself Doctor Roman. Something vastly different from the Solomon David had known. He was so…free. So open. He laughed and smiled easily. His words were always carefully chosen, David could tell that much, but Roman felt no need to hide his nature from the people he was close to. He wasn’t afraid of saying exactly how he felt to the people around him. He was so much more open and honest with his emotions. He looked so genuinely…happy when he was with Haru and Mash. And, slowly, David began to realize that he didn’t think he’d ever actually seen his son happy during his lifetime.

No, he told himself. He just hadn’t been present in Solomon’s life enough to see his son smile like
that. Surely, Bathsheba had seen Solomon be carefree and open. However, the longer he spent in Chaldea, the surer he was that Solomon had never truly known happiness while he’d been alive. It was a sobering thought. David knew he hadn’t been a good father. He’d allowed Amnon to get away with raping Tamar simply because he’d been his eldest, allowed Absalom to return to Jerusalem after murdering Amnon as if nothing had happened. And when Solomon had been appointed to the throne, David had forced his son to carry out a massive purge against those who had supported Adonijah’s bid for the throne. There had been a multitude of expectations placed upon both of them. They’d been kings, blessed by God and expected to make the right decisions regarding their kingdom and their people. It was a terrible feeling, looking back over his life and seeing all the mistakes he’d made. All the damage he’d done to his son.

David told no one of his realizations, of course. Roman didn’t want anyone to know his true identity. After all, he’d made a wish to become human. To not be Solomon anymore. Besides, it probably wouldn’t have been good for Goetia to realize Solomon was right in front of him. David was sure his son could handle this. Most servants may have seen Roman as a bumbling fool, but he was, in all honesty, a very capable leader. David had made sure of that. If anyone could bring down Goetia, it would be Romani Archaman.

Meanwhile, David tried to do everything he could to make sure that Roman was happy. For the most part, Roman didn’t want anything to do with him, so David worked in secret. He could understand Roman’s desire to be away from him. When they were alone, they fell into old habits. Roman had had to stop himself a few times when he’d started to call David ‘father’. David would have been lying if he’d said his heart didn’t ache every time the word almost crossed Roman’s lips. But he resisted, staying out of Roman’s way.

Still, he couldn’t help meddling occasionally. Such as on Valentine’s Day. Valentine’s Day was chaos at Chaldea. All of Haru’s summoned servants were preparing chocolates, both for their Master and for each other. Mash herself was busy making some chocolate for her senpai under Emiya’s watchful guidance. He was in charge of most of the cooking since he was by far the best cook of the lot of them. Haru was sent rushing around all day, delivering and receiving chocolates all day. When night rolled around, David fully expected that he’d find her firmly wedged in her bed. Instead, he found her in the kitchen near midnight. She was wearing a shirt that was too large for her, likely borrowed from Roman, and a pair of shorts under the apron Martha had sewn for her. Or were those boxers?

“What are you doing up so late?” David asked, walking up behind her. Haru shrieked and almost dropped the bowl she was mixing ingredients in.

“You scared me!” She hissed, putting the bowl down.

“Sorry.” He smiled apologetically. “But what are you doing up so late? We all had a long day. I thought you’d be in bed.”

“I was going to go to bed,” Haru admitted. “But then I remembered that I forgot to give Doctor Roman some chocolates.” David stared at her for a moment, his face blank. Then a shit-eating grin spread across his face.

“Weeell~” He wrapped an arm around her shoulder. “Does my Master have a crush on the good doctor?”

“W-What? N-No!” Haru sputtered, trying to push him off. “Shut up!” Her face had turned a rather delightful shade of red and she was waving her hands in what appeared to be an attempt at denial.

“You protesting only makes me think it’s true~” David’s smile widened. Haru groaned, covering her
“Alright. Fine. Maybe a little.” She finally said, lowering her hands. “He’s just…He’s such a nice guy. And he’s most of the reason me and Mash survived in all the Singularities.” She started fidgeting with the hem of her apron. “I know it’s kind of weird, cause he’s almost 30 and I’m only 17, but…he deserves to be appreciated. He’s just so awesome…” She smiled softly at the ground.

“I wouldn’t say it’s weird.” David patted her back. “Roman’s a good man.”

“Really? You think so?” Haru seemed surprised by this response. “Most of the people here talk a lot of shit about him.”

“We give him a lot of shit, but he’s a good guy.” David shrugged. He would never speak ill of his son. Tease him, yes, as was his duty as his father, but never insult him. Honestly, he couldn’t have been prouder of who his son had become. Solomon had managed to become human, had gotten the chance to live out his life for himself. But he’d come to Chaldea to prevent the Incineration of Humanity. He’d given up his chance to be free and happy to help save the world. Roman was out of his depth, he was scared, he was powerless, and yet he continued.

“He is.” Haru nodded dreamily before quickly snapping out of her stupor. “Anyway, I thought he deserved to get some chocolate too. I didn’t have time to make him any today so I wanted to make it before I went to bed.”

“Mind if I help?” David glanced at the counter to see how much she’d gotten done. So far it seemed as though she’d just made the chocolate batter or whatever it was called.

“You…You want to help?” Haru tilted her head to the side. She had such interesting facial expressions. They were so expressive.

“I’m pretty sure the others’ll kill me if they found out I let you stay up this late.” David lowered his voice to a conspiratorial tone. “Two of us working will help get it done faster. That way you can go to bed sooner.”

“Well, alright.” She smiled shyly, then began explaining what she needed help doing.

It warmed his heart to know that his master was in love with Solomon. She was such a sweet girl. He was certain she’d make a lovely daughter-in-law. Were she not 17, he might have even meddled a bit and tried to get her and Roman together. But she was 17 and it was awkward and for now, he’d just let her little crush run its course. At the very least, it was good to know that Roman had someone in his corner to cheer him on despite all the obstacles.

“It’s done!” Haru proclaimed, holding up the finished chocolates. David had helped her wrap them too, although his wrapping skills left something to be desired.

“Do you want to give it to him now or in the morning?” David asked, glancing at the clock. It was a little after 1 am. Far too late for either Haru or Roman to be up. But David knew Roman was probably still chatting with that Internet idol.

“Now,” Haru said. “I don’t want him to think I forgot about him.” She held the box to her chest, her eyes bright. She was covered in flour, cocoa powder, and a little bit of butter and would probably need a shower before she went to bed.

“Well then, let’s go.” David gave her a wink. Haru nodded fervently, making an excited little noise. Together, they crept through the darkened hallways toward Roman’s room. It took everything both
of them had not to start giggling. The more responsible servants, and Mash, wouldn’t hesitate to chew them out if they caught the pair sneaking around this late. Emiya was the first to come to mind, but Boudica and Jeanne were just as likely to scold them. They were almost caught once when Jekyll heard them moving around and came out of his room to look for the source of the noise. Thankfully, they were able to hide in time and he didn’t see them.

Once they’d reached Roman’s room (the light was still on, as expected), Haru knocked and waited. It took a moment or two for Roman to respond. He answered the door dressed in a t-shirt and shorts, not unlike Haru’s attire. Peering past him, David could see that the computer was on and open to Magi Mari’s web page.

“Haru? What are you doing up so late?” He asked, worry immediately clouding his features.

“I realized I forgot to make you chocolate today.” Haru smiled shyly, holding out the box. “So, um, happy Valentine’s Day.”

“You didn’t need to make me chocolate,” Roman said, although he accepted the box all the same.

“But I wanted to!” Haru insisted. “We all give you so much shit. I thought you deserved something nice.”

“I helped,” David added. Roman’s smile faltered a bit as David stepped into view.

“That was…nice of you.” He forced himself to remain cheerful, but David could tell the good doctor was incredibly uncomfortable with his presence.

“I hope you’ll like it.” Haru began to fidget with her apron. “I mean, I know I’m not all that good of a cook-”

“I’m sure it’s very good,” Roman assured her, reaching out to pat her head with his free hand. “I’ll try it in the morning. Right now, I think we both need to go to bed.”

“Yeah.” Haru giggled. “Um…I’ll go now.” She ran off down the hallway before Roman could say good night. Roman smiled to himself, laughing softly. David slipped away as well, not wanting to overstay his welcome. The look on Roman’s face lingered in his mind, however, once more reminding him of how much happier his son was now.

After Babylonia, David went to see his son. The end was nearing and if his son was going to die, and David had a feeling he would, he wanted to give Solomon a proper apology. He found Roman in his room, hunched over his desk. His gloves were off, revealing a single ring on his right hand.

“Doctor.” David knocked politely on the doorframe. Roman nearly fell out of his chair, scrambling to put his glove back on.

“There’s no need for that.” David closed the door. “I know who you are, my son.”

Roman paused, glove half on. “How…How long have you known?”

“From the moment I was summoned.”

Roman stared at him. His expression was hard to read, but he appeared torn between frustration and something like sadness.
“…Why didn’t you say anything?” He asked, his voice soft. He put the glove on the desk, resting his hands in his lap.

“It was pretty clear you didn’t want your identity known,” David said, sitting down on the bed opposite him. “And…You seem happy like this. As Romani Archaman.” He smiled gently. “Are you happy?”

“I am,” Roman replied without hesitation. David’s heart felt heavy.

“I’m glad.” He cast his gaze downward, resting on the ring. One of ten. He assumed the false Solomon had the other 9. They were silent for a moment or two. David was the one who finally broke the silence.

“I came to apologize.” He said. “We seem to be close to the end of whatever this is, and if there’s a chance I won’t get to see you again, I wanted to give you the apology I never did when we were alive.” He took a deep breath, getting up and crossing the room so that he was standing above his son.

“You were never allowed to be a human being because of me. I abandoned you to God so that you could be the perfect king.” He hesitated. “I…I was not the father I should have been. You deserved far better than the life I forced upon you.” David might have been summoned in the prime of his youth, but at that moment, he looked so much older. Almost like the man Roman remembered from his childhood, always so solemn and serious.

“My son.” He cupped Roman’s face in his hands, smiling softly. “I’m so proud of you.”

“Really?” Roman’s voice was quiet and hopeful.

“Really.” David nodded. “If anyone can defeat Goetia, it’s you. I know you can do this.” Roman reached a shaking hand up to place it against David’s.

“Thank you…Father.”

“You’re welcome.”

Everything was going to be fine. They would beat Goetia and Roman could finally be a normal person.

Then came the Temple of Time. And…He was gone. His son was…gone. He’d erased himself from existence to finally defeat Goetia. Quite a few conflicting emotions roiled in David’s chest. On one hand, his son was gone. And that was awful. But Roman had truly been happy during his existence. David wasn’t sure how to feel. So he went to see his Master.

“You knew, didn’t you?” Haru said. Her back was to him. She hadn’t changed out of her Chaldea uniform, still covered in dust, debris, and blood. David hesitated in the doorway.

“Yes. I did.” He finally said.

She curled up tighter. “Why didn’t you tell me?”

“It wasn’t for me to tell.” He answered. “He wanted to keep his identity a secret. To protect all of you.” Haru sniffled loudly. She’d been so happy when she’d discovered Mash was alive and the two of them had gone out and seen the sun for the first time in a year. But the happiness had eventually
worn off. Even if Mash was back…Roman was still gone. And he wasn’t coming back. She couldn’t even summon him since he’d erased himself from the Throne of Heroes. He was just…gone.

“It’s not fair.” She muttered.

“Life isn’t fair.” He walked in and sat down on the edge of the bed.

“It’s not fair.” She repeated, fresh tears welling up in her eyes. “Everyone else was fine! Everyone else was alright! Why…Why did he have to go?!” The tears began to stream down her face as she curled tighter around her favorite stuffed animal. “I don’t want him to be gone! I don’t want him to be dead!”

“I know…” David reached out and put a hand on her back. He’d never expected that he’d have to see his son die. He’d died before Solomon had when they’d been alive. He’d seen his children die before, and it had been terrible every time. It certainly hadn’t gotten any less terrible, that was for sure.

“I don’t want him to be gone…” Her whole body was wracked with sobs, to the point where she could barely talk. David sighed, drawing her into his lap and stroking her hair as a father would.

“I won’t tell you that everything is going to be alright.” His voice was gentle and calm as he spoke. “I won’t tell you it’ll get easier and you won’t stop missing him. But I want you to remember that he was happy while he was here.” Haru sniffled loudly, looking questioningly up at him.

“He was happy here.” David continued, smiling reassuringly. “You and Mash and Da Vinci made him happy. I know you did. His life was worth living because you all were in it. And don’t forget that.” Haru just sniffled again, burying her face in his stomach once more. David continued to hold her, stroking her hair until she fell asleep. Once he was sure his Master couldn’t hear him, he turned his gaze skyward.

“Take care of him, please.” He whispered. Perhaps Bathsheba would be waiting to welcome her son into the kingdom of Heaven. He certainly hoped so. His son deserved a reward. He just wished it could have been a life of his own.

End Notes

Please check out the art of @secondmagic. They’re the ones who inspired this.

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