

entelechies

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by [ioucos](#)

Summary

The year is 1699. Mircalla is the freshly-titled Countess of Karnstein. Her father is gone. She's... free. Why, then, does it seem like something is missing from her life?

(OR: an AU in which carm never became a vampire but laura lives in 1698.)

Notes

See the end of the work for [notes](#)

The first thing Mircalla felt as her father died on the bed before her was relief.

The second was horror.

Just in time—for her father had been motioning to secure her a husband—he had fallen ill from some strange ailment, and the negotiations had to be postponed, then halted entirely as he was no longer of sound mind. She felt so wicked for feeling so much joy at the pain of another.

She was the Countess of Karnstein.

But now what?

The duties of a countess were—strenuous, at best. Managing the corvée, serving as broker of disputes, suddenly having a stake in a war—not to mention appearing before the Duke, inexorably the least enjoyable of them all. She had been so blind to the world but a year ago, insulated by wealth and imminent station not yet arrived. She didn't like it. She didn't want it.

How was she to settle *agricultural conflicts* between the sneering, insinuating lords? She'd never even *held* a plow!

All she had going for her were voracious candlelit readings of purloined manuscripts of treatises by Spinoza, Descartes, the ancients, the poets, and her old dreams that maybe... maybe she could...

Mircalla sighed.

She was alone.

So lonely.

She felt the aching pangs now just as strong as the preceding year. The empty, gaping yearning, for something she could not know...

One day, she was making tour of her territory, ensconced in the protective frame of a covered coach, listening to the clop of the horses, gazing through the slits of the window. She would've rather been in bed, away from everyone, perhaps with something to read and sigh over, but she owed it to her people to at least witness their labors, their condition.

If she were to take so much from them for herself to live and for the Duke and the princes and His Imperial Majesty, she could at least do *that*.

Yet every pair of eyes that nervously averted hers as she passed, no matter how understandable, was another pang. So, so many...

Near the end of her tour, in the little village of Hollis, Mircalla saw something truly wonderful for the first time.

She was very near Castle Karnstein and, despite the best of her abstract devotion, she was terribly bored. What she saw here would be no different that what she saw the village prior, or the one before that, or the one before that. The veil between plenty and destitution had a way of flattening things. She looked outside nonetheless. She'd always had a peculiar fear of enclosed spaces, so it was best not to focus on them.

Outside, she saw an angel.

She had long, honey-gold hair that shone so beautifully in the sunlight... Lovely, tanned skin that knew the work of the fields, the work Mircalla could, would never do. A glowing smile, hands animatedly moving as she spoke with a tall man Mircalla supposed was her father, ignorant or perhaps unworried (Mircalla desperately hoped) at her passage. She couldn't at her angle glimpse her eyes, but she instinctively knew they would be the most stunning jewels she had ever witnessed.

She was consumed. Gushing flame radiated from her stomach out through all her flesh, pervading her, irradiating her with wonder. What was it about this girl? She hardly knew — she certainly had seen her share of pretty girls along the way. But *this* girl — so lovely and filled with Life — suffused her in a way she had always thought Communion was *supposed* to feel like.

Perhaps it was fate.

It was too late to stop the coach when she returned to her reason, flushed, frazzled. Her molten heart was astir, and within it, dusty dreams wriggled.

Hollis... she memorized, by heart, by soul. *Hollis*. It was all she had to hold on to.

Hollis...

The year, the turn of the century, had passed in a flurry of duties. She forwarded a perfunctory celebratory message to the higher lords of the realm, labored with decisions and readings and memory, and sat in her castle, her hereditary seat, as lonely as ever.

But something was somehow different. Where once her heart ached with longing, now her soul seethed with restlessness. She had to do something — she didn't know *what*, but *something*.

She had been so patient all these nearly-twenty years, she could wait a little longer...

But what if she has a husband? Perhaps that man, after all, was not her father.

The thought came to Mircalla all of a sudden one day. It was as though she were plunged into ice. Her world unraveling, unspooling from its skein. But then... why would that matter? Hadn't the object of her desire always been to acquire a friend, a real, true friend? What of her having a husband? Surely, it shouldn't matter...

Yet it didn't sit well with Mircalla. Not at all. *It would be better*, she reasoned. *If she did not have a husband. I lack one, and I am free...*

Though, she supposed if it made the girl happy... but then, the image of coarse lips and stubbly chin nearing those sublime, *angelic* lips and Mircalla wanted to retch, wanted to *dissolve*.

What then?

Perhaps I could make her happy, she thought, but then turned her analytical mind on the notion. In a moment, she gasped.

Revelation...

But then despair. *How could I make such a glowing, resplendent girl as her happier than she already is? What am I but ungrateful parasite on this land?*

Tears ran unbidden down her pale cheeks, and she started, surprised.

“W-what...”

A sob.

When have I ever made anyone happier than they already were?

...

In the wake of her twin revelations, Mircalla was left with shaken foundations. She was clearly a creature none of the philosophers nor poets had spoken of, or if they had, certainly not with affection. There was a Poetess countless polemics every which way had debated about, which gestured obscurely at her condition — but she could find no proper manuscript of her scattered fragments, neither in her family's library nor at any of those she inquired at. Was she fated to be a liminal being? The seducer in her vice? One who feasted on girls?

What could Mircalla *be*, now that she *knew*?

She withdrew from everything but her duties, to the adjudication of the regular disputes and the movements of labor. The work of the philosophers and the poets was either fundamentally incomplete or she was vicious. Neither option absorbed her. Perhaps she should write her own theories. Music and waltzing and drink, which she once had taken to with such a thrill, seemed

empty. She functioned mechanistically, a wound clock of sharp bones and soft skin ticking.

In the end, the girl came to her.

Some nonsense, evidently—a protracted land dispute that the pitiful lord of Hollis could not resolve, hence he brought the disputants to her court to await her decision. It was hardly any different from any other claim she'd had to settle. She sighed, tired. The name of the village didn't register for a few moments.

But then Mircalla looked up.

It was the girl. The girl from Hollis.

Mircalla's breath caught. Her eyes shot back to the floor. Flames licked at her skin. The greeting words of Hollis' lord introduced the parties.

Theodore, the blacksmith's son, and his father. Altogether-disreputable men. The way they leered at Laura—and Mircalla—had her choking down her disgust for a moment or ten, just for the sake of propriety.

And Laura, of Hollis—the baker's daughter. Her father, a tall man yet one with bad legs, owing to an accident years in the past, who had sent his trusted and only child to repel the blacksmith's rapacity. So the man *was* her father. Laura's father.

Laura.

Laura...

Mircalla's heart raced a stuttering beat.

Laura...

At her awaiting, imperious look, the two parties made their claims.

Both were largely as expected.

The blacksmith was a slimy, rambling old man who babbled such tangents with historical inaccuracies and improbabilities so grievous Mircalla had to stifle an astonished giggle on several occasions.

And Laura...

Laura was *everything*. The passion, the righteous force of her arguments. The *blaze* in her words. Mircalla shuddered as their heat washed over her. It had hardly taken much to conclude the blacksmith and his son were looking to acquire some new parcels of land and hegemony to the ear of the lord of Hollis, but even so, Laura would have convinced her.

The adjudication quickly drew to its inevitable close.

A plume of ice-cold fear plunged its way into Mircalla's blood. She had already lost Laura through hesitation once...

She closed her eyes. Sucked in a deep breath. Stood.

"I should like to hear the lady's case alone," she nodded toward Laura. Her eyes flitted to the blacksmiths "You two have rambled a great deal and I should like to hear Miss Laura's edgewise."

The room stilled.

“*Alone*,” she emphasized.

A chatter filled the room as servants, the lord of Hollis, and the blacksmiths filed into the antechamber.

A quiet.

Mircalla gestured to a nearby seat, hands shaking imperceptibly. Laura took it, and Mircalla finally looked up.

Their eyes met.

As if it had never been quelled, the flickering, curling flame in her stomach at once burned to life. Laura’s eyes were a beautiful, rich brown, the sparkling kind with pretty golden flecks in it under the light. Just as stunning as she had intuited. Mircalla trembled. They seemed to dilate, looking upon her, alone — but perhaps it was a trick of the fire.

“I knew it,” she murmured.

Laura went rigid, just for a moment.

“Uh... knew... what?” she nervously laughed. “My Lady,” she added, an afterthought.

To Mircalla, it was charming. She smiled. Then realized what she said.

She burned deep crimson.

“O-oh, I—i... my *sincerest* apologies. I—I just...”

Laura tilted her head adorably, awaiting a response. Mircalla’s heart sung.

“I... eight months ago, I was on a tour... around Karnstein, a-and I happened to—to*see* you. And there was just... I just...”

She took a shaking breath. Hadn’t she read that she was supposed to be a seducer? A devourer? And here she was...

“There was... something about you...” she finished inelegantly, the burn still on her cheeks.

But Laura grinned, *mischievous*.

“Something *about* me?”

“I—y-yes...?” she trailed off.

“What was it?” Laura breathed.

“I... um, well... your—your eyes,” she said, pointing to her own. “I never saw your eyes. And they are so beautiful. Molten pools of rusty gold, filled with such life...” She flushed deeper.

Laura giggled.

“You sound like a lovelorn poet, my Lady,” she said.

Mircalla stilled.

“I... I—well... w-what if,” she stuttered, gathering her courage from the deepest, darkest reserves of her heart. “What if I was?”

Laura smiled. Her eyes were so deep, deep deep... Mircalla found herself sinking into them, losing herself...

Laura reached her hand across the table to slowly tangle her tanned fingers with Mircalla's paper-white ones. It felt right.

“What if I was, too?” Laura dared.

A burning, lovely, unexpected jolt of joy surged through Mircalla. Was this...

“R-really?”

Laura looked at her, then, angelic, poetic eyes sweeping her face. Mircalla burned deeper still. And then an arm wrapped around her shoulder. Soft lips slowly met hers.

It was ecstasy.

Warmth flooded her, oceanic in its swirling vastness, sparkling every inch of Mircalla's skin alight. She leaned into the kiss, forgetting where she was, *who* she was... just Laura, Laura, *Laura*...

Just like fate. Inevitable.

They separated with a shared sigh, Mircalla resting her forehead on Laura's. Her knees were weak, overcome. If she had still been standing, she would have collapsed with the pleasant fervor.

“Oh...” Mircalla whispered.

“*Mircalla*,” Laura smiled.

Unused to hearing the name, she looked curiously at Laura. The girl suddenly stilled.

“I—I... I—apologize, if you didn't... want that—and for saying your name, that was disrespectful. It's just that... well, I've always loved girls, a-and—Danny ran off with Kirsch, a—and, when I saw you here for the first time you were the most beautiful person I had ever met—s-so, I *had* to, m-my Lady. If not...” she trailed off at the sound of Mircalla giggling against her lips, soft and gleeful.

With every beating second, the dreams in her heart germinated, worming their way out at last.

“Far be it from me, *Lady* Laura, to obstruct your duty. You are a most brave knight.”

She slowly wrapped an arm around Laura, pulling her close. “And please, drop the address. You—I...” she suddenly went shy again. “I've been... waiting for you, my *entire* life, it feels...” she murmured.

Laura went pink.

“*Oh*,” she breathed.

Their lips met again, so sweet. The languid heat of the movement drew a noise from them both, passing between them. It sank into their bones, their cores.

Slowly, Laura slipped into Mircalla's lap, made simple by the flexible ease of peasant clothes.

They came together with a moan and the promise of the press of flesh on flesh. Mircalla's free hand cupped Laura's cheek. They separated, gradually.

They shared a smile.

Then there was a knock from the antechamber's door.

They froze, still intertwined.

"My Lady!" a servant's voice called. "The guests are getting restless."

"O-of course," Mircalla quickly called, the sound clothed in a feeble impression of her official voice. "We will be out in a moment."

Mircalla and Laura shared a tense glance.

It was going to end.

It would end.

She would be alone again...

"Laura," she whispered, voice wavering.

The other girl watched her, carefully.

"W-would it... be, um... agreeable to you, if I found means to... ensure our regular meeting?"

Laura's beam was more dazzling than all the stars overhead, no matter how bright and distant.

With swift hands recovering from so much trembling, Mircalla pulled open a drawer in the table, extracting an inkwell, a quill, and a sheaf of parchment. She quickly penned a letter in flowing black script, signing with a flourish. She lifted it up to Laura.

"How does this look? It mentions you specifically. It should be able to get you access to a coach here whenever you need."

Laura squinted at the words for a bit.

"I can't read," she finally said.

Flushing, Mircalla brought the letter down and appended a scribbled line to the last paragraph.

"Then I shall *teach* you."

Laura pressed a smiling kiss to her hair. "So brilliant..."

"For *you*, my sweet knight. My... apple tart?" she blushed. Then, she quickly blew puffs of warm air onto the ink, to dry it, and, when she was satisfied it was, folded the letter up, grabbed a seal from the drawer, a candle from the table, and sealed the letter. She handed it to Laura.

"Please, keep this to yourself. I'm utterly certain you don't need to be told it—" Laura smiled, "—but those townfolk of yours hardly seem the... reputable sort. O-oh, and..." Fumbling, she removed the ring on her right hand. The family ring, with the seal of the Counts and Countesses von Karnstein. She pressed it into Laura's hand, atop the letter. "Keep this, please. N-not, um... for any especial reason, but... I want you to have something of me?"

Laura kissed her again.

Then, she carefully hid both, and they stood, walking to the door, hand in hand.

...

Five years later...

They lay in Mircalla's bed together, bare—not *nearly* for the first time, in the pleasant post-coital aching and euphoria only love joining with love and body meeting with body can bring.

Mircalla panted, underneath Laura. The girl laid a tender kiss on her forehead, and then her lips, before sliding off her, draping an arm around. She drew her other fingers, the ones wet with Mircalla's sweet nectar, up to her lover's mouth.

"Taste yourself," Laura husked.

A pulse of pooling warm passion surged from Mircalla's already-spent core out through her veins, so rich and potent it elicited a long, quiet moan. Without a word, she took both fingers between her lips, suckling submissively. Laura giggled, removing them from her mouth with a pop, clean. Mircalla groaned.

"You have a sort of sorcery, strudel. You leave me in constant marvel."

"I love you too," Laura teased.

"Of course—I love you. Inextricably, inexorably. Like..."

"Fate?"

"Fate," Mircalla agreed.

They lay there together, wrapped up in each other's arms. Existing only in each other. Eventually, Mircalla grabbed a board with a sheet of parchment attached from atop the nightstand. A cluttered mass of theories and poems. She slowly wrote out another of the latter, smiling.

"You know..." Laura began. "The other week Danny and my father tried to figure out where I kept going to and from regularly."

Mircalla stilled. "Oh?"

Laura gave her a soothing caress. "I told them I was meeting my brooding lover, Carmilla, across the moors..."

Mircalla relaxed, chuckling. "An anagram."

Laura winked. "Who would expect it?" Mircalla rolled her eyes.

They dissolved into another warm silence, until Mircalla put her writing away, curling up against Laura.

"The philosophers all insist the world is governed by the thrum of the pulse of reason," she murmured. "They are fools. Your kisses are *more* than divine..."

Laura leaned into her, kissing the crook of her neck. "Your words are almost as breathtaking as you..."

Mircalla breathed a happy breath.

“I love you,” she crooned.

“I love you too,” Laura replied.

Mircalla was no longer alone.

End Notes

i was just contemplating leibniz's principle of sufficient reason one morning and since i just absolutely Adore carmilla karnstein and everything about her i applied it to her character and it became Readily Apparent that, especially in light of alt carm, carm Really Is just a super fucking lonely girl who's always needed somebody to love her for who she is. which is hardly a surprise but it just struck me so Powerfully that i got the inspiration for this. a take on what would happen if she didnt have the time to close off from the world and develop all the coping mechanisms she does over three centuries. this sweet lovely girl deserves the World

also: on the general style. it's quite deliberately verbose to replicate the times, but i also aimed to capture as much vivacity as i could with it. i hope it succeeded! and i hope you enjoyed~

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