Unrequited

by savaged

Summary

Leo thought he could choose the love of his life.

Notes

The following work is a prompt fill for this (the anon’s a cutie. there are more unfulfilled prompts in here) about Leo being sold to an arranged marriage with a 'stranger', combined with a 30 day OTP challenge from tumblr that I was truly looking forwards writing. Because, welp, Crismessi's one of my favorite OTPs.

Flip by Glass Animals is a song that goes well with this chapter.

In other paragraphs, 'Fernweh' is the ache for distant places; the craving for travel. 'Rasasvada' is the taste of bliss in the absence of all thoughts.

Enjoy c:
Barcelona's not a place you easily define with words.

Barcelona is, in itself.

Barcelona's a mood; a lively dream, a fantasy that has become true on its own. A magic land full of stories, coffee shops, hidden doors, antique chapels and enchanted second-hand book stores you get lost in. Or at least that's what Leo tells himself while strolling around the bay, with his fists shoved inside his pockets and a mourn that's written all over his pale face.

The sun sinks softly into its citadel crib, coloring the sky of all the sweet colors in his morning Froot Loops and strangely shaped clouds –cut by the historical edifications which Lionel identifies in short time. Short time that became short in his already ten years present at the city, and he can't help but wince at the blinding light –he has always despised the way the sun chooses to lay its rays on him, like he's in some kind of NatGeo photo shoot at the mercy of hidden cameras.

The comely taste of a thread of drifting thoughts on his tongue vanishes when his stare crashes against the Sports' store open doors; the image of everyone's so acclaimed idol promoting new sneakers. He squints, disgusted at all the photoshop applied on himself as he looks away.

He was sold.

The crowd of people jogging and walking early evening takes a look at the passerby, and the ruckus Lionel is used to starts. They point at him, start to yell, then come in hoards. Like a script they follow every time they meet him –an elder man approaches handing Leo a white paper with a pen. He's all wrinkled and wears an Atlético Madrid jersey matching red knee socks; and tugs a reluctant kid from his hand who seems to protest and wants to face away from Leo.

"I know who you are," he starts. "You're not fooling anyone with that hoodie, y'know?" Leo peers over his clenched knuckles; the commoner just laughs. "Are you crying? You have nothing to be sad of;" he shakes his head and tilts his chin towards the paper Lionel receives, "you're the Messi. What about an autograph?"

He was threatened. By his friends, his family. His manager, to be specific. And now this guy.

It must be karma which he's not sure as to what for, that which brought him to get sold for an arranged marriage. It sickens him to the very core of his skull. It's the 21th century, for fuck's sake – he writes his name on the white paper and hands it back, smirking and nodding and excusing himself from the fans before he gets to break down.

He doesn't want to marry someone. He does not want someone to marry him.

And that's fine. Because it's just an opinion, and Lionel brings his hands to his eyes and rubs them, trying to confuse tears of tiredness with those he's starting to spill once again.
"You are abusing me."

His manager winces and tilts his head to look at him over the newspaper that has his face on it, a happy expression while he kisses the crest of the blaugrana shirt.

"There's no way I'm doing it, I can't do it."

"Have you considered how incredible it can be for you, Leo? I mean, don't even get me started on the incredible benefits of this arrangement."

"Can you tell me who is it, at least?"

"Who?"

"The person I'm supposed to marry next week?" Lionel exhales and looks down at his sneakers, the untied shoelaces remain that way and he plays with his thumbs. "I know it should be top secret because of the press but," Leo stops and points at himself. "It's me. I want to know what's going on with my life. What I'll make of it."

The manager shakes his head smiling and drops the newspaper on his desk. "We never get that chance, Leo, son. Besides, your knight in shining armor should be arriving very soon. There's a reason I traveled all the way here; I couldn't miss this."

"Really?"

"Yeah, he must be at the lobby right now, chatting with the receptionist. Why don't you go down and say hi? I'm sure he'll be glad to finally meet you in person." The manager giggles. "Just joking."

"I'm not sure if." Sure and consistent knocks irrupt in the room from the closed door, they stop and Leo looks back with his eyes wanting to jump out of his sockets. He lowers his voice and it sounds like a whisper when he speaks to the manager; "is that him?"

The manager simply nods with a smirk and gestures with his ring filled hands towards the boy. "Go get it."

Lionel feels like he just swallowed a whole bag of nails before dragging his feet through the floor, reaching the sculptured golden doorknob. He pulls. And standing before him, is the last person he wants to see on the world. Not because he'll marry him, but because he knows him, and he knows him terribly well.

"You" Leo brings his hands to his face and curses under his breath.

"Me" Cristiano Ronaldo smiles.
Chapter End Notes

Toes is a good representation of this fic's Cristiano in a song c:
Lionel can pretend the bags under his eyes are there because he's spent the whole night playing FIFA 15. Or he can be honest, instead, and explain everyone he's been sold to Cristiano Ronaldo and the invitations to their wedding are yet to arrive.

He chooses the first option, because it's more like him, and Neymar gives him a friendly bump.

"I bet you scored more times as me than playing as yourself."

"I did." Leo smiles sympathetically knowing that's not true and emphasizing the word did like the tone he uses will drastically affect the brazilian's ego. He's pushing a ball around the pitch as Andrés watches them carefully, arms folded and discussing tactics with Xavi for their next match every now and then.

"Will you take me to the bay tomorrow?" The request falls on Leo's shoulders heavily when Neymar passes him the ball, panting and writhing around and soaked in sweat. He shrugs, twists his thick lips. The shadow of an unshaven beard starts to appear on his upper lip, and Leo still doesn't touch the ball. He's never been the kind of bear-loving guy, he's more the hairless chest type, scarce hair, shaved –why is he thinking about that in the middle of practice? "It's been a lot since we last hanged out. The weather's nice."

"It is nice, indeed" Rafinha hangs himself from Neymar's neck and they swing together until both lose balance, and fall onto the floor laughing. Attracted to the ruckus, the third of the brazilian trio approaches kicking a ball upwards and holding it between his hip and his arm.

"What's going on? Are you guys revolting?"

"Lucho's dead" Rafinha darts his eyes to Dani and dedicates him a brilliant smile that eats his whole face. He has Neymar on lock down, and messes his already untidy, damp hair against the grass of the pitch until Neymar's swearing in portuguese. "Long live Rafinha!" he yells in a distorted, low-key voice that would make a disaster if being used by an actual king. Dani pushes him off before Neymar starts crying or throws a bad punch at the youngest of them.

"I'd like to hang out with you guys if you're going to the bay," Rafinha looks around and goes back to Leo, whispering; "I kinda got sick of walking the dog with Marc, y'know."

It paints a chuckle from Dani's lips and Neymar folds his arms stubbornly. "Nina's the sweetest dog, you swine. You're jealous because you're just as ugly as her but we like her more."

"Shut up!"

Dani gets between them again and Neymar sticks his tongue out to Rafa stopped by the hand of the elder man. "Leo's going with me, anyway, he doesn't like no dog-looking swines!"
"Actually, I..." Lionel speech halts before he continues; his hand is cupping the back of his neck and there are some streaks of outgrown hair that get in his eyes, but non of them point that out. They met him as a thin athlete, a fighter for the goal posts, a kid that never went out to get a tan. A cool, laid back kid. And right now he looks paler than what they can remember. "I can't go out tomorrow. I have this... Dinner thing? So..."

"Oh. I guess that means..." Rafinha looks at Neymar. "You and I, Ney? Like the old times, good friends?"

"I never was your friend."

"And you're old."

Dani sighs and retires from between them with both his hands up, but for his surprise, they hug like great mates. Before them, a sleep-deprived Leo starts to slightly tremble. And smiles. Because he's prettier when he smiles. The camera man and his manager say so.
Just like fallen from the sky, pale, rejecting the gloom that the place gives in such lack of light. Cristiano gazes at him like he'll break if he approaches too much, like a shooting star on fire that landed on the back of his yard and is just about to explode.

The candles, with their tiny trembling flames surround them as if they're taking part in some kind of ritual, some kind of carnival of lust commanded by Lionel. *His* Lionel, for all that matters. Cristiano's wearing his best cologne tonight.

The background music is quite empty. It sounds like one of those late-night-at-the-bar songs performed by young looking artists, and Cristiano does nothing but swim through it, running his fingers through his forehead and gelled slick hair. Some of his golden rings shine, some don't. He sees Lionel biting his bottom lip. He sees Lionel taking out his phone, typing something. He sees Lionel shake away a strand of hair that gets on his face. He sees Lionel everywhere. There's it. He reaches out for his hand.

"What are you doing?"

Cristiano tilts his chin and smirks. "I'm trying to hold your hand, love."

A gasp is heard through the tables and some couples turn back to glance at Lionel.

"Don't dare fucking call me that" the football player darts his eyes away, "ever."

"I'm trying to have a romantic dinner with you."

"I don't care what you're trying to do, just *don't touch me*."

Cristiano twists his lips and retreats, resting his hands on his lap as the basket of bread remains untouched. The waitress finally brings the bottle of wine he asked for, with the fancy tall glasses that reflect their faces and the candle lights on the crystal.

They have a golden ring around the base, a delicate detail that costed Cristiano more than the whole dinner. Lionel doesn't wait for the girl to pour the wine, he simply grabs the bottle before anyone touches it, uncorks it with his own hands (it was half uncorked, either way he would have lost his nails) and fills his glass until it spills. There's red wine stains on the white table cloth when they react, and Lionel's empty glass slammed down as he glares at the young waitress and orders in a grunt; "fill it up."
haze

Chapter Notes

this song could go well with the current events/Lionel's thoughts

haze • [in sing. ] figurative a state of mental obscurity or confusion: through an alcoholic haze.

The moon is different, fuller and round and holding its reflection stubbornly on the calm water. The cars go by never minding the couple (they should. Cristiano's dragging a drunk man through the street who harshly expresses his lack of will to go on,) as the kid tugs from the white sleeves of Cristiano's suit and moans for him to quit his grip.

"But we hate each other," Lionel yells with a locked tongue and a lazy gesture of hands, "you and me. We don't know each other. Leave me to die here" a cab slows down to a side of them and the driver looks interested in them, "you won't regret killing me before I get to kill you in your sleep."

Cristiano clicks his tongue and looks down on his obnoxious fiancé, "you wouldn't." He surrounds the waist of the younger player and straightens him, tilting Lionel's chin and tidying his hair so the cab keeps driving. Do you mind? he wants to shout at the man of thick grey mustache; however he finds a bench a couple of meters away in front of the pier, and sits his date down, making sure he doesn't slip off. Lionel falls to one of his sides, instead. Cristiano sighs shaking his head and his diamond earrings shimmer with the light of the moon. It must be so exhausting to be this rich and handsome at the same time, Lionel giggles to himself.

"What kind of guy buys another guy, anyway?" he asks, considering the few stars available tonight. "It's so fucked up."

"It's the perfect ad-campaign."

"I'd rather marry a super model or someone else than you precisely."

"Thanks."

Leo brings his hands to his face and rubs his eyes, stretching. The bench creaks when Cristiano sits down and puts his arm on the back of the bench, guy-yawning-at-the-cinema kind of move.

"You're awful and my life is a mess."

"Thanks."

Leo uncovers his eyes and squints; they're red and look wet when they meet Cristiano's; "I still don't get how you deal with this all."

"I'm not dealing with it, I... I actually enjoy being with you."
Lionel folds his arms and looks away, giving Cristiano his back. The taller footballer holds his breath when he hears Leo whisper 'idiot' between gritted teeth.
When Lionel wakes up, the windows' frames are rattling with the wind of a grey day. He sits on the edge of the bed unsure and out of place, the post-sleep haze that hits him—and feels cold, as cold as he can feel while barely dressed and with the covers kicked to the end of the mattress.

His room feels odd. There's a slightly sweet scent; not perfume, but like cinnamon and chocolate together and he stands up to linger on it when he finds a basket of flowers, chocolate candy boxed in a heart-shaped apple red package, a little book of poems and a gift pack of freaking CR7 underwear that are way too soft to the touch; made of cotton. He scolds the basket and drops a white chocolate candy-sprinkled lollipop onto the rest of the goods and exhales, getting the first jeans he sees from his closet and puts them hastily on. There's a ruckus coming from his kitchen.

He lives in a two story house. It was originally sold to him thanks to his mom who knew the architect, and Leo found a cozy home in there more than an empty building needing the modern proper furniture. He filled it with his own taste and style, wooden chairs and tables and abstract art he considered colorful (he didn't know shit about art, but they were pretty). Cristiano would have laughed at it. Lionel shakes his head, remembering the past night's events.

A sweeter scent than that of the room becomes a strong, comely smell of fresh pancakes and sweet honey and cinnamon buns, and when he glides downstairs with the assurance that some obnoxious guy's making him breakfast all he sees is blinding black smoke.

His kitchen looks on fire. His hair is a disaster.

James Rodriguez waves at him.
"What are you doing in my house?"

"Ronaldo couldn't come."

"Who let you in? Did you break in or what?" Leo checks nervously on his front door and the windows of his living room, then comes back. James keeps scrambling eggs and making sweet treats. A bottle of honey he did not buy is there too, and James pours some on top of a pile of already done golden colored pancakes.

He's wearing a white apron with the inscription 'kiss the cook' on it and a silly smile contrasting Lionel's heavy frown when he turns around to face him, handing him the plate of breakfast.

"Ronaldo gave me the keys."

"What--" Leo doesn't refuse the good smelling meal, though. "Why?"

"Ronaldo said he wanted to-"

Lionel licks honey off his thumb, "look, can you just not talk about him." He tidies his hair stepping back towards the kitchen's table and sighs when he sees the look in James' face. "Just finish making that stupid breakfast and go. I'm changing the lock."

"But I'm hungry..."

The argentine player looks up in disbelief. He mutters a "fuck..." and forks the pancake, shaking his head and rolling his eyes blankly. "Fine. We'll eat. Then you'll leave."

"Deal" James giggles and brings his own plate to the table, setting a basket full of just-baked bread with butter, honey, strawberry jam and another plate with cinnamon buns, under melted white chocolate to top them. Leo's mouth waters.

"Did you buy those?"

"I made them."

"Wow."

James giggles some more when Lionel nods in approval and takes one, holding it between his teeth and grabbing the honey bottle.

"Are you ready for the big day?"

"Mph?" Lionel almost spits the bun out realizing the subject. He swallows quickly and chokes.

"It's gonna be sunny on Monday, perfect for you guys. It's gonna be on the beach right?"

"Y'know 'bout that?" Lionel asks with teary reddened eyes and fills himself a glass of water.

"Of course! The whole squad is here in Barcelona. Carlo didn't come though, he's not the wedding type of guy. And I guess he's still processing the whole event. A Barça player with a Real Madrid
one..." James shakes his head smiling, and his stack of pancakes has drastically cut down. Lionel scoffs. Carlo's still processing the event. Like Lionel himself has processed the fact at all.

"You guys are so cute together! You're like, the perfect couple," Leo grimaces at that. James just keeps talking like he has no end. "You're rich, you're physically stunning, you're gifted. It was already time that you guys married each other and lived together in a lonely-island." James' pink cheeks glow under the cloudy morning's white light. "So is it going to be formal or informal?"

At this point Leo doesn't touch his breakfast anymore. He feels himself drift and doesn't catch the significance of James' words.

"I totally see you wearing a baby blue bow tie. I actually like your suits, the ones you wear at the Ballon d'Or? Cristiano talks about them all the time a week before the event, it's like the guy goes crazy about them and bets what you're gonna wear next. There was this time when...

Leo tries to grab the kitchen's counter with both hands, since his legs fail to answer. Soon enough, his mind shuts and reality goes dark.
"Say, Leo's the kind of guy that keeps to himself, right?" Rafinha sweeps tomato sauce with a fork and a ravioli and draws a mustache on his plate. "It looks like he's up to something."

"Like what?" Dani asks.

"I don't know... Is he planning to leave Barça?"

"No deal" Neymar scolds him. "What are you dumb people talking about?"

"Rafa has a point. Lionel looks ill." Dani twists his lips. "Like he's having trouble at home."

"He leaves by his own. I've checked on that, believe me" Neymar uses his napkin and relaxes his back on the chair. In front of him there's an empty plate and a frown paints his face. "Unless that has changed, then I don't know."

"You should ask him" Rafa points at him with his fork. "I've got good intuition. Something's wrong with Leo, and besides," Rafa leans in and speaks in barely more than a whisper; "I've seen Real Madrid players in the area. That's always bad omen."

Dani chuckles to himself, "he's right, Ney. Go call him."

Neymar folds his arms, sighs and leaves the table carrying his cellphone inside his pants.

"Hello?"

"Oi? Leo?"

"No, Cristiano. You're Neymar, right?"

Neymar stares at the screen of his cellphone to check on the contact he called. He nods to himself and speaks, startled. "Yes, I was calling Lionel. What are you doing with his cellphone?"

"Oh, we're at the hospital. I was making arrangements for the salon and all, good luck James was there at the time."

"Hospital? What? Can you please put Lionel on the phone?"

"Lionel blacked out and he's currently speaking."

"Shit."

"Yeah."

"Is he awake? Gimme the hospital address, I'm going."

Neymar can hear Cristiano Ronaldo's eyes rolling blankly through the phone line, he grits his teeth.

"He already has companion, Neymar."

"And what do I care? He needs better companion than you, you aren't his friends."
"Guess you're right." Neymar smiles when Cristiano says it, but before he can speak, the portuguese cuts him defyingly; "I'm his fiancé."
His dreams are chaotic and fueled by darkness.

He dreams with an old broken city, the tall skyscrapers invaded by black crows and the tide rising over their heads like the wind has become liquid.

He dreams he's at the top of a building, his mother holding his hand. He dreams with a hurricane blowing them both away until he's standing at a stadium with a bunch of other kids his age and older, all looking intimidating and taller than he is. But they smile. They talk. They look at him like he's one of them, no weird stares.

And at the other side of the pitch, the coach. The coach with his tough arm surrounding a pale looking kid ten times smaller than all of them are. He has black locks covering his face, small black eyes, bruised skinny legs. He looks sad. To everyone. To the coach. To himself.

Lionel opens his eyes and sees Cristiano waking up, too. The portuguese is leaning against a chair's back and rubbing his eye, expression scented by somnolence as he smirks.

"Back to life, lion?"

Lionel looks at his hands –there's a tube feeding his veins serum– and licks his dry lips. He takes everything in very quickly, but finds himself too tired to rage.

"Do you need anything? Painkillers?"

"I'm fine."

Leo swallows and ruffles his hair, looks through a wide window avoiding Cristiano's worried stare.

"What happened to me?"

There's doubt in Cris' voice, fear. No, not fear. Concern.

"You blacked out, doc said you had a panic attack and started hyperventilating. James talked to me afterwards so... Yeah." Cristiano shrugs and lifts a hand to cup the back of his neck. He pulls down his scarlet v-neck shirt when he does so, and Leo sees the glimpse of a golden necklace over his tanned skin. "I was just taking a nap."

"Good."

Cristiano stands up.

"Look, I know that this is hard for you," he sits down on the edge of the bed and the mattress bends under his weight; consequently Leo moves closer to him. Cristiano rests his hand on the other side of the bed, past Leo's body, and his other hand moves streaks out of his forehead. "The whole
Lionel shakes his head and straightens to move away from him, even if it's just a little, and huffs bitting at his bottom lip. Just as he feels trapped in this whole thing, he's also physically trapped under Cristiano's body. Cristiano is still looking at him straight in the eye, and moves closer holding his chin up between his thumb and his index finger. He writhes, feeling his warm fingers contrast the shivers that the hospital blankets give him.

"I want you" Cristiano whispers. He doesn't move closer, because he knows he'd lose Lionel. He must know he's just big. "I want you to trust me, I want you to give me this chance."

"Cristiano, I just..."

"Just--" Cristiano strives to see farther than Lionel's eyes, "just let me show you I'm worth it. I'm worth all of this."

Lionel's lips open and his heart beating is a mirror of his throbbing mind. He's digging his nails into his palms, knuckles going white, pressing hard his back and head against the pillows and feeling weak as hell. Cristiano's thumb rubs his jaw. He's about to say something, to explain, to--

But the door slams open against the bedroom's wall, and Neymar runs in sweeping his feet across the tiled floor, and on his temple there's sweat. Pedro, Ter Stegen, Dani and Rafa are all standing behind him in casual clothes --so weird for Cristiano who stands up and furrows his brow.

"Yo" the skinniest of the brazilians points his index finger at a startled Cristiano Ronaldo. "Move his ass outta here, guys."
After standing up and covering Cristiano with both arms in a desperate attempt of protecting his team mates from going to jail, Leo explains, in a few words, how he signed a contract with his manager to marry a publicly recognized figure that would improve his image. It's not just an arranged marriage by his mom like Neymar simplifies, and it's far from being a true marriage anyway, with all the compromise and love and passion; but Dani begs to differ.

"I saw the eyes of that guy looking at you before we came in– He's gone all Jack-and-Rose on you."

The group of football players glare at him and nod. Neymar folds his arms. Lionel stares at some random point on the wall, ignoring whatever they're saying because his buzzing mind is louder.

"I don't care if he's Jack, he's going to die," the blaugranas nod their heads to Neymar, and Rafinha steps up.

"Why didn't you tell us, Leo? We want to support you in this one," he slaps his shoulder, "you're getting married, man."

Leo gets paler and Cristiano puts Rafa away from him. "I think we need some privacy, it's been a tough day for him already. The nurse is coming back to unplug the serum. You can leave, now."

"Leave?" Pedro interferes for the first time since they've arrived. "We can't leave while he's in here. Right, Leo?"

They all look at Lionel, full of expectation. He doesn't look back, instead, Cristiano stands there and a memory of his voice bounces back and forth making him unable to respond properly. He cups the back of his neck with a hand and can't face them when he says, "it's cool."

Neymar wraps a hand around Leo's free wrist. "Are you sure? Is it okay for us to leave? Because we can stay, y'know. We'll be all by the waiting room. Or not. I mean, we're cool with whatever you say." Neymar looks back at his clique and they agree solemnly. "We're with you, no matter where."

Lionel looks into his eyes and he maybe wants Neymar to stay, but only him. And then that idea quickly tumbles down. "It's okay, Ney, I appreciate it, but..." He looks back to Cristiano. His fiancé. He cringes. "It's cool."

Neymar glows when he hugs Leo. He pushes his mouth into his ear confidently, the stubble tickling Lionel's soft neck while squinting at Cristiano behind him, and whispers "congrats on the wedding, big man."

He's smiling playfully by the time he leaves, specifically to the man of the golden collar. To which he moves his lips making no sound; 'screw you. '
Lionel kicks the air with his sneakers and settles his feet on the bench, bringing his knees up to his chin and pops the cap of a blueberry Powerade that Cristiano bought. *Doc said you should keep hydrated.* He made no big deal about it, just kept his mouth shut afterwards like he had been doing the whole noon.

"Four days to go, huh?" Cristiano faces the sea, keeping focus on Lionel by the corner of his eye. He fidgets with some kind of black box making it jump from one hand to the other.

"Nice breakfast today."

Cristiano drops his head. "Yeah, I should have been there. I'm sorry."

"I'm changing the door lock."

Cristiano sighs exhaustedly and scoots closer to him. "Look, I wanna give you something." He seems reluctant, but puts the small box in Lionel's hands. He licks his lips watching the shorter man cautiously open it, and the silver reflects all of the evening colors under Lionel's face. It's a ring.

Lionel holds his breath and surrounds it with a thumb, unsure and caught in the beauty and smoothness tucked in the jewelry packaging. He giggles, amused.

"Where did you buy it? This thing must have costed you freaking grands."

Cristiano tilts his head to a side, "it was my grandma's."

*Lionel, you idiot*– his own mind chants and his stomach revolts, like it's laughing at him. He tries to find words to save him. No. To save Cristiano from this. "I can't keep this, Cristiano, this is your family's."

"Soon you'll be my family too, lov– Leo, and I need you to keep it. I know you don't want to keep me and I don't mind" he lies, "but at least you can keep a pretty thing, right?"

Leo twists his lips. "You are pretty."

"Don't force yourself" Cristiano sweeps away a lock of Lionel's hair, a sad smirk pressed on him, and quickly scoots away. "I've been thinking about what they said at the hospital, and I– I understand you already have somebody else, and it's just a contract, right? No love, no commitment."

Lionel is quiet while sliding the simple yet clean, smooth circle of silver over each of his fingers. It's too small for his index finger, or his middle one. Too large for his pinky; it meets the knuckle and dances around. He tries in a desperate attempt to shove it down his thumb, but his finger goes blue before he reaches the middle of it.

He swallows sharply and puts the ring where it's finally supposed to go. And it feels just fine.

Cristiano isn't talking, or looking. But Leo is.

"How many days did you say were left?"

Cristiano raises his eyebrows, Lionel's softly nudging him with the sharp ring that shines on one of his knuckles.

"Only four. *Ow.*"
A justice of the peace walks into the hall of the fanciest hotel of Barcelona in a black suit. She's got her suitcase tight under her arm and folded sunglasses in her other hand, a loose bun that she made on her way out home and she's looking for Lionel pretending she's not, while Lionel is already looking at her. He can tell the louboutins just hurt, and he can't do anything but admire her.

He's wearing a hoodie while clenching his fists, trying to not call anyone's attention when the elevator's door opens with a 'ding' and Cristiano Ronaldo comes out dressed in a white plain shirt and black tight pants, diamond earrings glistening as he hugs the justice of the peace. Leo supposes they know each other, until they shake hands once they're done with the hug.

He isn't jealous.

Of course he isn't jealous. He hates Cristiano. He hates her. Oh, he hates her.

"I'm over here" he speaks in faked exhaustion uncrossing his legs.

"Good morning" Cristiano says, all flirty and shifting weights from one leg to the other. He's even blushing by the time the shorter football player approaches to them

"G'morning" Lionel repeats, and nods to the justice of peace. "I'm Lionel."

"Honey, we all know who you are" her voice is a red velvet matching her lipstick. "Now, what about we get going towards the initiation? Have you brought your vows?"

'Yes' and 'what vows?' are heard at the same time. Cristiano and Lionel throw looks of confusion at each other but she interferes, "you need at least some words before kissing your charming Prince, pumpkin. But that can wait." She opens her suitcase and slides out printed papers. "We're here to rehearse and make sure you two say all the right words as explained on the contract. Leo, would you like to start?"

"Can we do this in a more... Private place?"

"Like where, honey? I don't have all day."

"I don't know" Lionel cups the back of his neck, "the café. Sit down, talk about this, learn the stuff I have to say."

"I agree on that" Cristiano eyes at the woman. She just sighs and brings her suitcase along.

One white chocolate cappuccino and two espressos later, they're going through the papers in search of anything that's missing for the vows. Lionel has a couple of notes in his hands, and Cristiano memorized everything –he had, from Internet– and the justice of peace rests her laced hands on the table with a look of joyful accomplishment all over her face. She puckers her lips.

"Now, for the obviousness of this part, my love birds, I think you should discuss what kind of kiss you want to show to your attendants."

Leonel raises one eyebrow, "no kiss."
She slams her hands down at that, "tradition! For god's sake, Lionel, it's a wedding, not a goddamn funeral!"

"Half of my relatives are gonna be there. And I don't wanna hear someone's portuguese family make fun of the obvious height difference while we publicly—"

"I don't think they mind." Cristiano shrugs, "they're liberals."

"A kiss-less wedding?" She puts her sunglasses because of the sun breaking through the café windows, and tourists come and go through the glass. "Who do you think you are, denying the public a kiss, huh? Grow up, Lionel, you're not a kid anymore."

"Hey" Cristiano grunts. "It's okay if he doesn't want to, it's just a dumb kiss. Watch it with what you say to him."

Lionel's guts get stirred. The justice of peace twists her red painted lips and hums, tapping her blue nails on the black wood of their table, smiling.

"Then you're not prepared to get married. How am I going to approve a marriage of two people that can't even spend half an hour together chatting or simply kissing? May as well postpone it, right? Or... Better just break the contract." She holds the forms with her hands and digs her thumbs and index fingers by the middle, refusing to pay attention to Lionel's scold.

"No" Cristiano clutches the edge of the table, "that's totally different, the kiss is just forced and we don't want to—"

"Just wait." Lionel leans forwards staring at the justice of peace. One of her fine eyebrows gets up in disapproval. "If this is what you want, then fine." He licks his lips like an unexperienced ice cream eater and looks at Cristiano.

There's silence. Cristiano asks "what?" and Lionel can feel his throat tighten when he speaks.

"We gotta kiss, idiot."

"Are you sure—"

Lionel approaches to him and places his lips softly on his left ear, so she can't see. He doesn't notice Cristiano's goosebumps, but the tall player keeps steady and focused on Lionel's words. "That bitch there— she won't let us get away with this shit if you don't just kiss me" he turns his cheek and his skin rubs Cristiano's aftershave cologne; the ghost of a gone stubble tickles him in between seconds. "Okay?"

Cristiano nods. He takes a deep breath. This never had been his idea of giving the love of his life a first kiss.
The Weeknd - Coming down

Ever since they've been the two qualified people to be called 'best in the World' Cristiano has felt things for him. So many things, from hatred to envy, from sympathy to love.

Leo glances at some stranger passing by the window, feeling himself tense up and get his stomach cramping at the sole presence of some random woman watching them kiss.

He didn't want this. Someone staring at him like some kind of show— No, he's accustomed to it. More like he doesn't need or want someone peeping into their privacy; Cristiano and his own self's privacy. That doesn't even compare to getting watched while in it.

He curls his fingers around Cristiano's wrist and brings him forward, completely ready for the soft collision of lips. He doesn't mind closing his eyes, doesn't consider doing so, but the portuguese does and so his long lashes tickle Lionel's cheekbone like the flutter of a butterfly's wings on his skin.

He's soft.

Everything about him is soft.

It's not a push of mouth against mouth; it's a light nibble on a marshmallow, a lubed up by drool marshmallow. But not as sweet or shallow, more like—meaty and consistent, and Cristiano kisses him hungrily, and he's kissing him back. He's kissing Cris back; some hushed part of his mind rustles and Leo's ears feel hot when he gasps against Cristiano's open mouth.

When he pulls away, the portuguese's eyes are open and staring wide back at him in honest— surprise? Awkwardness? Shock? Lionel can't tell, but the woman across them is clapping slowly and she has a smile printed on her face.

"Well, that was some rich James Cameroon's worth acting," she stands up in a sway grabbing her suitcase and filled forms and puts on her ombré sunglasses back, the ones she had taken off to watch. "This wedding will be easy cake and that kiss right there's gonna be our frosting." She calls the waiter and walks to the cash register, while Lionel ruffles his hair and Cristiano still looks at him, partly with a pout.

The shorter man darts his eyes towards him and straightens up. "what the hell are you looking at?" he raises his voice daring to catch the attention of other fancy customers.

Cristiano looks away muttering a faint "yeah, sorry," and tilts his head towards the window, happily gazing to the naught.
"I won't go to the wedding. I will *not* go to Cristiano Ronaldo's wearing, I swore on that" half drunk Dani Alves keeps shaking his head as Xavi gulps down his beer. The group's reunited around a table at their favorite pub– Well, Gerard's favorite pub. The place has Belly Dancing Contest Friday and the winner always gets a price.

"I know, and I know we all swore on that, too, but..." Gerard huffs, "it's *our* Leo and we need to be there for him. Only him. The kid needs us."

"Yeah" Busquets reasons, grabbing a handful of peanuts from a small dish and Neymar glares at him from across the table. He ignores the anxious brazilian and keeps eating with his full mouth. "He's the spirit of the team, y'know."

"But it's gonna be full of" Pedro lowers his voice down, "merengues!" He shouts in a whisper. Rafinha nods solemnly. "I don't want to go into the jaws of the wolf, the food will be poisoned. The roof will fall. There'll be snipers there. It's bad omen." Ter Stegen and Jordi also start nodding; Andrés puts both index fingers upon his lips considering the whole situation.

"My wife will be singing!" Gerard states, matter-of-factly, twisting his lips. "Plus, there'll be feijoada and I know you brazilian little kids love that," Rafinha, Dani and Neymar seem a lot more relieved. Gerard smiles. "Besides, I can drive you all there."

A huge silence falls upon them and Pedro yells 'I'm not gonna get killed even before I arrive to that hell hole!' and half of them make gestures of approval to the forward.

"The reception room will be divided in two, I believe, for each of the groom's families." Andrés' voice sounds quiet and clear before theirs, so they listen; "we can sit in Leo's side, so you don't have to speak to Real Madrid players..."

Xavi pays explicit attention and tilts his head, "go on."

"And the tables for the dinner afterwards will have given numbers. So... We'll be spread all around, not actually facing them, I believe."

"Yeah!" Gerard says, "come on guys, it'll be fun and quick. You can even get to give Cristiano that Barça scarf you've been keeping in the back of your wardrobe for years as a gift," Gerard grins. "He'll love it."

Pedro hums. "Will we be best men?"

"Excuse me buddy," Neymar calls from across the table, "I think we all know who has that role here."

Masche, who had been quiet and focused the whole time jumps a bit from his chair and points at him, "yeah, buddy. I think we all know. There's still no bridesmaid, though."

Neymar rubs his upper teeth as the whole team shatters in chuckles.
"Cristiano's bridesmaid's rumored to be one of his sisters."

"Katia?" Rafinha darts out.

"Yeah."

There are gasps through the table and Rafinha's suddenly blushing when he talks. "Aye, watch it. She's cute but you ain't got a chance with her."

Mascherano whistles and Xavi starts laughing, "oh my God"

"What? I'm just sayin'..."

"Is that a 'yes, I'm going'?"

Rafinha fold his arms and lies back, "Call it what you want. I'll take her out for a dance."

Chapter End Notes

this is Katia Aveiro and this is her on the right, yeah, she's a champ. I think she looks like Cris' mom tbh
"Do you think this suit makes me look too tall?"

James curls around Gareth, and Karim's shaved face falls into his own hands; his thumbs rub his temples in gentle circles, barely applying pressure while Cristiano turns and turns and turns.

"The bow's too small for the suit, it doesn't combine at all."

The boys sigh longing the Barcelona breeze that breaks through the window of the suite, cold and making their skin shiver in unison. Gareth gets distracted ruffling James' hairs at the top of his head and sees the city lights, then licks his lips. They make the satin sheets under them rustle when they wriggle together.

"Cristiano, you look fine" Karim breaks it, "you always do."

The portuguese rolls his eyes at the understatement of the century, "I have to look perfect, it's my wedding. Little fact: my fiancé's gonna be there. Just so y'know what I mean by perfect."

"But seriously, will Leo even show up in a suit?"

"He loves his suits" James throws a pillow at Karim, which the french man dodges and it casually goes through the open window. Good luck there's a balcony. "He'll show up in the best suit of all and kiss the prince, like in magic tales."

Gareth laughs through his nose and into James' neck. 'That's so dumb' he makes sure Cristiano can't hear him, 'Leo's suits suck'.

"That's why I have to look perfect too, 'cause I know he will" Cristiano pulls from the borders of his blue bow tie and tilts his chin up on the mirror. If he wanted, he'd look like an actual prince. He just needed a crown. A flower crown, James would say; Cristiano keeps it to himself and smiles. "Thanks for coming, guys, really. I don't know what I'd do without you."

"What does Lionel have to say about this, though? Is he okay with it?" Cristiano raises one eyebrow and twists his lips. James throws another pillow at Karim, this one hits the target. "Aye, I'm trying to keep it real."

"A real asshole you are" Gareth mouths, but it comes out muffled by James' shoulder on his lips. They wriggle again, reaching for each other's body heat.

"He signed a contract, there's not much to say."

"And I paid for that." Cristiano adds.

"Like he's some kind of thing you buy?"

"He paid for that, too."

Karim sits on the edge of the bed resting his elbows on his knees. "So let me catch up; you guys are paying to get married to each other and none of you can back up."

"We weren't aware of who we were marrying—"
"What? You do that kind of thing while drunk, Cris. And I mean– You marry Lionel Messi while drunk. Do you have any idea what this image will do to our club?"

"He can't back up" James rolls his eyes blankly, "and the press will just talk and talk like they always do. Fans won't even notice, believe me. This is pure convenience."

Cristiano's eyes fall to his shoes and his fists clench by his sides. "Well, maybe my manager told me who it was. Maybe this is not just pure advertisement."

"Dude, I think it's hot."

Karim and James shoot their eyes to Gareth's vacant ones. He's staring at the ceiling, lost in his thoughts. Cristiano furrows his brow, "what?"

"I don't know. You two. It's hot." James snorts. Gareth keeps on, "steamy hot sex between the gods of football-"

"Merde, that's enough" Karim stands up and throws his hands up, "I've had enough. Carlo was right. I shouldn't have even come."

"But dude, can you even come when-"

"Oh my God" James giggles onto the crook of Gareth's neck, "just shut up, you're making it worse."

Karim slams the door of Cristiano's bedroom.

"How can it get worse when it just gets better" Gareth absent-mindedly smiles. Cristiano's frowning by the time they doze off.

The bow hangs around his neck, untied, his hands rest to his sides on the room's desk and the sleeves of his shirt are rolled up. He chews on his lower lip.

The wind plays with his chin and arms, and calls him but he doesn't react.

It's not pure advertisement.

He's become frightened of being the only one thinking that way.
The morning arrives settling its colors on the sky like a feather being carried away softly onto the soil.

The whirls and particles of perfume dance around the room as a shining rain of perfume getting everywhere, even on Zucaritas, the pink stuffed monkey from the basket gift he named after his homeland's favorite sugary cereal. And which Poker destroyed the night before, while Neymar played God of War.

"He's huge" Lionel smiles messing with the enormous golden beast before him. Neymar nods, keeping focus on the killings of the screen. "Who's feeding him while we travel?"

Silence.

"Neymar," Leo repeats the question, "who's feeding Poker while we travel?"

"Some friends of mine."

Leo nods, puzzled by the unraveling indifference. But Neymar does this to Leo and only him, keeping things to himself when he's mad. "Well, they've been feeding him great. Look at these fangs" Poker grunts when Leo touches his mouth and the football player has to release the dog before it bites. "Shit. He has some character."

"Yeah. I wouldn't recommend touching his mouth, think I forgot to tell you that."

"Ney..." The brazilian pauses the game and turns his head to Leo. "Is there something you're not telling me? Do you want me to take care of Poker for a while?"

"No."

"Then what is it?"

Lionel reads Neymar's face. He's too calm to speak truth; "I'm not mad. I'm disappointed."

"Of what?"

"I thought I was gonna be your best man."

Of course. He knew he'd fuck up at something, and it wasn't going to be cheap. He sees pain in Neymar, in the way his foot taps on the floor anxiously, how he bites at the nail of his thumb with a mourn, how his breathing gets shaky. The excited, pumped up brazilian that he usually is, is turned off like a broken light bulb.

"I'm sorry, Ney." Lionel shakes his head, "I had promised to Kun—"

"Kun? You got Kun as your best man?" Neymar snorts, Lionel raises his eyebrows. "Dude! I thought you had told Javier about it before thinking of me! Thank God, that bald head would talk about it for years." He bounces on the couch. Lionel barely gets the mood swings of his teammate.
"I wish I could have two best men but that justice of the peace wouldn't stop shouting at us..."

"Who?" Neymar turns off the game console and Poker runs back to him swaying its blonde tail side to side.

"Long story. Do you think you could be the guy who brings the rings?"

"I could be the guy standing by your side on that day if you asked me to."

"God," Lionel covers his smile with both hands. "You're gonna get beaten up before the wedding even starts."

"You wouldn't out me, would ya?" Neymar hugs his waist and holds tight, "I'm impressively fast when I run, anyways. They wouldn't catch me."

"It's the whole Real Madrid squad against you."

"Against us. The whole barça squad." Neymar lets go and fixes Leo's shirt; Poker gets between them and pushes Neymar back like a furry barricade. "I'll carry the rings. But I'm not wearing any flower crown. I'm not your brazilian spring child."

"Neymar," Lionel licks his own upper teeth, smirking. "That's not even a request, that's an order."
"I can't believe it, man!" Neymar smacks the steering wheel with his free hand. He hits the horn and Rafa, Marc and Sergi get startled in the back. Through the rearview, he seems a raging old man with sweat on his temple and a lilac flower crown that keeps slipping back. "Cristiano's car got a flat wheel." He pronounces the name of the portuguese like his sister usually does, mocking him. "Dude must be applying BB cream at the back of his suite."

"Relax, we're here with you."

"He's gonna make Leo wait, man! Dude's gonna puke all over himself! It's gonna be a goddamn show for those fucking madrileños--" he goes past a red light and Rafinha winces, leaning closer to Marc and Sergi. "Time to put your seat belts on" he whispers in an attempt of not letting Neymar hear him.

The click of the belts reach Neymar's ears, however.

"I'm not driving that fast."

"No, but you will if you start ranting about how Cristiano will ruin everything again."

"I won't" he sighs, "look I'm sorry. I'm just nervous."

"About what?" Sergi speaks, nonchalant and resolved. "Leo's getting married, not you."

"But he's one of my best buddies, and I want him to be chill about the whole damn wedding thing, I'll personally wreck Cristiano if he doesn't show up."

"How is that going to happen? It's most likely that Leo won't show up, he's the one cursing that damned tall tanned ass since last week" Rafinha clicks his tongue, "you're just mad you aren't Lionel's best man."

"Hell yeah I'm mad, but at least Javier isn't the best man! Plus, it's monday. We're all mad."

Marc and Sergi start to giggle at some kind of inside joke and Rafinha scolds them, "what's up with you two?"

Marc grins and angels play trumpets somewhere near the sky, and Rafinha cringes. Sergi looks out the window seeing the orchestra out of the wedding place, trying their instruments.

"Neymar," Marc says, "you're gonna be the guy that breaks into the place and shouts 'I object.'" He laughs innocently and Sergi nods. "That's the only thing missing here."

"Well, you're gonna go missing and no one will object if you don't shut your mouth up" Neymar parks the car lazily in the first free spot he finds –there are expensive and good looking cars in the parking lot already,– and glares at the blue eyed man. Marc is furring his brow handsomely. "What are you looking at like that? You're too pretty to be pissed."
I uploaded another chapter today to hurry up the wedding..
However, happy Valentine's day!
being in love with one's self is super cool and healthy, so if you're on your own today, 
treat yourself and take a super warm bath and eat some chocolate or whatever you like. 
You can. You can everyday, actually, but today's universal reminder of how sweet love is. 
so, lots of love and thanks for reading, you beautiful folk!
xox
с:
Neymar has been to a bunch of varied, weird places since he was young. Partly because of his natural skills at football and an immense amount of coaches taking him to these places, and partly because of his curiosity and natural skills of getting in trouble with his friends since age nine. He's always been a fast runner, anyways. But he has never been to a fancy wedding.

Yes, there had been aunts and cousins' weddings and a couple of rich relatives getting married along the way in the middle of brazilian funky cacophony back in the days, but he had never been to a rich level wedding, where the kind of people getting united own yachts (each). And the whole place yells I'm not trying to be pretentious, but look at these ice sculptured angels i bought kissing under a fountain of champagne' and Neymar puckers at it, shrugs, and takes a selfie with the guy that offers him to park his car while calling him 'sir'.

"It's alright you know, have my keys and don't scratch the car. Who's here already?"

"The enemy," the valet smiles. "You're not alone. I saw Lucho earlier. Piqué entered through the left blocking most of the Real Madrid players occupying the area, those seats have barça guys already. You'll maybe want to take those."

"Thanks" Neymar giggles and gives him a handful of bills, warning Marc, Sergi and Rafinha on his way to the building.

The four suited man encounter themselves before what seems an old castle renewed for events and such, with the tall grass caressing the soles of their black patent leather shoes, ferns with lilac and white flowers blooming in big wild bunches to the sides of a stone path, which guides them to the rustic entrance. Behind the building, they can hear the soft cradle of the waves against stone and sand.

It looks like those medieval castles of movies, with open windows lit up by candles, stone brick beige walls up to two stores covered by creepers, adding the charming magic that the practicing classic orchestra outside provides and makes them swoon, though they don't mention that out loud. They suck it up, like the mellow that sticks to them as they walk.

Neymar observes the musicians like he's Alice from São Paulo arriving to Wonderland. He makes a mental note of congratulating Cristiano for choosing this place, because for a first impression, it's A+. They all seem to approve.

It's peaceful. Pleasuring. Surrounded by comfort.

That is, until Marcelo Vieira stumbles out of the building blasting pagode through his cellphone and the orchestra, horrified, interrupts its comely sounds.
Someone sits on the edge of the marble counter and leans their back onto the mirror behind him, the one he spent hours looking at before the first people even started to arrive. The person has a warm laugh, a laugh that can make Leo smile whenever Kun pleases; he surprisingly doesn't hate that. It's different when it's with him. He thinks it's different when it's him. He hopes so.

"Maybe you two'll have kids, get a golden retriever which will have Neymar's dog's kids. There'll be kids, Leo, kids like we were" he nudges Lionel with his elbow. "You'll keep having matches to win, it'll be fun to see your husband playing on the pitch. I'd love to be a footballer's wife, you know. If you gave me that as an option."

Lionel shakes his head, "you're different. I'm not this."

"Of course I'm different, we all are. We are as we come and we change."

Leo doesn't answer to that. There are knocks on the thick old wooden door of the change room and Kun's the only one to turn his head.

"You got a trophy husband. Who are you gonna return it to, huh?"

He opens and peers outside. Someone speaks with urgency and pulls Kun outside from the sleeves of his black formal suit, dragging him from the tie. Kun looks back and throws a 'sorry' glance at Leo, who holds his breath in his throat watching his best friend go.

In replacement, someone pushes Cristiano in, who looks paranoid. And very tall. And very handsome. The last part must be due to the imported cologne and deodorant scent he floods the room with, the dark blue undone bow tie that decorates his neck and the rolled up sleeves of his white shirt contrasting his easily tanned skin. His pants are dark and –Leo gulps, undone. He's got a rush to pull his zipper up and buckle his belt and starts apologizing;

"They wanted me to see you before we started, I think it's a bet."

"I thought you hadn't arrived."

"Are you kidding? It's our wedding. I've been getting ready the whole afternoon."

Leo giggles.

"What's so funny?"

"It's our wedding."

One corner of Cristiano's lips rise up. His eyes are down, on the thick fingers sliding his belt and buckling it. "It is. Can you help me with this?"

Lionel scoffs, and approaches lending his hands to Cris' belt–

"Aye, no. Not there. My bow tie, can you do it?" Cristiano moans from the bottom of his throat when he finally succeeds at buckling the heavy looking belt, and it sounds manly and erotic to the ears of a stressed, tired Lionel. He finds himself quietly blushing, dismisses his sleep deprived mind.
"Yeah. Nice bow tie."

Cristiano stares down on Lionel while his pale hands lie upon the undone blue cloth, tickling his neck almost as if Lionel was doing it on purpose, but he shakes his head and sighs. Lionel wouldn't, in two hundred years. In the amount of years that this castle he rented has. He wouldn't get Lionel's eyes to shine as he saw moments before he entered, when Kun had just left, or to nibble on the pink of his bottom lip like he does right now. The warm lights make blonde highlights on his hair, and Cristiano finds the need to run his fingers through it.

He does.

He treads a streak of hair out of Leo's comely face, focused on the task of tying the bow tie, and huffs in relief when Lionel doesn't stop him. He's too concentrated to even care about Cris does. So Cristiano follows the shape of the bang, tucking it behind his ear and gently touching his hair, getting lost in the texture of it under his fingertips, and studies the planes of Leo's face while he does so. The soft mountain of his cheek, the groove that cuts his chin, the peak at the end of his nose, the stars that glisten in the blackness of his eyes, the brown coffee aura that kisses his pupils. His lips. Being with him there, the whole room is made of summer.

"It's okay."

Cristiano opens his mouth and wakes up. Lionel gestures towards his neck, "I think I did a good job. Check it out." He moves so Cristiano can look at himself on the mirror. All he sees is Lionel. And himself, standing by his side.

"Love it."

"Thanks" Lionel pulls a goofy smile, "I like bow ties, I have one already."

"I saw it!" Cristiano pokes at it, "matches the suit. Contrasts with the black shirt. Good choice," before he realizes it, he's running his hands over the fabric of the burgundy jacket and Lionel's giving him a neutral look.

"Hey, I..."

"How are you?"

Lionel swallows. "I don't really know." He should have asked something else. "How are you?"

Cristiano winces. "I'm... I'm fine, I think I'm happy. I mean, if you are. Which I guess by now..."

"I'm not."

"Yeah, about that..." Cristiano drops his hands by his sides and lets them incidentally rub Lionel's; that close they are. It aches. He feels Lionel's tension, the forced calm breathing of the argentine player hitches as he approaches. "I want to make today count."

"Yeah?" A fire sparks in Lionel, "well, I'm not doing shit for you. It's been a whole day of getting nauseous over the idea of this whole thing, I'm not your servant."

"I wasn't talking about you" Cristiano's lips melt into a warm smile, "I'm all yours, after today. Specially tonight." He tilts down his head so his mouth gets closer to Lionel's ear; "can I? Will you let me be yours?"
Lionel features soften and his throat goes dry. "What do you mean?"

"God" Cristiano chuckles low and raw, "may you forgive me. I kinda like you in this suit. You're fucking stunning."

"Thanks" Lionel giggles but quickly returns to his reluctant look, "what are you planning?"

"Well," Cristiano sweeps up his hand under Lionel's sleeve, sliding a finger through his skin like he's spreading gasoline on a surface and his words are a lit up match. "I want you for myself tonight, that's pretty obvious. But I want you to want me," Cristiano turns his mouth from Lionel's ear to face him, "more than anything. Just give me tonight. Make it my wedding gift."

"Do I really have to give you a gift?"

"I'm already gifting myself" Cristiano smiles. "I thought it'd only be fair."

"That's so cheesy."

Cristiano draws vague lines above Lionel's left cheekbones, his eyelashes rest on the footballer's skin. His hands caress Leo's wrists and the shorter man starts unconsciously biting his lower lip, even more unconsciously rubbing onto the waist of the tall man. He backs away hastily when he realizes the last fact, gasping and flustered at the growing hotness at his groin.

"What the hell..." he breathes out slowly, looks away and stands awkwardly shifting the weight of his body from one leg to the other. "You need to go," he clears his throat, "Kun must be waiting outside."

"Really? Pretty much he's in the main room right now, having a conversation with everybody else."

"Can you... Can you just leave me alone? Jesus, you're annoying."

Cristiano raises his eyebrows and retires his hands from under Lionel's sleeves, smirking. "Are you serious?"

"Yes."

"I'm telling you Kun's not out there. He's downstairs probably laughing at some 'Macherano's going bald' joke."

"You're an idiot."

"But he is!"
prologue

Kun's laughing at some joke about Mascherano when a bunch of brazilians irrupt in the room; he can hear 'oi, cabeza!' everywhere mixed with loud manic music, and sees the weird dances that Kun highly doubts they don't practice whenever they skype.

The ruckus extends from the entrance to the back of the place, where a woman with her hair tied in a tight bun rests bored on a desk. There's a lot of paper work there, like she's in her office and not in a wedding.

"How are things with Karina going, Kun?" Xavi asks putting a warm hand on his shoulder and smiles. Andrés is to a side of him, and surrounding them half of the Barcelona squad listen on their seats –because the other option is glare at the Real Madrid players occupying the majority of the room, who are already glaring at them.

Kun nods with his head, "she's okay. Hey," he lowers his voice and approaches Xavi and Andrés, "I was wondering... Where's your coach, guys? Wasn't he supposed to be here?"

Xavi smirks, "of course he's here." Andrés tilts his head towards a corner of the rows of seats, organized as if they're in a theater, near the entrance.

Lucho's talking, and laughing. The pink shirt of his suit wrinkles with each chuckle, the dark blue of his pants lets Kun see blaugrana stripped socks matching a burgundy leather pair of italian styled shoes. To his side, a grey-haired man with big ridiculous sunglasses and a cap tells jokes.

"Ancelotti" Xavi murmurs, and Andrés shakes his head. "The bastard said he wouldn't come. Like a leacher, he wouldn't resist such chance of sucking Lionel's life power."

Andrés presses his arm and curses, "come on, don't be like that. You'll scare Kun! Carlo's a kind guy when he wants."

"He never wants. There's that."

Kun observes Carlo. His big knuckles rest on his knee and they both look like an old couple of men chatting at the back of a crowded bus about the younger –disrespectful– generation. Carlo reminds him of Sabella, only fatter, older and slightly more Spanish. Right as he's going to mention the last thoughts, the woman at the desk stands up and yells 'Sergio Agüero?' at the top of her lungs but the call comes out as melodious and controlled. Kun winces, however.

"Yes," he waves at her, "that's me."

"Mind coming here for a second? Last minute details, nothing too alarming, hun."

Kun nods, to her, to half-Barça, and to the many other suited men present on the room that keep staring at him like he's an alien. Including Leo's siblings, and Cristiano Ronaldo's family and friends.

Ten seats to the right, in the middle of the room where Cristiano and Leo are supposed to marry in
less than ten minutes, a demi-circle of brazilian pagode has formed. From left to right; Kaká – expressively mailed to Cris' wedding from some place the guys ignore but are grateful that he is there,– Neymar Jr, Marcelo Vieira –holding the mini buffers of his phone,– Rafinha –bouncing and showing Marcelo some sweet moves,– and Dani Alves.

"Rafi, I think you're a bit hyper today, hein?"

Rafinha furrows his brow and scolds Neymar, "you told him about Katia, dirty rat?"

"You told him yourself with that stupid blush."

"Shut up!"

"Aaaye" Marcelo lowers himself onto the back of his seat and also lowers the volume of his music, "someone's gotta tell you guys you're ruining the party. Rafi, you like Cris' sister?"

Rafinha cups the back of his neck, "I guess."

"You're a dead man. Don't talk to me."

"Told ya'" Neymar smiles slyly.

"She's gorgeous, alright? It's not my fault I like her" Rafinha says, and the members of Real Madrid that are near them turn their heads, quietly listening. "I don't have a chance with her so relax, Marcelo. And deixa de recalque."

"That's my phrase, kid" the funny haired man answers in soar voice, "and I don't blame you for being a pussy and not going to talk to her. I thought you were a pussy, and turns out you are."

Kaká snickers and the group of brazilians look at him with judging eyes. "What? Marcelo's right."

"Even the religious guy thinks you're a pussy, pussy."

"Oh, shut up. You're wearing a goddamn flower crown."

"Doesn't it suit me?" he tips the lilac flowers' piece and smirks, sliding his arms past Marcelo's lap behind Rafa's back. Neymar pushes a bit and frowns. "You go and present yourself to that woman right now. I won't have a pussy by a friend."

"I never said I was your friend."

"That's 'cause you've always been a pussy."

Marcelo giggles, scooting over so Neymar can successfully push Rafa from his seat making him stand up.

"Go, tiger. Show some paws."

Rafa can hear them snicker when he awkwardly walks toward the rows of seats where Cristiano's family cheerfully talk.

"Ten bucks if he hyperventilates and pukes on mrs. Aveiro's dress."

"Twenty if Cris breaks his nose even before the wedding starts."

"Fifty if he cries."
Marcelo folds his arms and rests his feet on the seat in front of him. "It's on."
To one side, he has Isco, Carvajal, Khedira, Ramos and Casillas wearing elegant ties and white flowers in their buttonholes. The society of bearded gentlemen snicker about each other's suits and Karim Benzema wriggles, uncomfortable.

To his back, he has a bunch of brazilians speaking in portuguese that won't shut up about Rafinha. The latter kid walks past and sits down on a free seat of the first row.

He nods to the Messi family with a cordial smile, there's nothing he can do.

There's no signs of Leo. He's afraid of what Cristiano, James and Gareth had been doing outside of the change room, maybe he shouldn't have left Leo alone. Now, the justice of the peace called him to his desk, and Kun doesn't want to approach to her. She seems rude, and pedant.

"What's up?"

The lady tilts her head with a smirk. "Honey, don't 'what's up' me."

Kun twists his lips and folds his arms, "sorry. Anything you needed?"

"You, precisely, to stand here now. The grooms are about to arrive."

Kun sighs and rests his waist on the desk, "aren't you supposed to stand up, too?"

"I've married people while skydiving, sweetheart."

Kun raises his brow, doesn't open his mouth. He spontaneously misses the silence of the Barça squad while they stared at Ancelotti across the room. "Do you think anyone will oppose? Has it happened to you while... Marrying people?"

"Not really. Brides have run away, though."

"What if... What if Leo runs away, too?"

She looks up to him and smiles. "With who? You?"

Kun swallows sharply. "No, not like that. More like..." Kun inspects the faces of Ramos and Casillas, Carvajal, Khedira –all looking bored and consumed in a haze of curiosity towards the members of Football Club Barcelona. It's funny, Kun thinks, how everyone else than them keep pushing the two groups apart like it's socially wrong for them to interact. He shakes his head. Maybe this is Cristiano and Leo's chance to fix that, he hopes.

"All set?" Gareth lowers his voice to James. The kid nods and the pink tangled roses that keep his pitch black hair straight bounce. "Did you get Neymar?"

James winces. "You didn't tell me that."

"Well, I'm telling you now! Our couple's coming downstairs! Go get him!"
James huffs and rushes to the main room, where the guests are. Gareth waits by the staircase listening to the whispers of Cristiano and Lionel arguing since the opening of a door.

"And then you're all like woah! Sorry for shoving your coach away, Lionel! I didn't mean to start a civil war on the pitch! Look at my shirt, it's about to rip up because of my sexy arms--"

"That's not how I talk."

"Oh yeah, ref! Give me that red card so I can stare dramatically into the camera like i'm on The Office! Gimme all of it, give it to m--"

Gareth's staring at them from the bottom of the staircase. Leo's lips form a thin line. Cristiano clears his throat and puts his jacket on, guiding Leo down by his lower back.

"So..."

"Hey, Gareth."

"Hi, Leo." Cristiano raises his eyebrows at Gareth. He goggles at Lionel with a sense of urgency.

"Looking nice, man."

"Thanks. What's up with you here?"

"I'm Cris' best man." Cristiano smiles and surrounds Gareth's shoulders with an arm. "Carlo's here, he befriended Luis Enrique."

"Lucho," Leo points out. "We're all family now."

Cristiano looks at his fiancé with a weirded out smile.

Chapter End Notes

Just so you know
http://36.media.tumblr.com/d57c3624e72960e0c76664bb00c8a2f3/tumblr_ni41c54SQb1qef2r3o1_5t about their suits c:
Neymar rolls his eyes.

"I don't want to walk to the freaking desk with you, I don't want to look like we're Woodstock flower children."

"What's Woodstock?"

Neymar rolls his eyes at James, again.

"I mean, there weren't other colors for the crowns? Blue, at least? You know, there's this french blue the seamen used--"

"Here they come" James nudges his left rib and Neymar gasps, they step to a side of the way that divides the rows of chairs in the main room, which face a desk with the justice of the peace sitting behind it. Gareth's rushing to Kun and the justice of the peace, both leaning into the desk, as Leo's and Cristiano's parents stand up clearing their throats simultaneously to get the guest's attention.

"Now, now" the justice of the peace speaks clear and loud, "the couple may approach."

Cristiano throws a side glance to Lionel full of fondness. His tall contexture, square shoulders are quiet rigid comparing the slouching figure of Lionel who attempts to drag his feet. Cristiano takes a grip of Lionel's elbow and they walk together slowly to the sounds of soft violins and cellos; the orchestra playing some Vivaldi or Lionel thinks so.

"Can you please release me?" he whispers, while Cristiano smiles at their guests. "I'm not your goddamn dog, I can't escape this one."

"I don't want you to black out and fall to the ground. Remember when it happened and I wasn't there? Your friends almost murder me."

Lionel twists his lips and shuts up, nodding his head to his family and the barça squad. He sees Kun at the ending and hears James... And hears James crying, perhaps? He doesn't want to seem nosey by looking back, but that's Neymar's voice telling the colombian to shut up. Cristiano's hands tenses the grip. Leo gasps and scolds at him.

Aside of the dysfunctional moods of the duo, their flawless outfits match. The iridescent burgundy velvet of Leo's tuxedo contrasts to Cristiano's rich deep blue one; Cris looks like a wedding cake groom and Leo's obviously his handsome counterpart. The portuguese's white shirt and black flaps of his jacket compliment that pitch black of Lionel's shirt, creating a constant play of colors, like one piece of their clothing answers to that of the other and so on. Cristiano smiles. Even though Lionel had figured it out, he had chosen his suit this time.

"Ready, gentlemen?" the justice of the peace asks.

"Yeah" and "no" are both answered at the same time.

"Aw, come on" Kun interferes. "It's only yes in these cases!"

"He's right" Gareth shrugs. "You never really are ready. Smartest answer is always yes."
"He's not smart" Lionel mumbles to himself and Cristiano rolls his eyes.

"I'm trying to keep it real, I'm nervous."

"Oh, because sure I'm reaching nirvana here, Ronaldo."

The justice of the peace smacks the back of her hand against the desk and the guests flinch. "I'm here to perform the union of Cristiano Ronaldo dos Santos Aveiro and Lionel Andrés Messi" she announces with a smile. "Who will now proceed to read their vows out loud in order to express their commitment into this marriage."

Cristiano clears his throat and is the first to take a handwritten paper out of the pocket of his jacket and Lionel looks suspiciously at it, glancing at the justice of the peace.

"I thought he had memorized the words" he whispers to her. She shrugs, curiously shaking her head towards the note. Cristiano swallows sharply before straightening and holding the worn out paper with both hands.

"Lionel Messi," Leo's ears tingle at him pronouncing his whole name. He thinks this is the first time he has done so, at least in front of him, and it's weird.

"When I met you, I never would have thought of all the things we had in common; both our careers, our ambitions, our friends or supportive acquaintances, our talent and gifts. Our legacy. I also never would have thought, that all those things that made us so alike, would be the same things that would put us on completely different sides of a spectrum. Our clubs. Our press conferences. Our words used during said press conferences," that seems to be humorous for the guests for some reason, but Lionel doesn't laugh. Instead, he listens. Cristiano doesn't move his eyes from the paper.

"Even though I thought, at some point, that not even through years we would be able to converse like normal human beings because of these walls built around us, you showed me your world. You helped me climb up them, these words, these expectations, these things I figured out later weren't important enough and didn't make me who I am; you helped me crack the mold we had been forced to fit through years. You made me free of them."

Lionel's mouth goes dry at this point, some people are even crying. He can't even dare to look at them; he doesn't know what to say.

"Lionel Messi," Cristiano follows. "I vow to hold you with tenderness, to keep you safe and to protect you, to share the silence when words are not needed, to live within the warmth of your brave heart and always call it my home, and to help you love life the way you have helped me love it when I'm with you."

Just then, Cristiano lifts his stare from the paper to Lionel.

Somewhere at the back, Carlo Ancelotti starts to clap like a proud man at one of his sons' wedding. Of course, the rest of the guests follow, and Lionel finds himself all flustered and clenching his fists while Neymar nods smiling and James weeps like a little child.

"Now, Lionel?" The justice of the piece gives him a little push. "Say your words."

"Are you kidding?" his whispers are muted by the clapping and sobbing of Sergio at the front row and the rest of the society of bearded gentlemen comforting him, some whistles at the center of the room and Cristiano just bites his lower lip and stares at his feet. "This guy just nailed my vows, you couldn't have given me a more simple note to memorize, could ya?"
"For Christ's sake, Lionel, haven't you ever spoken from your heart? He believes in you, show him what you've got."

"Okay, but I'll keep it simple." Lionel looks at Cristiano. "Is that okay?"

Cristiano nods, dark big eyes shiny. He smiles indifferently, even content with simply being close to Lionel, and Lionel can't understand that. "Simple." He repeats Leo's words. "Okay."

The clapping slows down and everyone lowers their voices down, waiting to listen to Lionel, who sways back and forth on the heels of his his feet.

"I..." Everyone hushes. It's just him and his voice. Lionel wants to puke. "I... Want..."

Neymar nods fervently and James copies him. They both gesture Lionel to go on, waving the wedding rings around and the faces of Cris' mother and mr. and mrs. Messi are fixated on both their sons. Leo's, mostly, because he's staring at everyone.

This is it, he thinks. They're waiting for you, Leo. Come on.

"I..."

He'll throw up. Oh, God, he'll throw up and words aren't coming to his head and this is such a bad idea–

He gets on the tip of his feet and steals Cristiano's lower lip quickly, tucking it between his teeth, gnawing and lying his lips on him, moving slowly to surround his shoulders with both his arms and feels the bow tie of Cristiano tickle his chin. He's afraid of swaying and falling over, but Cris' arms are soon wrapping his waist keeping him steady against his chest, and kisses him back hungrily wanting to push the words into his mouth– I'm not letting go.

There's a general gasp and 'aaaw's through the room; James taking both hands to his mouth throwing the ring away letting out a fainted delighted scream –Neymar's there, so he catches the ring before it hits the ground.

Applause floods the room; keep it simple.

"Same stuff you said" Leo breaks the kiss stumbling backwards and Cris is blushing by the time the justice of the peace rushes James and Neymar to bring the rings.

One of them is the silver that Cristiano had gifted Leo some days ago; the other, Leo's golden simple band. It's gold 24k, and thick as Cristiano's fingers. Maybe he should get him golden earrings as a gift too– No. Not to the blushing dork before him, no.

"We done now?" Leo asks while Cris slides the silver ring onto his fourth finger. The justice of the peace sighs exhaustedly.

"And now, ladies and gentlemen," she ignores Leo, "having already witnessed our lovebirds' vows and kiss and with the power invested as a justice of the peace, I name you two" she lies her hands on their shoulders, "husband and husband. You may kiss the groom."

Lionel groans. "Again?"
Javier Mascherano is sitting at his Spanish speakers' table, with his forearms on the surface and his thumbs rubbing against each other denoting anxiousness or boredom.

There are people who look at him, because he's lonely but the rest of his team is somewhere else (the catalans table, those lucky bastards), and he's been swallowing the chatter of Alcántara and James Rodriguez and the glares of Sergio Ramos and Casillas being silent since the moment they sat down. They didn't even ask for wine, for god's sake. The waiter poured the thing into both their glasses and the bearded duo nodded when it was enough.

His eyes run across the room searching for Kun, who left him half an hour ago. The seat is empty by his side; the dining room's loud as hell from the Brazilian table and the Portuguese one seems weary as hell. Mrs. Aveiro keeps telling Coentrao about this time when Cris went ape crazy against his teacher and the principals kicked him out of school. She's proud of Cris up to this day. She talks like she is, and she shows from that big smile.

The waiter comes to the table with a bunch of mugs on a tray, steam topping each of them and a caramel chocolate scent that makes James' mouth drool from across the table. Javier looks at him and shakes his head.

"Excuse me," a young voice with a strange accent makes Javier flinch. "Can I sit here, yes?"

Karim's suit is a flashing electric blue with a fancy dotted bow tie that reminds Javier of comic books' villains.

"Sure. Kun must have left already, I'm not sure..."

"Came just for dessert." Karim leans in, whispering "Mathieu freaks me out. He doesn't say a word."

"I can't say the same of your team mates" Javier tilts his chin towards James, who already has a spoon in hand and is licking chocolate hot fudge off of it, staining his lips and cheeks. Isco uses his thumb to wipe it off and lick himself afterwards, staining his soft beard.

"An interesting duo, huh" Karim nods. "You're only in for a dinner night. I have them in every single practice, match, events... And that's if Gareth isn't there, because... Well, you're very lucky Gareth isn't here."

"Okay" Masche smiles, taking his cup and leaving it hastily on the table before it burns his fingers. It's a chocolate mug cake laced with peanut butter; dangerously fluffy peanut butter mousse that tastes exactly like peanut butter pie and looks even better. Karim buries a finger in the buttery melted hot fudge of his mug and throws a whimper that startles Javier.

"Merde, c'est chaude!"

"Pardon?"

"Sorry" Karim blushes. "Just swearing at this good looking bastard."

"I'm actually on a diet, I think Lucho said so." Masche shrugs. "Want my cake?"
The french man peers over his bald's partner dessert and looks back at him, eyes full of gratitude. "You'd give me your cake? Man, this is heaven in a mug. Try some, at least."

Masche takes a small bite off his spoon and smirks. "It's like a chocolate volcano. I like it."

Karim nods. "I knew you would. Now," the french man swallows and points to Javier with his spoon, raising one eyebrow and lowering his voice down. Mascherano approaches to him to get a better listen, "Have... The guys... Been talking to you recently... About coconut oil?"

Rafa's always been the good kid of the clique. He just doesn't know that, but that's the first thing the Aveiro family notice of him.

He's sitting quietly by Katia's side munching on a bread stick too shy to ask for soda and blushing constantly whenever she speaks. She's got her hair over her shoulders, and wears a long sleeved dress with a U-cut neck that lets everyone see her neck. But Rafinha's too busy looking at her eye shadow, the shade of her lipstick, the cologne she uses; the resemblance of her high cheekbones to the rest of her family... And suddenly, Mrs. Aveiro's asking him things. About his family, his brother, his house, his future ambitions... Coentrao sighs in relief.

Rafinha shoots answers to all questions like he's in a job interview. Katia isn't interested. He's a perfect candidate. She can tell by the way her daughter pretends to not listen, and picks on one of her earrings, instead. Mrs. Aveiro keeps asking to kill time before Leo and Cristiano have the chance to make the toast.

And speaking of which, the argentíne taps his foot nervously on the ground. One of Cristiano's hands rests on his shoulder and the portuguese is practically feeding him spoons of melted chocolate mousse while lying his lips on his ear—it tickles,– softly murmuring about the different personalities of the Real Madrid squad and stories about Sergio and Iker getting accidentally locked in the locker rooms, James and Gareth's slumber parties, Marcelo's collection of hairpins, Kroos' stash of bagged pretzels during games where he's benched and much, much more. Leo can't help but keep eating the sweet cream since he skipped dinner already, afraid he would throw all up.

"How are you feeling?" Cristiano asks after cleaning the corners of Leo's lips with a napkin. The guy catches a hard strawberry blush, puts his hands on his lap.

"Like my stomach will collapse and the acid will corrode the rest of my organs."

Cristiano drops the napkin on the table and smiles. "Sounds like you."

"Like me?" Lionel scoffs. "Am I supposed to carry the burden of sticking with you? When will you stop acting like it's okay for me to feel this way?"

Cristiano raises one thin eyebrow and twists his lips. "Am I really a burden to you?"

"I didn't say that."

"Then what did you say?"

Lionel slouches. "I didn't say that."
"Of all of this" Cristiano signals at the totality of the room with its guests, the orchestra, the ambience, "tell me. What's the real burden here? Is it me? Is it the fact that you would have said 'I don't want to marry you' if you could? Because I need to know before taking you home tonight, you know there was no going back from this."

"I know that."

"Then tell me what terribly bothers you, it's always good to know."

Lionel takes a look at the planes and contractions of Cristiano's face, the expressions he used to represent concern and hurt turned slightly into deep indifference to Leo's anger. He clicks his tongue and drops his head onto his hands, tired. "I don't know if I'll be able to keep up with this through... Through months, Cristiano. Years. I don't know when the hell does that contract end, I mean..."

"What do you mean?"

"I don't know if I can stay in a relationship with someone I barely know. With someone I barely know if I want or not, you feel me? The wedding's nice and all, but... I don't know if this will work out."

Cristiano smirks, "I understand–"

"No you don't." The portuguese stiffens. Leo swallows sharply. "What I mean is, Cristiano, this wedding's magical. A safe haven with our people, an euphoric rush... Hell, the moment before the roller coaster peaks, but I don't know if I'll ever love you in the real world."

Cristiano takes Leo's hand and nods. He's far from being as weary as Leo is, with somber eyes and a faint thunder of doubt and fear striking his face. Instead, Cristiano's almost glowing, and he passes that electric feeling through his fingertips towards Lionel's hands. His eyes glisten the way kids' dilated pupils do when they're up to something. He may not understand, he may not feel exactly what Leo feels. He doesn't give a care, because all there's left is the night and the turned up laughter of drunk people, and somewhere, an intense hope of winning someone's heart and in front of him, the most stunning person in the room. In Barcelona. In whole Europe.

Cristiano Ronaldo leans in just so his lips hover and brush Leo's never actually touching them. "I'm dying to let you see what my real world looks like, just like I'm dying to explore yours." He smiles, and Lionel feels the gesture on his mouth.

Chapter End Notes

Hi, there! I must infinitely thank you guys for reading up to this point and bearing with the story; also, a super special thank you to all the sweethearts that leave me amazing comments. You make my day and I hope good karma finds its way back to you! Hugs, and I hope you like what comes next in the story–

xox
They leave the party after Kun's speech.

James follows them with his stare and whispers to Gareth, who also watches the duo and whistles.

Neymar (or the rest, in general) is too busy to notice the couple walking out to the entrance yard, playing 'never have I ever' along the other brazilians and some spanish guys that added themselves (members of the society of bearded gentlemen, such as Iker, who was dragged into it by we all know who), with shots of strawberry flavored vodka, the strip version of the game. Neymar's the only one in his underwear and wearing a flower crown, on that matter.

The stars are pretty and the sky looks smooth; the mellow and breeze caressing the tall weeds and ferns of the garden outside remind Leo of enchanted lands. By his side, a guy who would be considered a blue prince by the color of his tuxedo strolls lightly, taking him by the hand.

He's known for taking paths that lead him to many other places; from Argentina to Barça, from amateur football to number one -or well, one of the number ones in the world judging by the assertiveness of the man walking along with him; from someone who had a dream to someone who made it come true. This runaway from a routine of pushing people away is just another one of those decisions (he hopes, because it's hard to keep the grip on Cristiano's hand, and he's trembling by the time they reach Cristiano's almost new car opaquing the rest of the others in the parking lot.)

It's not until he finds himself in the comforting darkness of the road and the shimmering various lights of the car's board and knobs that he feels Cristiano's hand on his thigh. He simply lies it there, warm, keeping his eyes on the highway with his profile highlighted by the front lights, keeping Leo's mind away from blurry images that fill him with anxiety, like Cris has become his most efficient lucky charm.
Lionel's feet hover above the tiled ground of the suite's kitchen. It's clean caramel marble, reflecting the sole of his shoes, he looks at them swing back and forth as the cooling sprinkled water with lemon goes past his throat, tickling the back of his mouth.

It smells like him, this room. Sweet breakfast, clean sheets, flowers. Everything he's done to cause a good impression on Leo; it's the first time Leo himself realizes it, surrounding the beverage's glass with shaky pale fingers and a vague sense of finding himself in an odd place.

The crystal lamps hang from the ceiling and they mirror on the wall wide windows, competing with all the lights of his beautiful city; Barcelona, the one and only who's absent-mindedly reminding Leo of how high Cristiano's suite must be to have major buildings on the ground looking like tiny stars.

And up, the clear sky. Lazy grey and small clouds move along, strolling through the black void consuming Leo's pupils. He sees the moon, giant and silver and surrounded by a committee of white spots cradling it that resemble galactic freckles. That resemble all of humans, and in the middle of them, very near the Earth, a rotating satellite that gets all the attention and looks very pale.

"I have never seen a view like this in any other place of the world."

Leo jumps a bit, alarmed by the voice, and turns around to see Cristiano smiling with his hands inside his pockets and his jacket already gone. He steps back from the window and clears his throat. Behind Leo, Barcelona shines. In front of Cris, everything shines.

"Does it scare you to gaze down into all that depth?"

Lionel leaves the glass on a lamp table by his side and clears his throat. The fogged up cool crystal starts to leave water spots on the fine ebony.

"I'm afraid of heights."

"I'm not surprised," Cristiano steps in, approaching Leo. He tilts up his head and brings a hand to brush Lionel's hair to a side, changing the style of his comb. He stands in the way of the ceiling lamps' lights casting shadows over the argentines face, then drops his hand onto Lionel's cheek and caresses it with the back of his fingers. "You're so short."

Lionel scoffs, "really? Well, you're too big--"

"Come on" Cristiano laughs. "You're ruining it."

Lionel raises one eyebrow when Cris' fingers go down, one running over his lip and a thumb holding his jaw. "Ruining what?" His voice sounds like he's having a hard time to keep breathing normally; exhaling through his nose is not an option anymore.

"I know you're lying."
"What--"

Cristiano reaches Leo's face and closes the gap left between their lips. They embrace in a damp kiss, a simple peck. "You actually like this, I don't know why you keep lying."

"I don't--" Lionel gets cut off by Cristiano's lips on his again, gently pressed onto his bottom one.

He feels the taller man's breathing on his cheek, the smell of his aftershave cologne; hears the whimper when they break the kiss. Cristiano's dilated pupils are fixated on him; the auburn that was originally his iris now tucked into a fine line. He had whimpered. Leo had whimpered.

"Wanna go to our room?" Cristiano runs his fingers through his hair again, he must have a thing for it. Lionel chews at the insides of his cheeks. "You look tired. I've noticed it in you this last week. It's insomnia, isn't it? You could use some rest."

Leo's fully red and presses his mouth firmly, "you keep pushing me into this. I try hard to look at things in an objective way but you pull me closer to you, like you're-- Like everything gravitates around you."

Cris shows an easy smile. "Maybe you're finally reading beyond the newspapers' articles about us. You're experiencing it first hand and this thing's not as bad as you had imagined, perhaps."

Lionel lets out a sigh of frustration before the portuguese's nonchalant smile.

"I have no intentions of simply taking you. Leo, I can have anything I want in matter of hours, minutes, and I lack one thing that all that money can't buy."

"Cristiano..."

"I may have married you, may have your body but you, that sparkling soul irrupting all of my thoughts and making me angry at myself for feeling so vulnerable... I want you. I want to have you, not by force but simply as lovers." Lionel whimpers and gasps at the proximity of Cristiano and the warmth of his words. He's put a spell on him, looking at his face from up there, and behind that image of superior gentleman lies a tender expression on his visage. "To see your eyes during those moments, when you give yourself to me freely. Not because you have to, but because you want to."

"Yeah, but... You're not--" Cristiano approaches Leo's neck, close to his earlobe.

"I'm not supposed to be the world and you're not supposed to be the moon? Because if you got closer..." he runs his tongue through the side of Lionel's neck, the thick tendons there that he usually sees tense during matches. Leo lurches back at the spontaneity of it, "God, Leo, if you got closer we could make a wreck out of this."

"A wreck?" Lionel's question comes out as a drifted murmur.

"Have to find it out" Cristiano slides his fingers into Leo's waist, past his belt, hot and warm. "I'm kind of pissed off that you won't help me out, though. We could make a special research, with your whole consent..." Cristiano shrugs, "I'd even give you lessons on what I do best."

He steps back, conscious of the argentine's reluctancy.

There are things he hasn't been able to get in his life, things he was unlucky to never have, things that just drifted away because of destiny's choice. There are things he hoped hard that would happen, and imagining and daydreaming about them wouldn't even make them come true. Birthday candles, 11:11s, shooting stars, bonfire nights wouldn't work for him.
But Lionel grabs his hand.
Hey there, lovely! This chapter's kind of explicit, so if you feel uncomfortable with that fact, please make sure to skip this and the couple of following chapters c: (straight into chapter 28 which will be up in a couple of days)

Arcade Fire - My Body is a Cage

The touch of Leo's hand is something Cristiano's embarrassed to shiver about. The flesh-and-blood warm contact makes him jump a bit, electrifying the whole suite's living room and making his presence steam. Cristiano Ronaldo gasps when Lionel pulls, swings on his feet, scolds him.

"I didn't make it this far to not try you out."

He feels himself ready to push the short footballer against the window, not afraid of gazing down on the vast emptiness of a hundred of meters fall as long as he has Leo on lockdown. Surprisingly enough, a sportsman of his range dwells on enough discipline to not answer such strong calls and holds himself back, so flustered and bothered he would comprehend if Leo mocked him.

"Look, I..." Lionel licks the corner of his mouth and gestures with his hand, "I..."

The tough time of looking up words ends by the strength of Cristiano's arms lifting him up the ground, and swaying him around the living room dodging black marble statues; matte glass flower jars and knocking over a few chairs and lamps, the result of a bee line to the bedroom. During the trip, Leo cups his face and gives him sloppy cheek kisses like he's a kid getting carried to his bedroom, ready to hear a night story straight out of his dad's mouth.

Alright. He's not good at metaphors, and he should ask Cristiano to let him down before he starts to suffocate by the strength applied to hold him. Cristiano clutches at him like he's embracing a lifeline, the cloth bulge of the rolled up sleeves of his white shirt nudges Leo's back.

It's a matter of time until the argentine feels the edge of a bed behind his knees; Cristiano's bed, made up and cream and strawberry colored, and he sits down on it while Cristiano puts one arm on each side of Leo's suddenly small body.

The man huffs near his ear, covering the soft light of a yellowish ceiling lamp, not as aggressive as the ones of the living room. His designer cologne floods all of his senses.

"May I take your clothes off, mr. Messi?"

He feels converted into another dimension when he says it. Lionel smirks and pulls at the ends of Cristiano's bowtie, leaving it to hang around his neck and undoes the first button.

"How about we undress you first? You love the underwear ads."

"Yeah, but mostly if they're yours."
Lionel blushes at the indecency and his hands get surrounded by Cristiano's when he's halfway unbuttoning the man's shirt. They finish the task silently, dumbfounded by the muteness of the room and their loud breathing; and each one's glad to not be the only person with a hitched breathing when they reach for Cristiano's belt buckle.

The flash of bare skin between the open shirt is a new gaze for Lionel, who's seeing it in reality for the first time. He rests a hand there and looks up, aware of Cristiano's eyes focused on him as he slides the belt making a pornographic, dull metallic sound, and lets fall to the soil the heavy-looking leather thing letting Lionel undo his zipper. He has to hold back a gasp when the kid touches him through the slit, cupping him through the dark colored underwear.

It feels dirty. Of course he feels dirty, but he also feels aroused. He feels so aroused it's hard to qualify any other feeling; maybe, just maybe also admiration of Cristiano's ancient-greek looking body, but he's not admitting that. Not now.

"Mr. Messi" Cristiano hums with a smile he can't contain, "can I get rid of these?"

Lionel rolls his eyes over the portuguese pointing at his pants and nods twice slowly, biting his bottom lip with anxiety taking total control of his body and soul.

"May I see what your suit covers afterwards? It'd only be fair that way." Lionel knows, God, he knows it'd only be fair that way, but he finds himself in front of an herculean reincarnation and he wants to die just picturing himself naked in front of him.

"Maybe just the pants?"

Cristiano lifts one corner of his lips kicking what's left of his pants around his ankle, staying in barely his underwear and peels off his already open shirt. The guy gets on the bed, crawls behind Leo and sits down so each of his legs rest to a side of Leo's body, hanging over the edge of the mattress. He covers Lionel's eyes with both hands and sticks his lips onto one of his ears, so the words get pushed right into the argentine's mind.

"Don't open 'em."

Lionel nods at the command.

The hands of the Real Madrid player trace down his face, rest on his collarbones undoing the bowtie and disarm him from the jacket throwing it to the ground.

Giving each button the treatment of a delicate knob, he twists and turns his fingers around going progressively down the black shirt that protects Lionel's skin and Lionel leans back relaxing, crashing into Cristiano's chest and torso. He stays there, surrounded by Cristiano's arms undressing him with tenderness and a heart that beats inside a chest that fits the shape of his back.

An intense calm starts to invade every single inch of his body. His legs fall asleep, his head lolls back on Cris' shoulder as he feels the pair of warm hands finally touch the bare skin of his chest like a statement, like 'we finally are here' and Leo feels Cris' smile on his earlobe and his teeth softly nibbling there.

He whimpers. Not like when they kissed; he whimpers like he's satisfied with all of this, when really everything has just started.

The hands start a downwards trail. The ending, of course, being his pants, and Leo wriggles to realize how close Cristiano is to his back, pushing himself against his spread legs and lap. He feels his plump arousal on the tight curve of his lower back.
"Don't open 'em."

He obeys.
Lionel Messi is ashamed. Fully ashamed, but most important, unable to shut his moans.

Cristiano manages to get his hands past his abdomen, stroking Lionel with the strength he'd use to hit someone, and the argentine's not ignorant of that fact. He wriggles back to hold onto something desperately and ends rubbing Cristiano through his underwear with his own buttcheeks, which makes the man groan and hold one of Leo's hips steadily.

"Let go" Lionel writhes, gripping one of Cris' forearms trying to stop him. He tries to face him instead, but Cristiano's mouth and chin presses onto his cheek when he tries to turn. "Please, I'm gonna come."

"You can."

Lionel swallows sharply, knowing that's not an option. He's not going to further embarrass himself coming in the first two minutes they're together, not even fully naked yet.

"Come on, come on, please" Lionel pleads in frustration when Cristiano's hand tightens the grip and sharpens the pull at his dick, making it a pleasuring catastrophe Leo's not sure he'll be able to endure any longer. He holds a curse between his teeth and exhales slowly. "Undress me first, then we can do anything you want."

Cristiano stops and releases him, caressing his belly, rests his cheek on Lionel's bare shoulder. "We do anything you want," he corrects him, and Lionel nods.

He stands up, relieved, and pulls his own pants down, including his boxers, then turns around holding in his breath and crossing his arms over his chest, to have something to do with them.

"Can I open my eyes now?" he asks.

Cristiano's mouth is briefly open producing no sound; he lets his unsaid words float around, his mind focused on one thing; the first image of Leo's body in front of him, just like he was first delivered to this world.

He takes his teasing time to stroll his stare around the squint of Lionel's closed eyes, the upper lip covering his bottom one which teeth must be gnawing on, the quick raise of his shoulders betraying his accelerated heart beat and the arms covering one of his modest nipples. The hard shape of his elbows contrast the curves of his abdomen. The hair on his arms, spreading around a soft texture he lacks on his own self.

His thighs, strong and round and holding him are open; from the insides to the beginning of his pelvis, a trail of dark pubes surround his erection and Lionel sighs out in frustration, shifting the weight of his body from one leg to another.
"Should I open my eyes or are you busy laughing?"

"Why would I laugh?" There's more to Lionel's question, and even though Cristiano knows, he doesn't mention it. "I wish you were seeing yourself."

"I do that everyday, trust me."

"You're so cute" Cristiano stands to put Leo's arms away from his chest and runs his hands over his body, stopping on his waist. "I'm jealous."

"Of me?" Lionel laughs bitterly. "Yeah, sure."

"You get to see yourself everyday" Cristiano kisses his lips, Lionel responds by kissing him back. "That's it," Cristiano smiles, "come on."

There's a furrow on his brow and Leo pushes his tongue in, hungrily taking control over Cris' mouth, eager to do so under Cristiano's urgency.

He pushes him into the bed barely letting the portuguese take off his underwear between furious kisses, teeth hitting teeth, noses bumping. In the middle of it Cristiano halts him with a "stop, lion" and a breathless chuckle.

A gelled curl decorates his forehead. It's the first actual time that Leo sees him flustered and breathless outside of a pitch, sprawled over a bed with his limbs supporting him and a hard on that rests against his abs. If Lionel was any less reserved, he'd whine.

Grow up, he shouts at himself, grow up and show this guy you can do it. You can do this even better than he'd do it.

He approaches and sits on the edge, on Cris' lap, putting one knee to each side of Cristiano's thighs.

"Are you okay--"

"Shh" Lionel puts his hand on his mouth. "You're ruining it."

His other hand rests on Cristiano's broad shoulder and slides down until he rests it on his chest; he can feel his heart beat under. The argentine's cheeks grow hot, warm like Cristiano's skin; he drops his hand and wraps his fingers around the thick cock dripping pre cum, rubs the foreskin, and the player curses against the prints that cover his lips. He kisses them completely devoted, nibbles on the joints, and Lionel has a sly smirk on his face when he pushes his index and middle finger past Cristiano's lips. He takes them whole, sucking on them like an experienced hooker.

"You like that," Leo whispers, "don't you?"

Cristiano giggles, submissively deep throating Lionel's fingers, throwing a stiff whimper that makes Leo's legs melt. They start laughing shortly after Cris takes him out of his mouth and Leo runs his thumb across his husband's lower lip. He smacks Lionel's ass.

"Get on the bed now, come on."
A few seconds later he's on his knees, bent over silk sheets and Cristiano's legs make the springs of the mattress screech, like wanting to scream 'this is not a bed made for two grown men, guys'.

However Cris smiles, and runs his fingers up and down Leo's back saying "turn around, shift your waist up," before his lover does.

"Will it hurt?"

"A lot" Cristiano laughs. "That's why no one ever does this."

Lionel groans. "If I ask you to stop we stop, okay."

Cris lowers himself on him and kisses his forehead, nodding. He crawls for a tube of plastic on the night table and asks Leo to snap the cap open. The gooey, sticky transparent liquid starts to drip out; Cristiano catches some with his index finger and makes Leo lick the surplus. He looks at Cristiano, wide eyed.

"Vanilla?"

"They didn't have the normal one. Tastes good, huh?"

Lionel swallows sharply, he doesn't want to taste that. "Yeah, I guess."

"Well, it's my favorite flavor" Cristiano smiles nonchalantly and goes down on Lionel chest, stopping to catch his nipples between his front teeth and kiss the skin after his belly button. The pelvis of the argentine player trembles under the sudden touch and the slick tact of Cristiano's lubed up fingers, and smooth lips that run through throwing slow huffs.

He feels like a kid getting on a roller coaster for the first time. He doesn't want to look down; he closes his eyes and expectation shakes him from head to toe. Involuntarily, Leo thrusts his hips up when Cristiano opens his mouth around the head of his cock and wraps his lips around, sucking in slowly and pouring some more lube on the base of his erection. His body arches and his fists surround a chunk of messy sheets.

Cristiano takes him fully in the damp heat of his tongue and cheeks and Lionel lets out a shaky "fuck!" so loud he's afraid of people in other floors hearing him, and Cris gets flustered (although Leo can't see that).

He's a hundred percent sure he'll come if he gazes down, so he tries to calm down.
"You're so good to me" he whispers, speaking his mind out like he's making a pained comment.

Cristiano pumps his fist around his dick after taking it out of his mouth. His lips are swollen, glistening from the suctionning. "What makes you say it?"

Lionel takes the portuguese up to his face and takes him in his hands, kisses his cheek, slowing him down and propping himself around his torso; shifting his legs and wrapping them around his hips.

"I wanna be good to you, too" he pulls him closer and Cristiano hovers above him, erection pressing over Lionel's.

"That's insane, you're great already" Cris embraces Leo's back and shoves him down on the mattress, stroking and lubing up his own cock. "You've always been my favorite because of that. Quiet and good. And shy."

Leo scolds him. "Then I'll start being bad."

Cris glares back at him, then cracks up. Leo follows, smiling so hard his cheeks start hurting and the grip of his legs on Cristiano's body gets loose. "You're an idiot." His back relaxes on the bed.

Their laughter fills the room, until Lionel's chuckles turn into an aggravated moan when Cris slides in slowly and presses his mouth on Lionel's, muffling his groans and whines into grunts and whimpers. He keeps kissing him until he's completely inside and lets out a deep sigh from the bottom of his lungs; Lionel's panting and has tears on the corners of his squinted eyes.

"Want to quit?"

The smaller player shakes his head swallowing a knot. Cris pets his hair holding him tighter and pulls out halfway, then shoves back in. Lionel wants to shout.

"God--" his teeth are gritted impeding his yelling and his muscles are tense, "you're..." Leo adjusts himself and Cris touches him, pushing him down; "this is, ugh..." Cris fills him up. He's inside him, in every fiber of his body, every thought his synapses carry. Telling him to calm down; telling him to breath; "yeah... It's weird."

Cristiano nods and shifts his position, going up or down and barely moving inside Leo, like he's trying to find a certain posture. Lionel discovers what it is Cristiano's looking for at the same time Cris does, and the blaugrana player gasps and holds his husband's name between his teeth like saying it would be a great mistake. But he holds his glare instead, and watches Cris rock on the bed with a certain new found fondness that the portuguese player himself doesn't perceive.

Leo relaxes closing his eyes. The darkness that embraces his overridden mind mingle with the hot dampness of the room, which make both of their sticky skin sound funny when they slam into the other. There's there, and inside, the pain and the pleasure. The friction, the embrace of extra strong arms that hold his legs up, the comely face of the national football portuguese captain, the natural and native angry, passionate, bittersweet thrusts of the best player of Real Madrid. Of the world outside Leo. He swallows, letting himself moan his name out loud when Cristiano hits a spot that makes him whine.

It comes as a drifted stutter; "Cris... Cristiano, for fuck's sake" he rolls his eyes blankly.

A drop of sweat rolls down his temple into the sheets. Cris tries to hold himself together after hearing Leo, not for too much time, because heavy and tired, he falls onto Lionel's chest still inside him, working his way to a climax.
His lips plant sloppy kisses over Lionel's neck and ear, nibbles on the lobe. All of him trembles. There's no control to whatever speed he's driving Lionel, at least he thinks he won't be able to crash while having Leo whisper his name in such erotic ways. He blushes and groans when Lionel digs his nails into his shoulders and advances through his back.

He comes. It's an accident, terribly bad orchestrated accident that costs him Lionel's discomfort before the substance filling him inside. Cristiano curses and furrows his brow realizing Leo's looking at him with a silly smile; the portuguese twists his lips.

"Let me... I'll–"

"Well, you're fast." Lionel grins, proud of himself and teasing. "I mean, it's not a bad thing..."

"Shut up" Cristiano looks down and slides out with a gasp of unsteadiness, grasping Leo's cock when the small player sits up. With no words, he goes down on him and sucks on the head of his lenth with complete devotion.

It doesn't take too long, Leo's over the edge. He's been for at least the past ten minutes, writhing and wriggling and making his mind think of something else than sweaty, hot, sex-fueled Cristiano giving him head like he's sucking on an icy pop but– He comes and doesn't push the guy away, to his surprise.

A week before he'd kick him out of the room. Now, he cups his face after making a creamy mess out of his mouth and kisses his cheek softly, like a kiss good night, and unwraps himself around him.

Chapter End Notes

guys thank you so much for the comments! You're beautiful readers, hope you have liked the story so far! c:
They can see young Rafa take Cris' sister by the waist and swirl her softly through the dance floor, bathed in a midnight blue light. He plays with her hair, he smiles with her jokes, he tries hard not to step on her feet. He's all softness and tenderness, specially shy while performing a small approach. He puts butterflies around them, a curtain of intimacy that obliges the rest of the brazilian guys to look away.

"Where's Leo?" Dani Alves' head rests on the table near Marcelo and squints at the blurry vision of Sergio Ramos arguing with a couple of spanish bearded men across the room. "I've got to say something to him, dude's married now."

"At the back. Making out with Cristianinho, probably. Don't go there."

Dani goes and doesn't look back. It's possibly a mistake when he opens the door of the back of the kitchen, a kind of cleaning supplies room, his eyelids twitch at the lack of light.

He finds Gareth holding James, caressing the back of the crying boy with his hand under his shirt while Neymar drinks from a brand-less bottle. The latter holds his hand out to Dani.

"Welcome to the best man meeting. Kun already left to go home. Or the hotel. I guess."

"Rafi made it" Dani sits down ignoring the whole scenery and takes a sip from Neymar's bottle. "I like that flower crown you're wearing, suits you better than most snapbacks."

Neymar's almost offended at his words, James keeps sobbing against Gareth's shoulder.

"What's wrong with Colombia guy?"

"Just sensitive." Neymar shakes his head. "I feel terrible about this wedding."

Dani raises his eyebrows. "What's so terrible about it?"

"It's fucking great! I mean, why we gotta be fighting against Real Madrid? These guys are so dope!"

"Easy, mate. You're drunk" Bale stares him down. James rubs his eye with a fist and coughs a little.

"Cristiano got married, he'll leave us now."

"Leave you?" Neymar smiles like a mental patient. "Man, Leo wouldn't leave me for that douche in a million years." He clears his throat. "Leave us, I mean."

"He won't leave Real Madrid, pumpkin" Dani Alves adds, "his home is there. Besides, the wedding contract doesn't establish any specific household so he might as well go back to Madrid for matches and such. It's just all a big play."
The glow of James' grin is overwhelming. Gareth stops holding him when the colombian sits up, shaking from excitement, "does that mean he'll keep playing with us?"

"Well, duh."

"Are you freaking serious?" His pale cheeks go red and he hugs Gareth, "oh, my God! I thought we wouldn't be seeing Cristiano around anymore!"

The english man rolls his blue eyes blankly and lets James clutch at him, the reeking alcohol of the bottle reaches to them in short seconds, and so do the hysterical laughter of Neymar.

"Did you see Carlo Ancelotti with those stupid sunglasses, though? I wish Pep was here instead of that old dude. Hey, we should go say hi to them, they seem pretty lonely."

"No." Karim gulps down wine and steals a piece of cake of Mascherano's plate. "Carlo's not comfortable here, he came to check the wedding thing being real. He thinks no one has seen him."

"Seriously?"

Karim shrugs. "He could be worse."

"How, exactly?"

"He could be called Pep or some weird name like that."

Mascherano squints at him and keeps his cake dish to himself. "You're mean, Karim."

"I'm not mean, I'm a realistic person."

"You're a Real Madrid person, and I almost forget that."

"Oh, come on" Karim smirks. "Gimme a piece of that cake! I finished mine already..."

Suddenly, a rattle of broken glass invades the room and the music consequently stops. The orchestra looks terrified at the group of men standing by a table where Piqué is being held by Xavi and Andrés Iniesta, and by the other side Sergio Ramos is shouting at him while Iker shakes his head fully ashamed. Isco and Carvajal are also holding him back.

"I told you not to bring the cup incident back, Geri" Sergio pants. "You've been warned."

"So what you gone' do, huh? Drop some stupid argument on me? Tell your boyfriend to beat me up? You can't even reach my face while we speak, you--" The spanish men hold their breath. "You dwarf!" Andrés gazes at Xavi, who shakes his head.

"At least I'm not a seven foot tall freak."

"Screw you! Screw you and all you madridistas cunts!"

"He's just drunk" Xavi tries to raise his voice over the white squad's shouts, trying to make them reason, but it's not until Iker throws the first punch that he realizes he probably should run.
When the first lights of dawn wake him up though the window, he feels relieved. He sees the ceiling on top of him, he feels the softness of the comfy pillow beneath his head and takes him a whole minute to take in that it's just Cristiano's chest.

A hand caresses his forehead and keeps the hair out of his face. Lionel wriggles and wraps himself in the covers, discovering the chill cold that enters through an open room of the window. He doesn't know it's been open since the day Cristiano arrived, what he do knows is that the portuguese is also awake and has a wide arm wrapping Leo's shoulders.

"I'm not gonna kiss you or anything," he states. It's the first thing that comes to mind, a mechanism of defense he has developed all about rejecting other people before they have the chance of rejecting him.

"You don't have to." Cristiano kinds of accept him. He has to, they're married now. Or at least he thinks he has.

Lionel scoots closer and the bedsheets rustle under him. He kisses Cristiano's cheek; the taller player smiles. Only a thin foil of cloth wrap their thighs, up to where their sun tanned skin ends.

"Good morning to you, too."

Cristiano's hair is a mess. Well, Lionel's also, but the damp gel molded his hairstyle into an infinity of curled and messy threads. Lionel accommodates it as best as he can with his fingers, playing around and putting a short mohawk on the head of the player.

"Having fun?"

"Being your personal stylist is no funny business."

Cristiano chuckles and perceives Leo's big childish eyes. For a moment he goes absent and quiet. Leo notices quickly and drops the game.

"What's up?"

"That thing you said about being the Earth and the moon..." Leo twists his lips and nods, telling him to go on. "We're all stars."

Cristiano caresses his temple with his hand, puts his fingers on his nape and rubs. Just like a cat, Leo leans back into the touch and briefly opens his mouth, smiling.

"You're my supernova."

Somewhere, in the small emergency room of a hospital, Iker holds a bag of ice to Pique's cheek while Sergio revives World Cup memories with Xavi by his side.

Rafa finishes making breakfast for the black haired girl giggling on his sofa.

James, with swollen eyes and a tipsy attitude beats Neymar at God of War. Gareth scolds at them as Dani snores loud by their side.
Javier drops Karim at his hotel, catching a glimpse of a grey haired man with sunglasses talking to other at the hotel's cafeteria.

Somewhere Barcelona starts to softly wake up from the dreams of last night.

Somewhere, the planet still spins.
promise

Chapter Notes

This was a fun ride c:
I think this song fits perfectly for this last day:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FHCYHldJi_g
thank you all who're reading this and left such encouraging comments!
xox

Over the salty lips, the drops of sea water on his shivering skin leading to a damp swimming boxer, he doesn't mind Cristiano leaning his lips on him.
-

They came out to the press earlier on the morning, clarifying their doubtless affection for each other despite the reckless rivalries they feel for the other's club. Their political views were strong, as remarked by a Marca reporter, and this was justified by Leo who was eager to answer to all questions with hints of sarcasm and irony. Later, when Cristiano ran his hand up his lap under the conference room's table, the argentine softened his face and lost his voice between gasps. He had stopped to drink some water and Cristiano answered for him; that even as their clubs and their history put them apart, as individuals, they saw no problem in spending time together out of the pitch. Another reporter complimented the rings on their fourth fingers.

"So, who'll sleep on the couch next El Clásico?"
There was a round of low chuckles and surprised giggles through the room. Even Cris himself laughed and brightened half of the present journalists with his smile, as he petted the back of Lionel's head.
-

To a side, Neymar and Marcelo freckle under the burning sun sipping on ginger ales. To the other side, James drools on a towel with his cheek all squished under his face and eyelids closed. His shoulders and forearms are red, and Cristiano reaches for the sunscreen pouring some on the asleep boy's back.

"We have a match on sunday" Leo states, matter-of-factly, and stretches his arms. He's squinting his eyes at the brightness of the cloudless sky as he leans back on the sand.

"I know. I'll be watching."

"When's yours?"
"Saturday, at Sevilla."

Leo nods and bites his bottom lip.

"A short trip and then back to Madrid?"

"Yeah, I'll be waiting there for you."

"I've got Champions on Tuesday."

Cristiano lolls his head back, "riiight. Damn."

"Watch me, though. Will we Skype?"

Cristiano chews at the inside of one of his cheeks and smirks, sitting up and leaning into him. "During mid time and after the match and before you reach the hotel and during your shower." He clenches his fist and holds it out to him. Leo bumps it with a smile.

"Can you two please," a voice calls behind their backs, "get a room? People are trying to sleep here!"

Cristiano finishes leaning in and catches Leo by the mouth, throwing both of them into the sand and traps him between his arms.

"I'm not letting go, you know."

"Wouldn't like it any other way."

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