Then and now

by Vinylacetat

Summary

The alternation of reality and memories.
Jon doesn’t know what hurts him more — the fact that Theon teased him in Winterfell, or that now he is not able to do it.

Notes

Thanks to Elnarmo for beta reading.
This is a translation of my fic Тогда и теперь and my first work in English. I must warn that my English is pretty awful.

Jon knew that Theon Greyjoy cannot bring him any good. Actually, Theon Greyjoy was terribly annoying. He was mouthy, often smiled with all his teeth for no reason, took all the Robb’s attention and had a constant need to flaunt and to show off.

Besides he didn’t pay attention to Jon, pretending Jon does not exist at all. It was probably the most annoying thing about Theon.

Jon followed him distantly, looking away quickly if Greyjoy turned round. From the other side of the courtyard or the great hall he distinguished his voice, at once noticed his pretentious clothes in the crowd.
Theon was terribly attractive. Feeling it all the time was like feeling a thorn under the skin. Jon preferred to stay away from him, precisely because he was attracted to Theon so badly. Jon was restrained and coped well with that, but just before his departure from Winterfell to the Wall things began to unravel.

He was packing his trunk when the door opened and Theon entered his chamber without any knocking. “Hello, Snow.”

Jon gasped and then got angry.

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The mop of tangled white hair touched the floor, sliding down from the black sleeve. Theon was sleeping, cowering on his side near the untouched narrow bed. Jon looked at the body crouched on the floor, paused and squatted down beside.

“Theon.”

There was no answer and Jon touched Theon’s shoulder. Theon jerked as if he’d struck him and propped himself up on one elbow, looking at him with wide eyes, reflecting the unstable candle light.

“Why are you on the floor?” Jon asked.

Theon looked around the room with meaningless hunted stare, and his lips shivered.

He didn’t dare to respond - probably Jon’s question sounded demanding or judging. He just mumbled something defensive and almost unintelligible. It was pretty painful to listen to him.

“Stop it. Go to bed.” Jon pulled his sleeve, and Theon grimaced as if he was ready to cry. “No. No”, he whispered unable to look Jon in the face.

Jon released him and stood up. “Here you go. I’m not touching you. Do as you please. I’m leaving.” However he didn’t move, unable to quickly turn around and go away.

Theon moved and quietly, clearly said: “Don’t.”

Jon rubbed his forehead. “So what should I do?”

Theon hesitated, a few times he started talking then stuttered, until he finally said: “Stay here - “ He sniffed and nodded at the bed. “Just stay. If you can.”

Jon was tempted to ask the question, causing the same feelings as picking a sore or an old wound - nasty, painful, hard to stop - but he restrained himself and said nothing.

He locked closed the door, took off his boots and stretched out on the bed, his hands behind his head. Only then Theon calmed down and returned to his former position on the floor.

Jon stared at the dark ceiling listening to Theon’s wavy breathing that was slowly becoming steady.

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He approached. He smelled of wine.

“You know that on the Wall you cannot - ” His fingers fluttered at chest level, and he made the bawdy gesture. “You were running away from the girls, like from fire. So all your chances are missed, you will die a virgin!” Theon laughed. Then suddenly became serious. “Or you don’t like
girls at all?"

"Leave," Jon said grimly. "What the hell are you doing here?"

Frowning, he walked around Theon, went to the door and touched a forged handle. "Go away."

Greyjoy came closer again, forcing Jon to freeze not daring to throw open the door for him, like he was going to do.

"I came to say goodbye, Snow. And to express condolences. You will never know how it feels."

"How feels - what?" Jon asked against his will.

"Being with another person," Theon said, taking another step toward him and Jon retreated. "To touch someone's body... Handle him as you wish... Feel his desire."

"Do you want to offer me that?" Jon inquired, raising his chin and trying to imitate the impudent Greyjoy's tone.

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Jon tried not to think how it looks. He spends the night in the bedroom of his - who, prisoner? - and in addition keeps him on the floor. The fact that Theon had asked about this wasn’t comforting - on the contrary, it made his heart heavy. Jon just could not sleep. He leaned out of bed reaching Theon’s shoulder again.

Theon jerked a lot stronger than the last time, instantly emerging from sleep to awaking, and looked up, swallowing convulsively. His face was pale, under his cheekbones were a deep hollow-like shadows, and a long scar crossed his cheek, distorting the symmetry of his features, so light and nimble before.

Jon realized what hurted him mostly about Theon now - this unnatural stiffness. His acquired ability to stand still until he has been called or pulled up, or to lie for a long time in uncomfortable position, making the whole body protest and ache.

“I cannot,” said Jon. “It was a bad idea.”

“Forgive me,” said Theon quickly. “I'm sorry. I will not.”

Jon felt surprised: “What will you not?..”

Theon’s pupils darted from side to side as if he was looking for the right answer, but could not find it.

With a sigh, Jon slid down to the floor, dragging a cover and fur from the bed. “If you intend to sleep on the floor, then I will too. Is that better?”

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“Do you want it?” asked Theon approaching his face to Jon’s.

He was very close - Jon could feel his breath on his cheek, the warmth of his body.

“Um - Maybe I want to,” Jon said hoarsely, shifting from foot to foot.

“Badly?” Theon said.
Jon blushed. His cheeks were filled with heat like hot oven bricks. He stepped back and leaned against the door. Theon followed him and stood quite close, almost pressing their chests together.

He was awfully perfect with these sparkling eyes, smooth face and a barely noticeable smile in the corner of his mouth. And he didn’t moving aside and didn’t leave. From the words he said, Jon’s knees became like they were made out of a sand. So Jon threw his head, leaning against the door, and parted his lips.

“Badly,” he whispered.

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Jon drew himself on the fur, with his head on the folded cloak, and wrapped himself in the cover. Theon didn’t change his position, but his eyes were still open, disturbed and dark. He was lying on the bare boards. Jon sighed again and pulled his sharp elbow.

“Come on.”

Theon reached out, trembling desperately.

“Stop it,” asked him Jon. “Don’t shake so, please.”

He hid Theon under the cover and their hands met. Theon’s palm was icy, near the wrist there was a sticking out bone - Jon didn’t noticed how it happened, but he stroked his whole hand, patting this bone, the inner and outer side of the palm, the mutilated fingers.

Theon closed his eyes, leaning on his cloak.

Despite everything Jon couldn’t forget his bright and careless beauty, which hit him so hard a few years ago. Theon was so broken now, but for Jon it seemed that a kind of pale radiance shone through his scars and mutilation.

Maybe it was only Jon’s dreams and memory, though. Something lost and immortal, like everything he ever loved in his previous life before the Wall - everything he loved, but could not get. Ned Stark called him “son” only in private. Jon not even dared to dream about being a Lord of Winterfell. Theon Greyjoy snorted, and showed his teeth all the time, and was inaccessible.

Jon pressed his body against Theon’s and held him tight, stopping his shudder.

I wanted it to happen, but not at this price.

Do you believe me?

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Theon stroked his cheek - with those long and strong fingers of the archer, which didn’t let Jon rest when he looked at them. He imagined how they touch him down there - easily untying the laces, slipping under the fabric, gripping and strengthening the pressure.

He swallowed hard. His throat was dry.

Theon slowly ran his hand through his hair, brushed it, removing from the face. Jon rubbed his cheekbone faintly against Theon’s hand. His other hand squeezed him through the breeches, and Jon involuntarily moved his hips forward and tried to catch Theon’s lips with his mouth.

And then Theon pulled back and laughed. “Look at you, Snow! You're such a bitch! I knew you
want me.”

Jon hit him in the shoulder, pushing away. Now he found the strength to flung open the door. “Get the fuck out!”

Theon, sniffing and rubbing his shoulder, went to the exit. He turned on the doorstep to give him a fast, cutting glance.

Jon grimaced on how painful and uncomfortable it was, not noticing what he does. Wherein he was still aroused, and felt some dull ache in his chest, thinking that this is the last time he sees Theon. His eyes were ready to get filled with tears of anger and bitterness.

“That's not true!” Jon shouted after him, leaning out the doorway. “Never, do you hear? I have never wanted you and will never want to! You make me sick!”

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Theon fiddled awkwardly in his hands - as if the presence of another’s body being so close was more uncomfortable to him than the hard floor.

Jon stroked his cheek, his fingers tracing the scar and removed his white hair to the side. Theon froze and tensed.

“Are you afraid?” Jon whispered. “Don’t be afraid.”

“I was always afraid,” said Theon suddenly. “Used to be. Before.”

“Before?.. When, in Winterfell?” Jon raised himself up on one elbow, trying to catch his glance. He wasn’t sure that he understood correctly - or that Theon clearly understands what he says. “How could you be afraid - of what?”

Theon looked into his wide eyes. They were not now sparkling or cutting - but were quite sensible.

“I was afraid that you don’t want,” said Theon very heavily and his voice cracked. “So I hated you all the time. Because you're proud. Because you have never wanted me. As if I was an empty place for you, though you are a bast -” he coughed, choking the word, and his features contorted as if in pain. “I - it was important for me - to prove. And now you are just sick of me, even more than you were before.”

Jon was silent. Theon grimaced and closed his eyes, hopelessly calming down under his arm. Very quietly, Jon called his name. Theon’s eyelashes fluttered.

“What? ..”

“I wanted to. And I want it now.”

“Jon - ” Theon slowly lay one hand on his wrist - the movement was incredulous and inconsistent but it was real - and after that slid his fingers under the sleeve of Jon’s shirt.

“You are just you,” Jon said. “Then and now.”

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