Marco’s Heart Wounds
by The_Cookie_Thief

Summary

Marco suffered from these unknown flowers sprouting from cuts on his skin before. When Star showed up and he made new friends, they seemingly disappeared. When one sick day for Star causes Marco to grow flowers again, he tries hiding them from her. But she knows something is up and she is determined to help her best friend. And what happens when Tom is thrown into the mix? (Also posted on Wattpad)

Notes

This is kinda based on the fictional disease Heart Wounds from Hello Charlette, the horror game. I’ve never actually plaid it and only know a little about it so I’m going to be making up the cure for it as I wright.

Basically, Heart Wounds is a disease that inflicts cuts on the person based on others’ actions and words. Whenever the cuts heal, flowers bloom from the wounds. Something I have added is, depending on how harsh the action or words are and how much the infected believes them, the closer they bloom to their heart.
Chapter 1

Marco shifted in his seat uncomfortably. He resisted the urge to rub his sleeve covered arms as he felt another wound open, blood slowly seeping out to dampen his hoodie sleeve. The already red clothe darkening slightly, but not by much. After a while, he learned that red was the best choice to wear. Less noticeable when a new cut forms. The quiet whispers continued from behind him, somehow he could catch every word they were saying. And it just made things worse. He bit his bottom lip as he felt another bud make its way from the small cut, effectively drying the blood but causing more discomfort. Why did Star have to get the flu? If she were here, they wouldn't be saying these things. Not to where they could be heard at least.

Marco let out a shaky sigh as the flower bloomed under the sleave. He could feel it tingle a little as it brushed the sleeve again. Another comment caught his ear and he let out a cough to cover the pained noise that escaped his lips as another cut formed on the back of his left hand. He raised his right hand after that. He couldn't take it anymore.

"What is it, Diaz?" The teacher spat. He was some substitute. Filling in for Miss Skullnick, another one to catch the flu over the weekend. Marco cringed slightly as the angry, rude tone caused another slice to his right shoulder.

"M-may I be excused to use the restroom, please?" With a bored sigh and a roll of his eyes, the teacher nodded.

"Just be back before the bell." Marco nodded eagerly before he quickly stood and rushed out the door, thankfully. He rushed to the handicap bathroom a few doors down and locked the door behind him. This bathroom was only for people in wheelchairs or on crutches, but he didn't have much of a choice. It was closer than the others and more private. If anybody saw what was happening to him, he feared it might just make things worse. First, he grabbed the scissors from his hoody pocket before he layed them on the edge of the sink. He then slowly removed his jacket and shirt, carefully not to pull any flowers. He let out a pained hiss when his finger accidentally hooked on one, pulling slightly.

He looked at himself in the mirror, wincing at what he saw stare back at him. Dried blood covered his chest and arms, small blue flowers followed the lines of now healing scars. He shouldn't have to do this. He had been doing so well. He hadn't had a single petal sprout from his body in months. The last time he could remember was when Star had gotten mad at him for fallowing her to the blood moon ball. He remembered that for some reason, that night, the flowers had turned red.

Another sad sigh escaped his lips as tears filled his eyes. Of course this hadn't gone away. The only reason it had seemed that way was because his blond friend had been with him almost all the time. If it even seemed as though someone was going to say something harsh, she'd defend him. She'd
been doing that since day one. He thought himself pathetic for it. Letting someone else fight his battles for him.

A whimper escaped his lips as he gently held a flower that had grown on his collarbone. How no one had noticed it was a mystery to him. He picked up the scissors with his right hand and slowly raised them to the flower he held. Careful not to cut it too short. Winced at the memory of the first time he did this.

It was a few months into his freshman year. Someone had started the rumor that he liked boys and, well that didn't blow over great. Harsh words and comments of disgust were thrown at him here and there. Things only seemed to get worse once he realized that they weren't just rumors. He had developed a crush on someone in the school. A boy. Once the boy found out, even he began throwing harsh words Marco's way. That's when the flowers started. A week after they began to sprout, he tried to cut them. When he had cut the hole stem off, it reopened the wound, causing more to grow in its place.

He threw the wilting petals into the trash and went to the next blue flower, holding his breath when pain shocked through his body. He waited a moment before he began to cut the petal. After everything that happened, he had decided to force down his true feelings. He began to pursue Jacky. She was someone who seemed way out of his league. He would never have a reason to actually talk to her. If enough people thought he had a huge crush on a girl, the rumors would stop. Or at least quiet.

Another tear escaped as he moved to the flower on his shoulder, slowly cutting the petals shorter. This was also the reason he became the "safe kid". It is really hard to make it through a whole school day when you bump into an opened locker and have to feel a painful flower bloom from your arm because of the sharp corner cutting you. At some point, it became habit. He would be the first to leave the classroom just so he could take the long way around the school to avoid crowded halls. He memorized where all the athletes had lockers in hopes of avoiding getting hit by random sports equipment; soccer balls, football helmets, pommoms, etc.

Next, he turned his left hand over. This one would be more difficult. He carefully held the scissors level with the bottom of the first petal. He choked on a sob as the scissors slipped down too far, cutting into the stem. He sat the scissors down and quickly grabbed a paper towel to dry the blood as another flower began to sprout. Another struggle he faced was Karate. He couldn't quit. His parents had already put too much money into his classes. He just had to be a little more careful during practice. Jeremy didn't really help with the situation. Every meaningless insult he threw Marco's way cut his skin deep. Even when some of them didn't even hurt his feelings, they still had a physical impact.

After the flower finished blooming, Marco began to cut it again. Slower this time. When Star first showed up, he thought he was done for. There was no way he was going to survive the pain of the
insults at school plus the scars from monster fighting. She had actually come close to finding out a couple times. Usually she would spot a petal or two in the bathroom or the few times she's just barged into his room without knocking. He finally convinced his dad to install a lock on his door with excuses like "What if a murderer sneaks into the house?".

When he was done with the back of his hand. He passed the scissors to his left hand so he could take care of the flowers on his right arm. This would be the hardest to get. He held the scissors a little higher than where he had cut the other flowers. He would need a little more room in case his hand slipped again. The petal stubs would be a little uncomfortable but he could trim them more when he got home. He closed his still teary eyes and let out a sigh of relief when he was done, his shoulders visibly relaxed.

He rinsed the scissors off in the sink and dried them before carefully pulling his shirt and hoodie back on. A milled itch rose around the wounded areas. But it was more tolerable than the burning pain when pressure was applied. He dried his eyes and nose with a paper towel and cleared his throat. He fixed his messy hair in the mirror, then turned to leave the bathroom. He still had one more period to go. He could do this.
Chapter 2

Marco fidgets with the sleeves of his hoodie, his eyes tearing up as the blonde paces across his floor. She stops and turns to him with her arms crossed.

"What is going on with you? It's like I wasn't with you for one day and you suddenly seem so closed off..." She trails off, not really knowing what to say. Running through the possible reasons for her friend being so distant. She had noticed it the moment Marco got home from school yesterday. She had been wrapped up on the couch in a blanket when he walked in. He walked right up the stairs without muttering anything in her direction. Throughout the night, he stayed in his room and didn't even come out to check on her in her sick state. After watching a marathon of some show with a detective duck on tv, she got bored and went upstairs to see if he wanted to play a board game. There was no reply from the other side of the door. Feeling defeated, she had gone to her room and decided to call Janna to see if she knew what was up. She was no help.

Today, he attempted the same thing. But Star was already waiting in his room when he had gotten there. Sick or not, she was getting to the bottom of this. She had blocked the door before he had a chance to leave and made him sit before she moved.

She waits for an answer he isn't even sure he can give. Marco had been trying so hard to make sure no one found out about his secret. What will she think of him if he tells her. Would she think he's weak? Would she laugh at him? Would she tell his parents? Or would she help him? That thought immediately became replaced by the memory of the monster arm and his frown deepened. Though she had been getting better with her magic, there were still a few things she was having issues with and the possibility that the situation could be made worse... He just shakes his head. Star let's out an aggravate sigh.

"You are so frustrating. You know that?" He freezes as he feels the cut form just under his left collar bone. His throat constricts and he diverts his attention to the floor before the tears have the chance to fall. Why did he have to deal with this? He wouldn't wish this disease- whatever it is- against his worst enemy. But why, out of the millions of people on Earth did he have to have this? His hands fidget with the sleeves again. He can feel the fabric rubbing against the sepal on his left hand and winces in pain. It's a small movement. If the princess noticed, she didn't say anything.

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"You didn't-" a crack in his voice cuts him off. "You didn't do anything wrong. I-" he shuts his mouth and shakes his head. For the briefest second, his eye catches on the closet door to his left. He briefly remembers the bloodstained shirt he hid at the back, waiting for a chance to dispose of it properly along with the one he wore to school today. The other scars and flowers along his arms and torso catch his attention again. He had accumulated more while he was at school today and
hadn't had a chance to cut these ones. He sighs, frustrated with himself. "I can't tell you... You just... can't know" He trails off.

Star doesn't know how to respond. Why won't he tell her? Was it that bad? Does he not trust her? Why is he so stubborn about this? A movement catches her eye and she stares down at the sleeve covering his left hand. She can see the end of a small scar there. Did he get in a fight? Was he hurt and just didn't want to worry her? Without giving herself a chance to back out, she surges forward and grabs his hand, jerking up the sleeve. She knows there must be a reason he was hiding whatever it is, but at this point, she is just so tired of her best friend not talking to her. At the sight of his arm, her breath catches and her eyes widen. Marco hisses in pain before jerking his arm back and pulling his sleeve back down, being careful not to agitate the blue flowers any more.

Star's lips tremble a little as she stares at the re-sleeved arm. "Wh- why didn't you tell me about this?" No answer. "How long has this been going on?" Her voice becomes more frantic as he just silently stares at the wall in front of him, unblinking. "Marco," She bends down in front of him and places her hands on his shoulders, just barely missing the flowers there, "why didn't you tell me?!" The tears start before she can stop them as she looks at the broken look on his face.

She had found out. The one person who needed to know the least about this. He's weak and now she knows. He can't seem to breath for all of ten seconds before there is weight on his shoulders and her saddened face breaks his line of sight. She's crying. He hears her questions but can't find his voice to answer. For so long, he had been this person that helped her. He fought monsters. He taught her about Earth. She needed him. But really, he needed her. If it hadn't been for her showing up, there is no telling how far the flowers would have escalated. Every time he was feeling down, she was pulling him up. Making him feel better. She kept him from thinking so many things about himself without even realizing it. She kept the people at school from saying things about him. She kept the flowers at bay. He didn't know how to tell her this. He lets out a shaky breath, giving her a look and shaking his head. He hopes she understands. He doesn't know what to say.

Seeming to understand, she closes her eyes and stands. "Can you at least show me how bad it is?" Her voice is quiet now, wavering. He looks down at the edge of his sleeve and pulls on it, thinking. Should he show her? Should he let her see how walk he really is? He feels like he is seconds away from a panic attack at this point. If that happens... he scrunches eyes together and shakes his head.

"I can't."

"I can't help you if you don't show me." Her voice is a little more firm now. She knows what this is. She has seen her fare share of Mewmans with this disease. If left untreated, it could be deadly. How a human developed this she had no clue. But if it isn't too bad maybe... maybe she can help. She has continued to calm a little more. Just enough to think. She gives a light squeeze to his shoulders and hopes it's reassuring. "Please?" Marco hesitates, But gives a small nod after a moment. She already knows about them. He supposed there is no way this could get worse.
She releases him and backs up, giving him room to remove his hoody and shirt. He slowly pulls the fabric over his head. He freezes when he feels a petal catch, hissing softly at the pain. He takes a breath and continues until the hoody and shirt are off. He sets them both on the floor and gazes down at himself. Somehow, the amount of flowers and scars has at least doubled since yesterday. He hadn't even noticed that many people were talking about him. More people must have joined in today. He feels a pang in his chest at the thought. There must be a lot of people who don't like him.

Star observes the scars and deep blue flowers all over his body. His attention is mostly drawn to the petal stubs where he had cut them to get them out of the way. He needs to stop. If he keeps that up, it could get worse. Next, she thinks about the placement of the flowers. She notices most of them are clustered close to his chest. Where the flowers are located can tell you how much the comment made affected the person. The closer they are to his chest, the more he believes them. Her eyes catch the still bleeding wound on his collar bone. That one must be from her calling him frustrating. She didn't mean it, of course. But he thinks she did.

After a few more minutes under her gaze, he shifts uncomfortably. This is the first time he's shown anyone this. He hasn't looked at her yet. And quite frankly, he is terrified. He can't tell what she is thinking and can't figure out if he really wants to know. His eyes have finally stopped producing tears but now, he can feel the anxiety of her staring at him.

"C-... Can you please stop staring at me like that?" He pauses. "What are you thinking, because this is driving me crazy." He finally looks up to see a concentrated look on her face. She seems to snap out of her train of thought.

"Oh! Sorry. Uhm... I need you to follow me." She gestures for him to stand. He hesitantly complies. She turns toward the door and heads for her own room. "Now I know you probably aren't going to like this idea, but right now Mom and Dad are in a meeting with the magical high commotion right now and he is the only other person I know that has hands on experience with this sort of thing. I'd ask Glossaryck. But he isn't talking to me at the moment." Marco freezes at her doorway. Who is she going to ask for help? And why wouldn't he like this idea? Before he can voice his questions, Star is standing in front of her mirror.

"Mirror, call Tom."
Chapter 3

“Calling Tom.”

Oh, he does not like this. How can Tom, of all people, help him? The last time they spoke did not go well. A shiver runs up his spine as the terrifying memory crosses his mind. The pure rage that he had seen in Tom’s eyes… He shakes his head minutely in hopes of dispelling the memory. It’s not much help. With a soft sigh, he moves further into the room, closing the door. Well, he supposed there is no backing out. Once Star has her mind set, there is little he can do to sway her.

It takes a little longer than usual for Tom to answer. It seems somewhat odd, but Marco tries to ignore it. He can’t. Maybe they caught him at a bad time? Sure, him and Tom don’t really get along, but he does not want to be a bother. If he is busy, he doesn’t want Star to ask him for help. Not that Tom would want to help him anyway.

Marco shuffles a little closer to Star as an image of Tom forms in the mirror. His body is facing the mirror, but he is looking over his shoulder at his bedroom door. It seems he was answering when someone said something at the door. A frown is on his face and he appears to be petting Marshmallow.

“I already told you. I don’t want any!” Tom yells. Marco flinches slightly, but continues to stare at the mirror. He watches as Tom gets out of the beanbag chair he’s sitting in and walks to the door. Even though he is obviously upset, something seems… different. Instead of his stiff posture and clenched fists, he’s slouching, hand slack as he runs it over the small rabbit. He loosely grabs the knob before slowly opening the door. “Just… tell father I’m not hungry…” he lets out a sigh as the other person says something. “Alright. Fine.” He takes a plate of food and closes the door with his foot before making his way back over to the mirror, setting Marshmallow on the floor and the plate of food on his lap. This whole time, he still hasn’t looked into the mirror. “Hey Starship…” he slowly moves his fork around the food and looks up. “Is everything okay? I’m kinda dealing with someth-“

Tom stops in his words as he takes in the two of them. He takes in Star’s sick state. He notices her pale skin and puffy eyes, her slightly runny nose as she sniffs. A shuffle to her right catches his attention and his eyes flick over to the brunette beside her. He has to blink a few times. Is he really seeing this? Dark pink scars litter his torso, bright blue flowers poking from his skin. A few areas catch his eyes where he can see the flowers have been cut. He almost doesn’t believe what he’s looking at. How does a human have that disease? His eyes are red and Tom can tell he’d been crying not too long ago. Now that he looks back at Star, he notices she has been too.

They both stare back. Tom looks terrible. Puffy, red eyes. Dark lines staining his Deeply flushed face. He lets out a sniffle involuntarily. Has he been crying? Neither of them have seen him like this before. Star had never even seen him cry when they were dating. He had been the kind of guy to hide his emotions. Well, except anger, of course. The duo can only guess what could have happened to upset the demon past rage and make the tears stream down his face. Star sneezes and it seems to break everyone out of their surprised trances.

“S-so… I guess this isn’t just a call to say hi?” He tries to joke. It doesn’t seem to help the situation. Marco crosses his arms over his chest, careful to avoid the flowers. He now wishes he hadn’t left his shirt in his room.

“Uhm. If this is a bad time-“
“Oh! No, n-not at all!” The pink haired boy scoots forward a little in his seat. A distraction. That’s what he needs. This seems like the perfect distraction. “Just a little family drama. It’s nothing major. I-If you need my help…” he trails off. Marco looks over to Star now. If she really thinks he can help, why not? She lets out another sneeze.

“Well…” She hesitates, taking a long breath before letting out a sigh. Now she crosses her arms over her chest, looking away slightly. “It’s Marco.” She pauses, expects Tom to get upset at the prospect. When he doesn’t, she continues. “I Uh. I think he has Heart Wounds? I’m, not sure how he got it.” She uncrosses her arms and looks back up at him. “I know this is a lot to ask, what with you two not getting along, and you seem to have something of your own going on.” Her brows furrow in worry. “But, I honestly don’t know who else I can go to.” Her voice cracks at the end.

Tom is silent for a long moment. He can’t remember the last time he had seen her this upset. This scared. His mind travels back to the night they broke up. Even with fire around them and him yelling at the top of his lungs she didn’t look this scared. He notices now, that the heavy wait that usually fell on him when he thought about that night isn’t there. He furrows his brow at that. He had tried for so long to get rid of that weight. And now it’s gone.

His gaze trails back over to Marco and he observes all the scars. Some faded scars catch his eyes and he realizes they don’t have flowery remains sticking out. The scars seem as if they could be years old. He remembers stories people have told. How they were miraculously cured. The flowers just… fell away. It always happened when they met someone special. Someone who made them feel like so much more than what they did before. It could have been anyone. A family member, a best friend… their now boyfriend or girlfriend. His features droop a bit more and he tries to ignore the forming pit in his stomach. If he was even a little hungry before, he most definitely isn’t now. With a soft sigh, he closes his eyes and sets his plate aside.

“Alright. I’ll do it.” He stands and grabs his dimensional scissors, ending the call. The two friends look to each other, not really sure what to make of the interaction they just had.

“I’m not complaining. But, did he seem… off? To you?” Marco asks as he looks around the room idly. When he spots one of her oversized hoodies hanging on the wall he points to it in question. He still feels uncomfortable not wearing a shirt but at this point, he’s worried his parents might catch him if he heads back to his room. Star nods, walking over to sit on her bed and fiddle with her wand.

“Kind of? He almost seemed like he was crying? I don’t know…” She definitely noticed something was up. But if Tom says it’s nothing than it’s nothing… right? She has a bad feeling. Before she can dwell too much, a rift opens and said demon steps into her room. Now he looks a little more composed. His face is cleared of any tear stains and is no longer red. Where he had still been in his pajamas, he’s now dressed in his usual ripped T-shirt and jeans. And on his back is a large backpack with a bubble in it. Laying comfortably in the bubble, is Marshmallow.

“Hey…” he waves at the two of them. Marco, now swallowed in a pastel blue hoodie, walks over to the two. “So, I suppose the first thing I need to know,” Tom turns to him, “is how long has this been going on?”

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