The Devil's Winter Tale

A quasi-gritty-love story of a kick-ass witty girl and the charming devil in his suit.

~ COMPLETE ~
Prologue

Chapter Notes

Let's start from their very beginning, shall we?

Enjoy darlings!

xxoo

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Thank you so much Dr. Foster, this means a lot to me.”

“Oh it’s nothing Darcy, I wouldn’t recommend any other name but yours.

I know you can do it … just, keep in mind, he’s a bit - difficult.”

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It was on a late August morning, when the crisp wind had started to chase away the warmth of summer. Darcy Lewis was fidgeting on her heels, straightening her skirt, checking her appearance on the bathroom mirror for the umpteenth time. She stood tall in her best white button down shirt, black pencil skirt and a fitted blazer borrowed from her roommate. Her previous part-time jobs never required anything sort of formal so this was as chic and formal as she can get. Her hair though, they always have a mind of their own, there was no other way but to pile them up in a tight bun and pray that no wild tendrils would stray away.

Considering this was her first real job interview, she pardoned her inner-stupid-self to roll around in mild hysteria - because this interview, it wasn't for some cheap burger joints or seedy diners. It was for the Odinson from the friggin’ Odinson’s Industries!

Okay, breathe! You can do this Lewis, break a leg!
She walked out the bright and sterile, citrus scented bathroom, heading for the lounge. This high-end building was one of the city's tallest skyscraper, with its high ceilings, monochromatic coloring on every wall and post-modern arts on display, sophisticated female employees and their French chignon, everything screamed out highclass - she can’t help but felt slightly out of place.

“Miss Lewis?” A blonde female greeted her, perfection shown on her make-up and attire, like the rest of the people there.

“Yes.” She swiftly replied, patting herself on the back for sounding calm and collected despite.

“Mr. Odinson is ready to see you now, just go straight through those double doors.” Blondie informed her. The weary smile and a flash of sympathy on blondie’s brown eyes didn't escape her notice. At once Dr. Foster’s vague warning came ringing in her ears.

‘He’s a bit - difficult.’

Out of desperation she hadn’t done a research on her (hopefully) soon-to-be boss, besides it was a last minute call. Maybe she should've, at the very least, asked Dr. Foster what she meant with 'difficult'. Obviously now would be too late for that, she huffed. Darcy quickly shook the vexing thought from her head and kept walking towards the doors down the corridor. It was even brighter there, glass walls on each of her side, sunlight drenched the lush grey carpet under her black pumps, but somehow, it didn't make her feel any warmer.

A suited man in his early forty went out the doors, he smiled and nodded politely as they crossed ways.

'It won't be that bad, see, that guy made it out alive!

She knocked before entering, her heart was almost leaping from her throat. Keep it together Lewis, don’t blow this shit up, you need the money!

“Come on in Miss Lewis.” A sultry, velvety voice in a British accent erupted behind the doors.

With one foot she stepped beyond the threshold, pushed the door wider. Her eyes scanned the spacious room. Her first impression was (forbiddingly) cold, but at the same time – bright as fuck. Was regular walls too mainstream for him that almost all of the walls were made of glass? Perhaps.

“Good morning sir.” Wait, are those … real swords!?

“Take a seat. I don’t have all day.” The same voice quipped, he sounded - miffed, but maybe that was just the way he speaks? She positively thought as she marched inside.

Then her eyes caught the man ensconced on his imposing leather chair behind the enormous wooden desk. Her breath hitched and fortuitous hot flush crept to her skin.
Loki Odinson.

**Damn.**

He was the most gorgeous specimen she ever laid her eyes upon. Dressed in a razor-sharp black suit that was no doubt, personally made to fit. Mesmerizing green eyes, jet-black hair, and dear god ... those cheekbones! He looked so different from Dr. Foster’s husband, the total opposite. She was ready for a beefy blonde, she can handle beefy blonde - not this, this renaissance-classic-looking-slim-sir!

Her traitorous heart started to gallop as she blushed (she cursed her stupid body reaction). Things like this never happened to her before! Maybe you’ve never met a man like him before, her mind teased.

“You’re punctual Miss Lewis. A good start.” He said, his voice in control, domineering. He waved unceremoniously to a chair, right across the desk. His face impassive, he didn’t even smile but he keeps his tone polite. Though she noticed the way his brows knitted in distaste as he weighed in her attire from top-to-toe.

**Well excuse you Mr. Designer’s – Suit!**

She quickly took a seat, nervously tugging the hem of her skirt as she crossed her legs to the side (a lesson from Queen Clarisse Renaldi). “Thank you for having me, I’m Darcy Lewis, I’m – “

Loki cut her introduction, “You’re here under Dr. Foster’s recommendation.” His eyes were assessing her intensely. Suddenly she felt the temperature raising a couple of notches and her heart starting to march in staccato, as if she was a claustrophobic cat trapped in a tight box.

“She never did that before, recommending people.” He continued, still holding his gaze, like a hawk to its prey.

**Yikes.**

“I – I, Dr. Foster was one of my professor, she’s amazing, I’m very grateful.” Do not stutter Lewis!

He nodded, “And I also never did this before.”

She eyed him with a question, did what?

“Taking people in based on recommendation. Nepotism.”

**Shit!**
So this was what Dr. Foster meant.

“I read through your files, impressive GPA Miss Lewis.”

Honestly, it didn’t sound like a compliment to her ears but she paid him with a ‘thank you, sir.’ anyway.

“Though … your previous jobs, they were a bit – how should I say, … indecorous. Completely different from what we have here, from what I need.” He slowly leaned back to the chair with one palm on the desk, long fingers drumming on the surface.

Okay, so it was safe to say that he didn’t think that she's apt for the job, but, indecorous? What the actual fuck? She washed oily dishes for god’s sake, not working for some madam in a sketchy brothel!

“I’m adaptable, you can throw anything at me. I can juggle multiple tasks at once.” She exclaimed confidently.

“Anything?” He inquired suggestively, a tease in his tone.

Why did that sound so wrong? “Yes.” She answered almost hesitantly.

“How do you have a boyfriend? A girlfriend?”

The odd unexpected question took her off-guard, “No.” She shook her head.

“Good, because with my working hour, it’d be harsh.”

Man, Dr. Foster, what did you get myself into?

“And, I despise crying women. Make sure you’re not one of those.” He said, his brows creasing in an utter distaste.

She accidentally scoffed in disbelief. Ha! As if I’d cry in front of you! Over my decomposed-dead body!

“Very well then, maybe we can begin with this.” He shoved a thick folder to her, sliding it on the smooth table.

She looked at it quizzically, unsure of what it was, but took it anyway.

“Inside you will find some basic guidance, legal document, rules that you must obey and live by,
shall I decide to take you in.”

Take me in? I’m not a friggin’ alley cat!

She tentatively opened the first page and her eyes instantly bulging from their sockets. She re-adjusted her glasses, in-case she read it wrong the first time.

“If you’re going to work for me, you must be ready for a limitless time slot of working hour. Those are nothing but details. The basic keywords are honesty, loyalty, discipline, total obedience and punctuality. I’m a perfectionist and I do not tolerate mistakes. I work non-stop and always on the move. You would need to adjust your way of living to mine.”

Discipline? Total obedience? She thought he was looking for a P.A., not a human slave! And what the fuck is this? He said details, but - this thick? Was this necessary? Heck, was this legal? Looking down the pages filled with dictatorial clauses, it didn’t feel like she was applying for a job, it felt like she was going to sell her soul to the pit of fire and brimstone!

“I’m not a very patient man Miss Lewis, and I got a lot going on in my hands.” He said promptly, as if that was a good excuse for the terms he just spelled out.

“I’m sure you do.” She replied, just to be polite.

After series of endless clauses she finally arrived to another ‘chapter’, typed in bold and capital on the heading was:

Confidential Disclosure Agreement (CDA)

“Just a basic laundry list. To prevent things from escalating the wrong way, you know, the usual. Media whores, opportunist, something along the line.” His scrutinizing eyes bore to her.

What did he just say?

“I assure you I am not.”

“But of course, words are easy Miss Lewis.”

Did he just throw that ‘easy’ word at me?
“- And do address me properly. ‘I assure you I am not, sir.’” He chided her like a child.

Her mouth went agape. This must be a prank! There’s no way this prick was being serious!

But maybe she was wrong, because he just looked at her, unrelenting. As if he was waiting for a confirmation. At that she knew, he was being serious, dead serious.

“Do you understand Miss Lewis?”

Okay, that’s it.

“No.”

“Pardon me?” He narrowed his eyes.

“No, I don’t understand.” She repeated, leaning to the desk, “But I do have questions, sir.”

She lifted the papers, tilting her head, feigning an innocent look,

“Should you be so kind to ‘take me in’, would you require anything else with this contract? Say, my firstborn? And shall I sign this in virgin’s blood or a regular pen would suffice?”

This time, his lips gawked into an absolute ‘O’, but before he had the chance to say a word she continued,

“As written and attached in my application, I graduated the top of my class. The Best. I worked my ass off, with decency and pride on those previous ‘indecorous’ jobs to pay for my tuition. And I can assure you I’m NOT a media whore or whatever you have in your twisted mind! Just so you know, I’m not here to be bullied, if it wasn’t for Dr. Foster, I wouldn’t even be here at all.”

The baffled expression on his face was priceless, if she wasn’t fuming she’d take a picture, as a souvenir (you mean … when you’re back flipping patties or washing dishes? Okay you know what inner-self? Go screw yourself!).

She slammed the contract to his desk with a loud thud, then she gracefully stood, “Now, if you’ll excuse me, I have another business to attend to.” Like, drowning myself in ice-cream whilst browsing for another job with less asshole of a boss.

“Oh, one more thing, sir.” She smiled sardonically, “You'll never come across anyone as good as me. Not even close.” That was more of a curse rather than bragging, hopefully it’ll actually work.

“Have a good day, sir.” Darcy held her head high and slammed the door behind her. Hard.
She didn’t need another minute to stomach the situation. She knew she would regret what she just did because her rational-logical-stable inner-self (she rarely makes an appearance) was already screeching inside.

**FUUUUUUCK! Now what will you tell Dr. Foster? Why can’t you curb your temper for a few more minutes? Why? WHY? WHYYYY?**

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What did just happen? What in the world just happened?

Loki stared at his doors. He was certain that Miss Lewis back there had just insulted him, told him to fuck off. She didn’t even have to say the words, it was clearly written on her burning blue eyes.

Loki was stunned, speechless for the first time in his life. That woman was a whirlwind. How did Jane Foster came across such exquisite creature? Somehow he wasn’t displeased, not even mad, quite the contrary … he was highly amused, impressed came close to describe what he felt.

Maybe she was right, though he may find one just as good, but as for the charming part, he highly doubted it, no one would come close to that spitfire of a lady. She has wit, she was bold, maybe she’s just what he needed, because he had enough of self-proclaimed ‘professional’ wimpy imbeciles that went out his door crying like someone just vandalized their latest season Chanel's bag, saying that he was a heartless monster.

He swept through the pages of her resume and caught the black and white photo on the upper corner of her data, with one finger he traced on her smiling face.

A very good point that she’s actually smart, her documents confirmed that part. Judging from her past jobs, she’s one hard-working girl and Dr. Foster spoke highly of her. Easy on the eyes too, his subconscious whispered. It was hard to keep a straight face when she stepped into the room. Even in her dull and cheap attire, she was as exquisite as a summer's day, bright and beautiful. Those enchanting blue eyes, plump lips, pristine skin, and by the devil, her sinful curves ... dear gods. If he didn’t know any better, he would think Jane Foster had just sent him a gift, a banquet, for one.

Virgin blood? Interesting woman.

With a smile on his lips he took out his phone and scrolled for Dr. Foster’s number (she demanded to be the first prompted shall Darcy Lewis passed her test). She answered him within the first ring, anxiously, quite apparent how much she wanted Miss Lewis to nailed this.

“Dr. Foster, I - … yes, of course I behaved myself, wha - I am not a brute!” He quipped, affronted at the wayward presumptions.

“… I like her. Tell her she’s hired.” Loki twirled his cufflink as he smiled.

*Oh things are going to get very interesting, mark my words Darcy Lewis, mark my words.*

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They're back!

At first I wasn't gonna post the fic this soon, howeverrrr very recently I tumbled upon Loki's Dirty Whispers (hot damn ... mmfhh!!!), so late - I know, I'm not a cool kid! (I have Chuuulip to thank for, I got myself a tumblr acc because of her question, it had opened my eyes to a whole new world of hiddlesporn!), and I was like

In her best imitation of Chancellor Palpatine, my inner fourteen y/o kept on coaxing me ("Good, good ... let the smut flows through you."), and then my fingers went haywire and here we are!

Oh yes, how can I forget, here's the suit-pornspiration for this chapter:

Liked/Hated it? Ready for more? The next chapter is gonna be as tagged and promised aaand NSFW for sure.
P.S : Happy birthday to one of my fellow tasertricks shipper, have a blast day!
P.S.S : If anyone wanna drop by for a hello or anything at all, my tumblr is soothsayerstale (crazynoona was taken ... boo! So I thought why not be the goat from Kung-Fu Panda right? She was cool with her lady-beard and all.)
Behind Blue Eyes

Chapter Summary

“Ceasefire Loki,”

Chapter Notes

I owe this chapter to Hiddles’ glasses of mass destruction. The one he wore in Top Gear, also fan snap shot at the tube, and (I hope not) last but not least, the black rimmed one that he wore on red nose campaign photoshoot ... just because.

* I am sorry for the tease on the prologue, so here's my dirrrty apology, the promised continuation, a steamy, (maybe) dark-ish version. Their backstory (I'm nervous).

* I hope you noticed the tags, there will be mention of drugs, violence, and of course explicit sex. Proceed with care. Last warning. *winks*

* It started where I left off from the last series, so if you haven't read it, for any of this to make sense, you would probably need to, unless ... you know, screw this shitty plot, gimme smut lol but in a nutshell : Loki screwed up (no surprise there), she got mad, he said sorry, and she was like : na’ah, better luck next time buddy, that and a whole lot of banging.

Enjoy darlings!

xxoo

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Drenched steps echoed in the empty stairway, as usual, each time it rained, the elevator died. At least she got to do her cardio tonight, she sighed heavily.

Darcy winced when the chill bit to her left cheek, her step halted and she held her body closer. By now her pinot duffle coat was as good as the metal senile of an elevator. She looked up, her teeth were starting to chatter. Two more stories before she reached the dovecote she called a home, but the question was - does she even want to go there?
No. Not tonight.

She didn’t want the blue-black cold and hollow of her empty cot. She didn’t want to be alone. With the new resolution, she ran back down, leaving her bleak world behind, searching for a meteoric escape.

You’re a whore! Just like your mother!

Darcy shook her head, trying to shove the memory off her brain to no avail. Droplets of water sloshed her hair, trailing down her eyes as she stepped outside. Well, she was already wet anyway, she thought as she took off her glasses and slipped it to the front pocket of her bag to bravely welcomed the rain.

Her frozen feet numb, still she forced herself to keep on moving, clomping down the slippery pavement. Idly pondering on how on earth did the dipsomaniac old man knew about her and the infamous, youngest Odinson? Dammit!

The weather had chased away half the resident roaming the city street where it was usually packed still at this hour. What day was it anyway? She frowned. It wasn’t even Wednesday and she was already having the vilest week of the year.

A doctor kept on calling her since last Sunday, desperately asking her to come (‘Miss Lewis, please, we need to discuss his condition, the procedure requires your approval.’), and so when the dictator left the office early (hence the sudden heavy rain, even mother nature was in total shock), she did.

A father she rarely met, a father who was as good as dead. She received the news about his whereabouts three years back. A mail from Borson’s City Hospital dropped in her mother’s old email. She was about to ignore it, but her mother’s last words rang in her ears and gnawed at her conscience.

Sweetie, take care of daddy for me, please?

It was an ancient time pinky promise, she was barely six, it wasn’t even legally binding, she could easily default it. She wondered sometimes, after all these years, why didn’t it slip off of her memory? Her life would be so much easier without it, without him.

As usual, her foolish heart got the better of her. For mother, she convinced herself from time to time, and took care of him she did. At least monetarily (thus the beginning of her never ending part time jobs, resulting in her late graduation).

She rarely came to visit but kept it brief when she did. Mostly late at night or when he was sedated so he wouldn’t notice. But earlier, he was sober, of course he remembered her. She’s the splitting
image of her mother, sometimes he even called her with her mother’s name. Geanna.

*Was his money that paid for all these? Take these off me! Take these all off!*

The short visit she finally made was … *hellish* to say the least. The poor scruffy doctor who called her looked apologetic beyond measure, even more so when the screaming fest ended. Random objects within the old man’s reach went flying to her direction. It was almost funny looking at the doctor’s expression when it wasn’t at all his fault, he didn’t know her father like she and her mother did.

She looked up to the tall and lavish structure proudly standing before her eyes. Why did her feet take her *here* of all places?

*Oh please, you know exactly why, Lewis!*

She fidgeted on her heels, of course she knew. She knew what was waiting on top of that sky-high tower. *No*, not the benevolent king, not the prince charming. It was the daunting dragon himself, and he, he’d never ask questions. He got no time for care. He’d just plunder, incinerate, and that was exactly what she needed at the moment. She wanted to burn. Set aflame in his hands under the pale moon-glow, so when morning comes drawing in a new sun, from the ember of his fire, she will revive, spring back to life.

“Good evening, Miss Lewis! Such nasty weather,” greeted his doorman, a ginger boy in his early twenties. She nodded with a smile, losing the will to repay his polite remark as she usually did.

Darcy’s steps muffled by the lush Persian carpet, she slid the card-key to his floor, resting her head on the mirror inside the mechanical cube that will take her straight to his unloving arms.

Yes, tonight she will end the chase. The mouse was begging ever so sweetly after all, thought the kat.

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The sound of insistent doorbell ringing woke him up. *Damn,* when did he even fall asleep? Loki blinked his weary eyes, his elbows propping him on the bed, supporting him up. He swept his eyes to his left. The nightstand held his black-rimmed glasses, an empty glass and some scattered white and blue pills. *Ah,* so *that’s* why he fell easily into slumber, he thought hazily.

Loki rubbed his eyes, groaning in annoyance, the demanding ringing pounded in his head. He left the office rather early today, his lack of sleep and over all rest had finally took its toll (he didn’t entirely blame it to his workload, his stubborn as mule P.A. contributed a lot too), he might actually kill someone if he kept it on. Thus he locked his own person safely in the peak of his tower.

He swept away the duvet, threw his legs over the side of the bed, reaching for his glasses, putting them on. He never used them unless necessary, and a pair of tired eyes combined with a bleary room deemed them necessary.

The darn rain hasn’t stop tumbling as the wind sings its eerie song. He watches them as they bounce on his floor-to-ceiling windows. The back of his mind knows there are only two possibilities on whose allowed to stand right outside the doors of his private quarter. One is his mother, while the other one is …

Darcy Lewis.

A petite brunette projected on a small screen of his intercom confirmed his intuition, though it stunned him still.

Completely sodden from head to toe, tendrils of wet hair covering half her beautiful face. *What is she doing here? Is this another trick conjured by his masochistic mind? A dream?*
He immediately opens the door to let her in. She of course holds a cardkey to his penthouse, but she never uses it unless he isn't around and she had to fetch something work related.

“Darcy?”

Her expression is unreadable, “Ceasefire Loki,” she says promptly before she throws her bag unceremoniously to the floor and lunges forward, diminishing the gap between them. She flings her hands around his neck, her frosty vapor breezes to his skin, her touch as cold as the winter’s wind.

“No questions.” She whispers to his lips before she came crushing it with hers.

Loki nods softly as he deepened their kiss, hands cradling her wet hair.

It was fervent, urgent. It was an explosion of all the frustration bottled inside of him, everything he felt and more. He can feel desperation screaming in her every move, her lips, her teeth, her tongue, her trembling hands, mirroring his own.

She took control. He let her. It was bare and new, a raw emotion, a pure naked feeling, something he never tasted before, especially from her.

Please, please don’t let this be a dream, his mind beseeches. His body thrums and throbs by the longing craze stirring on his veins, oh how he missed this, missed her.

His hands embrace her shapely frame even closer, wanting to hold her ‘til the verity of the moment douses into his acumen, molding her against the hard planes of his body, tracing her every curves.

Lust has clouded his vision, seeping through his pores. “We need to take these off.” He says as he reaches to undress her, starting with the heavy coat. Water had soaked through and through every fiber of the fabric, dripping down their feet.

She steps backward, giving him access, all the while keeping her eyes locked to his. The green has dimmed into an inky obscurity, his nostrils flared, his breath ragged.

He sets aside his glasses, “I’ll warm you up.” A kiss lands on her forehead, his nimble fingers busy with her wet shirt, “Then I will fuck you, is that what you want?”

Silently, she nods, licking her quaking lips in anticipation.

“A truce then?” He asks hopefully, demanding a viva voce confirmation, his thumb grazing on her plump lips.

Another nod and a soft ‘yes’ before he lowers his head to seal their deal. The wet and coldness in her shivering body melts to his, damping his thin white shirt and pants. They are a mess of heat and cold all at once. Before long, he manages to strip them both naked.

Darcy leaps into his embrace, igniting another searing kiss. Her feet are tiptoeing as she clung her hands around his neck.

This is what she needed, his scent, the rich, succulent taste of his flesh, the intensity of his passion and roaring desire, his silken dulcet voice adoring her name, as if he needed her, wanted her just as bad.
Tonight, she'll join the masquerade, with the devil disguising himself as a beautiful incubus. She'll believe his every praise on her skin, all his promises and more. Just for this moment, this one night.

His strong hands snaked around the small of her waist. Lifting her up, securing her legs around his hips, not breaking the kiss. The ichorous sound of their colliding tongues whiffed in the sharp brazen air.

Her body is freezing still, Loki thought to offer her a glass of liquor, but he knows she doesn’t drink. Thus he carries her to the fireplace, the warmest spot inside his penthouse. He can feels the teeth-clacking shiver under her taut skin. He definitely has to bring the heat back into her body before anything else. As to why and how long was she poured under the raging weather, he did not know, but the frigidness of her white knuckles had rendered their somber tale.

Loki grabs his tan trench coat hanging on the hall-tree, covers it over her shoulder as they sit on the velvet palanquin, the one they christened weeks before. He sets her on his lap, not letting her go, wanting to transmit his body heat to her.

It doesn’t take that long before the fire set ablaze. She's wet, soaking wet, dampening his toned thighs as she grinds on top of him, seeping through his full hard on as she rutted ferociously on it. “Darling, hush, slowly, I’m not going anywhere … ” He whispers to her ear, his thumbs on her nipples, round, and round, and push, before he suddenly pinches and repeated the whole process.

“No,” she shakes her head, panting, “Need you now, fill me up Loki, fuck me,” Her palm cradles his face as she spells out her words before once again taking his lips in hers in a silent plea.

Loki, Loki, Loki, she cries out his name between catching her breath. There's something in the way she utters it. Something that wrenches his heart with unspoken anguish, despair, blistering anger, and when he looks into her eyes, it was his own.

“Condom?” This time he manages to remember that little detail despite the uprising impetus in his venous.

Darcy shakes her head again, “I’m clean, and on pills - if that's okay with you?” She wants him, bare and naked, skin on skin.
Okay? She really had to ask? "Yes." That's all he could manage to say.

She lifts her hips, aligning their bodies, “Fuuuck – “ Loki grunts and hisses when her cunt engulfs the tip of his cock, his fingers buckling on her waist as she gradually descended, taking him whole into her heat.

Oh gods ... finally! He rejoices.

It was frantic and wild, like the wicked weather that earlier strike, taking the whole city drunk with the assault of its whirlwind of liquid sunshine. She too, took him into her whirling hurricane.

The red and gold glinted from the fireplace delightfully limned her features, carving them on his memory as she moves erotically against his body. It is beyond exquisite, hauntingly beautiful, if this was a symphony - they were playing a piano sonata of The Tempest from Beethoven. And how she plays him well.

She's nearing her edge of completion as their movement became more frenzied, feverish. Her nails clawed into his flesh, curving her spine when his fingers stroke her mound and his mouth ravished her breast in turns.

Beautiful, he whispered to her skin repeatedly and Darcy threw her head back in total abandon.

“Loki, Loki oh god! Oh oh - ” She cried out his name as she rode her pulsing release, a traitorous tear escaped, swiftly disguising itself with the dampness of her hair.

Darcy dropped her head to his shoulder, her body humming in contentment, breath heaving on her chest. He stroke the soft supple skin of her back, “We’re not done love,” he said hoarsely.

She snugged even closer, her sensitive body can definitely feel the way his cock twitched and pulsed inside. If possible, he was even harder than before. She decided to tease with a squeeze.

“Mmmh … darling,” he deliciously grunted, “Need to do this right, I can’t properly fuck you here.”

He enfolded her before lifting her up again, momentarily breaking the contact as they head to his bedroom, stepping on the forgotten trench coat pooling down the floor.

Loki placed her in the middle of his large bed, where his goddess belonged. Flicking the dim bedside lamp, wanting to look at her as he feast upon her once more.

Darcy found her body alighted again with a surge tide of arousal at the sight of his statuesque figure, and by the gods, he was beautiful. Naked, strong, and hard, stood magnificently on the edge of his classic four-poster bed. She crooked a finger, motioning a come-a-hither his way.

A lopsided smile rose on his lips, “Every single night I was dreadfully waiting for this, for you to come.” He drawled as he crawled on all four, prowling over dangerously, like a ravenous predator.

“What?” She asked coyly. Her heart thundering at his admission, on how perfect was this captive moment of pretty lies.

“I did.” His eyes drank the sight of her nakedness, gloriously splayed over the white Egyptian cotton sheet.

“Weren’t you busy - with those lunch dates?” Darcy asked impishly, tilting her head, wantonly twirling her hair between her fingers.
“I did have lunch.” Loki leered, looming over her, “I however, did not eat.”

“You weren’t?”

“No.” He leaned even closer, "And now I’m famished.” He cupped her jaw, angling her to face him squarely on the face. A heated longing and hunger painted there.

His gaze hardened when he noticed a fresh wound on the upper side of her left cheekbone. The skin around it had darkened into a fade shade of purple. Did someone hurt her? Bubbling anger arises from the pit of his gut.

She brusquely tapped his hand away, shaking her head she said, “No question. My condition for our truce.” Darcy repeated her request in a definite tone, tilting up her chin.

He was about to utter his protest when she cuts him clean, “We have rules Loki. Do not cross it.”

Damn those fucking stupid rules he made! He cursed inwardly. No attachment, no hearts and all that bullshit, absolutely nothing but impersonal sex, and much to his surprise, she had agreed to each one of it, she even added one of her own, that if one shall cross it, the deal is off.

Loki clenched his fists, he knew it was not his place to worry for her. That part was obvious, but still, hearing her saying it vindictively to his face, jagged like spiky thorns over his heart. Tampering his irk, he answered between gritted teeth, “As you wish.”

“Kiss me.” She commanded, reaching out to him, fingers entangled to his hair, wanting to erase the downcast look on his face. No. No more pity. She had enough of it for a lifetime. That ill-fated train had left, the poor little girl grew-up. Besides, playing a white knight in a shining armor would not be a fitting role for her malevolent paladin.

Loki fulfilled her request, recognizing her urgency, giving her the much needed escape. He rested his elbows on each side of her body, not wanting to crush her with his weight. He took his time to worship her, sating his hunger, kissing every inch of her skin before settling between her thighs.

Darcy’s fisting tightly to the lush duvet, bracing herself for the fine assault of his clever tongue and fingers. Soon, holding on to the eiderdown was not enough. Crying out his name was not enough. She reached down and tugged on his soft sable hair, clutching her fingers on them as he ravished her thoroughly. A nip, a swirl, in, out, up, down, on and on he goes.

“Soft, sweet, sweet cunt” he punctuated each word with a flick of his tongue over her honeyed folds.

She whimpered wildly, rocking her hips to his mouth, and when his fingers joined in the feast, quite attentively, another current imploding inside the streams of her veins. Her vision blurred, the time stilled. Her heart thumping in a chaotic rhythm and beat, her cheeks burnt numbly with pulsating heat running from her core.

Loki lifted his head, his raven hair in a sexy mess, he moved over to kiss her. Darcy can taste herself on his lips. She wound her hands around his neck, dragging him closer to her body, “Take me, Loki –“ she said breathlessly. Set me on fire, “Want to feel you come.”

With a low growl rumbling in his chest, he laced his fingers with hers, gripped them tight, and with one hard thrust he penetrated deeply into her cunt. She locked her heels behind his back, curving her body, welcoming him.

“Darcy! Nghh … fuck!” So tight, so hot, so fucking amazing! It made his devastating wait
worthwhile.

Slowly, he drew out before driving back in with unreserved vigour, wringing her inside out, again and again. She cried louder each time.

The percussion of their mating dance filled the air, the fire he kindled burst into a blistering heat, challenging a dare to the frozen night breeze. The reverberation that followed their mingling sighs and moans floated about the dim lit room.

The gaze he was giving her is too much for her to bear, as if he pried into the depth of her soul, searching for untold secrets gone astray. Under the scrutiny of those mesmerizing irises, she didn’t think she could utter a blatant lie, not in a moment like this, and so she closed her eyes. Savoring him with the essence of her being. She clenched his long fingers tighter in hers. The bittersweet irony didn’t escape her notion, on how they fit oh so perfectly.

“Darcy, Darcy, Darcy … “ gently he chanted her name, a melody of affliction in his tone. She wasn’t sure why at the beginning, until he dropped feathery kisses on her face as he caught the droplets of her fortuitous tears, tracing them down her face. Softly, he licked the blacken bruise on her cheek. She opened her eyes then, glassy blues locked to his sharp as sin greens, a hint of tenderness and pain hovers there.

*Please don’t. Don’t ask. Don’t be nice.* Her heart conveyed.

Loki seemed to catch the rendered emotion shone from her eyes. He filled her up harder, faster, the bed trembled beneath them. He clutched her heels to his shoulder, canting her hips higher, pummeling even deeper into her. The gossamer thin threads between pain and pleasure was stretched into a whole new level with the ferocity he was giving her.

*I’ll fuck the light out of you, I’ll make you forget, chase away your demons.* His soul silently promised as they race together, closer to the edge of Valhalla.

Darcy cried out, it was liberating, it was enchanting and aching at the same time, and how very alive he made her feel. *Yes,* she recited. *More,* she begged.

*Let go darling, let it all go,* he whispered softly to her ear, and at once she knew. She knew he wasn’t referring to their shuddering release. He was conversing to her soul, casting out her rage and all her foul.

After the rushing tide had calmed he held her closer into his embrace, so close in fact, that it made her feel as if her shards and broken pieces were finally meld together. And true to his promise, he had burned her pain into cinders.

Later, they fell asleep, limbs entangled in each other embrace. Sated, content as distant voices of the drifting rain mingled with their steady heartbeats and dozy breaths.

When the rain finally stopped and the fair moon was high up in the vault of heaven, Loki rouse again. She can feel his erection pressing onto her hip.
“Again?” She asked softly, a languid smile on her lips, wasn’t entirely sure if she was half awake or half dreaming, all she knew was that she feels weightless, with her mind abound and her heart fleeting ten feet above the ground.

“I told you, I’m famished.”

***

Loki was still trying to catch his faltering breath after their last round, lying on his back. His jumbled bed was a silent witness of their dalliance endeavor. The silken tie he used on her somehow ended up around his wrist.

“You’re leaving?” He asked incredulously. It was almost four in the morning. Why would she insisted on going back to her place? She basically just stayed the night! Loki was getting more and more annoyed at this stupid line she drew between them.

“Obviously.” She answered dryly as she put on her under garments, her back to his.

“Those are still wet.” He quipped, his jaw clenched.

“I noticed.”

“Would you consider staying? Use the spare room if you wish.”

“Too much kindness for one night Mr. Odinson, it’ll ruin your reputation.” She replied coquettishly.

Somewhere between him thoroughly fucking her (and vice versa), he insisted on applying a soothing salve on her cheek. His usually brisk fingers were soft when they work their magic. Blush washed over her alabaster skin. Compassion. She wasn’t use to it, especially coming from him.

“Darcy … “

She walked over to the side of the bed, bent down to land a lingering kiss on his cheek, “Thank you, Loki.” She whispered a promise, “I owe you one.”

He didn’t answer, his face sullen.

“I could use a dry shirt and jacket though.” She continued with her usual bright smile, dismissing his lack of response.

“Fine.” Do whatever you want! He let out a heavy sigh, knew that this mulish woman would never change her mind.

“Take a day off. I don’t need a sick employee.” He commanded (though he didn’t feel the least commanding, damn this woman!) as she wandered off to his wardrobe.

“I’m fine Loki. A cup of coffee will do.”

“What did I tell you about obeying my words?”
And so amidst the early fog, Darcy went home, inside the warm embrace of his shirt and jacket. She inhaled deeply into the over-sized black wool, tugging it closer to her body. She chose the one that he wore earlier, the one thick with his scent, thinking that perhaps later, she could curl and sleep in it, and dream of a better life.

***

After she left, sleeping was no longer an option as speculations running in his brain and anger in his vein. Nullifying a certain contract or/and filing a suit to his legal representatives was on the hot list. Why?

Two words.

Fandral. Twitter.

Apparently that shameless philanderer of a lawyer that Thor had ‘wisely’ chose to represent the company had once again proven oblivious to the meaning of ‘privacy’.

An automatic alert was set on his email for each time his name surfaced on every media available. This time, a picture emerged, from social media straight to the gossip column. A snap shot of him and his ‘plus-one’ attending the party. He raked his hair in annoyance. It’s been weeks for heaven’s sake. When will that bloody party stop making a re-appearance?

Actually, bad press was a part of his lifelong facade. He’d been in it one too many times, in the hands of women with nameless faces, mostly just to irate his ‘family’. But not this time. This chaotic world, his depraved ways, she deserved better.

Loki really couldn’t decide on who’s the real imbecile in this folly, but most probably weigh more on the one hiring a firm called ‘The Warrior Three’ (which was named after a losing bet on a drunken night). Loki highly suspected that the lecherous blonde man acquired his Magna Cum Laude straight from the petticoats of his professors. He rubbed his tired eyes, reaching for his phone.

Those buffoons can wait, for now ... “It’s me. Contact черная вдова. Tell her that it’s a go.” He commanded tensely to the speaker.

Darcy Lewis. That woman was a raging storm, swirling him into her vortex then leaving him in devastation on her wake. He yanked the other silken tie, clutching it into his fist. Another memento that still tied loosely on one of the pole of his bed.

"They look good on you ‘darling’, too tight? Good." She said sassily after securing a killer knot
around his wrists.

*Stop thinking about bedding her Loki, you sick fuck!* He cursed when he felt a jolt of arousal stirring on his cock.

Of course he got his fix of her. *Finally,* after all these horrendous weeks of torment and agony (at least on his part, honest to all deities known to mankind, those tight pencil skirts she wore, were tools of torture), but then she had to come here, all wounded and broken, and he supposed to leave it at that?

Heartless he may be, but he felt a sense of camaraderie when faced with another anguished soul, because more than anyone, he knew just how awful that horrid feeling festering inside you, eating you alive. Endless of therapies and drug abuse were indisputable tokens of his manic demons. He get rid most of it. *Relatively.*

“- And Fen, make it fast.” He dropped the call after instructing his loyal minion to once again, making sure the safety of Darcy Lewis’ journey home.

He will get to the bottom of this. With his hands, he will tear apart the insolent bastard that dared to lay a finger on her. She was fucking *crying* in his embrace! That was *not* the woman he knew. Darcy Lewis would rather nosedive into the abyss than showing a sign of weakness to his face.

Nobody was supposed to mess with his daring P.A.. *Hel,* if anyone, it should've been him!

She didn’t want to be taken care of, he completely understood that. But *this - was* different. Foolishly, somebody was breeching into his territory, and *that* made it personal. It would only fair if he, as a businessman, seeks for a disposition. Because *nobody* touched what’s his.

Just you wait Darcy Lewis. Just you wait.

***

Meanwhile, the next morning at a law firm uptown, a baffled blonde man in a dapper silver suit with Windsor knot silk pink tie almost spurt on his espresso,

“Oh won’t you look at this? A *love letter’! Just when I thought he forgot about dear old me. This is the best one yet, listen Volstagg, let me read it aloud, *wait,* wait call in Hogun, and Thor. They *need* to hear this too.”
Chapter End Notes

The jacket that Darcy borrowed:

And the white shirt (my smelling salt on the ready):
Also, the trench coat made an appearance, the one from the Esquire UK photoshoot (was it Burberry? I'm not sure, but it did looks good on him, heck potato sack would look good on him), that shoot was a thing of art and beauty mmmhh...

Liked/Hated it? Do let me know, I am literally nervous, finished this weeks ago, weeks, and after biting my nails I finally pressed the post button, was it ... okay? Was the 'temperature' warm enough? I wasn't fishing for compliments nor do I try to whales in insults lol but whatever grind your gears is fine by me (or just a simple truth would suffice), seriously, do I need to tone it down? Inputs are welcome.

I hope I did not screw things up by mucking the tone of the story, but I just can't help it. I blame it on the rain, and Adele. Totally.

This won't be a long series, though a tad longer than the first, say, maybe 8 - 10 - 12 chapters the most (even numbers, I'll always end it in even numbers lol), perhaps I'll modify it as we go along, depends on the muse, usually your encouragement help to refuels my imagination.

Side note :
~ I named Darcy's mother, Geanna Morrigan, after Gehenna, the goddess of death in Hebrew and Morrigan, the goddess of war and death in Irish lore *winks*

~ черная вдова / Chyornaya Vdova : The Black Widow
If Tom can read the Russian written on Chelsea Handler's T-shirt, then why can't Loki?

Have a great Sunday to everyone, thanks for stopping by ;)
Moonlight Mile

Chapter Summary

“Are we dreaming?”

“Perhaps. Should I wake you up?”

“Never.”

Chapter Notes

Because (1) Loki, and (2) Jaguar's "Business Associates"

After days fusing over some minor details, of editing (re-editing) on and on (and on) I finally decided that there was nothing more for me to add/delete, so I'm bracing my heart, crossing my fingers and pressed the post button to throw this little pebble into the AO3 sea of fan-fiction. Hope you'll like it, it costs me so many hours of peaceful mind ;p

P.S : I humbly thank you for all the kind support that keeps me going (comments, kudos, bookmarks, etc), this chapter goes for each one of you :* especially to the birthday girl, the unicorn and my fave chibi loki doddlers.
P.S.S : I should have said this beforehand, that I happen to be a huge fan of Mulder and Scully, though I won't be taking this (quasi) love story that far, as Freddie Page had eloquently said, I'm not a sadist (and I'm not that good a writer either).

Enjoy darlings!

* Not Beta'd (Translation : not suitable for grammar Nazis)

xxoo

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Loki had thought about it, many times over, on what his heart truly desired. Unlike what most people would've guessed - the answer was rather clear and simple. He just wanted to fly, wings
free of gilded thorns of past treacherous memories. And for a new beginning, a salvation, as written in old as time history, everything must first fall apart. This Eternal City, this corrupt arrogant world that he lived in, must be purified, down to ambers and cinders and pyre.

He swiftly changed the gear as the wheels roaring down the gritty pavement. The chilling night wind drifted over his skin as he slid down the car window, letting the crisp air swept through. His mind momentarily flew back, a decade away, to a certain monumental day.

“With your help, we will bring them down. All of them.” The one-eyed man drawled, death and danger marred his offer. He said that he was a government ‘agent’, been working half his life to take down the plaque that had poisoned the city, the country.

Loki was twenty-one, an undergraduate at the time. For safety reason, Odin had sent him to London - where he, of course, made all sort of mischief (and mayhem) that got the Scotland yards pulling off their hair. That was when he finally knew, all those things that he suspected were indeed, true. How could he be so blind? The clues were there for him to see as he was living inside the serpent lair. On why everyone was to cower before his last name and why that man had come to their house in the middle of the night, missed his shot and instead of losing a life, Odin lost an eye. The other man, however, was not as lucky. With a rifle hidden in the library, Loki finished him off in one single blow. The first life that he ever took. Though in the end it was considered as a case of self-defense, still, it was horrible, sickening. For days Loki couldn't stomach anything in fear of emerging nightmares filled with blood. Crimson red, gushing thick, dripping.

Nicholas (the agent) told him the grim tale about his father, his associates and their not so innocent businesses. With bile rising on his gut and cuffs around his wrists (sometimes mischief got caught too), he listened. The untold story that spoke of the nine powerful families that coiled around the country. Of course, Odin was the head. They called him, the All-Father. As many leaders before him, when old age came approaching, he decided to cleanse his dirty hands, washing himself and his family away from the underworld, building new businesses to cover the improper old.

Though one truth remained firm. The very structure was built in blood, their whole history was written in blood. There was no washing it, scarlet wouldn’t simply turn to white.

The other soon followed his lead, covering their tracks, playing the part of a saint. All but two, the one calling themselves the ‘Giants of the North’ that swarmed all over the lower district, and the one they called the ‘Mad Titan’. The later went missing more than a decade ago, out of the country. No one can really tell where to exactly. Some said that he had found the one that he’d been looking for and left.

After Loki accidentally obliterated the lead (their midnight ‘visitor’), the Giants said to be working under Titan’s order. Loki highly suspected that they were the one behind the kidnapping, the one that started it all. The catalyst for his lifetime anguish, his sole reason for playing along with the scheme. No one ever recorded the ‘incident’, not even the police, because Odin simply thought it would bring ‘bad publication’ to their family. No one was to die anyway.

From that moment, when his young betrayed heart said yes to Nicholas’ offer, he knew he was paving his own demise.

Today, true to his promise, an elementary solution that they both seek was already in the grasp of his palms. Soon, everything will burn, soon, all the tables will turn. With Kristallnacht well conspired, he was ready to breed carnage, shall calls it forward when the right time is nigh.

But even the apostles shared fine wine on their last feast, and so he too will share his. Before
everything collapsed in ruin under his feet.

Tonight, he will shed his armor, bared his soul, in the presence of this fair woman, his brown haired goddess, that had enchanted him with her wit and bravery and more.

Nothing was ever built to last and forever is just a tale, Loki thought. But here is real and now is all he needs, for tomorrow holds their own sorrow.

With a delicate rose on his hand, a sharp suit molding his skin, he knocks on the queen’s humble door.

***

Darcy Lewis thought that night was a mixture of a fancy dream, stolen moments and reckless hearts. But mostly, a dream, because Loki showed up at her door and asked her out for an overdue party for two. Dressed in a dark fitted suit, with silken lapels and a dapper silk bowtie to match, another stem of red rose in his hand. This time, he picked her up himself, like a gentleman would.

She was hesitant to accept, for two apparent reasons. First off, her heart was still reeling over what happened at her last visit to his penthouse a week ago. Yes, on that stormy night, the one that marked the downfall of her pride (dramatically put maybe, but godamnit, it was!). She, cried, she fucking cried in front of this man! Talk about humiliation. He clearly warned her that first time about how much he despised crying women! Thank god at least he had the decency not to bring that up and rub it to her face. With the rest of her pride intact she tried her best to keep her head high (despite utterly cringing inside).

Secondly, it was still vivid in her memory the last time he invited her out and the bad taste it had left on her tongue. Horrible was an understatement of the year for what went down that night.

No, darling, no more tricks, he assured her. He looked so sincere when he said it, moreover he was giving her the puppy eyes - again (cheater!), and as usual, her heart, her foolish heart got the better of her. So here they are, toe to toe, all dashing and striking in each other's presence.

“Ready?” He asked when she stepped out from her door, divine in her simple black dress. It was low cut on the back, down to expose her back-dimples, though totally covered to her collarbone on the front.

“Don’t I always?” She smiled, one hand perched on her hip.

Loki’s eyes glinted with appreciation at the beauty standing before him. He faintly returned the smile as he offered her his elbow. When she finally took his invitation, their young night was finally starting.

The ride was silent though not awkward, never awkward. They've grown accustomed into each other skin that words weren't always needed. Though judging from the lack of his usual ‘old-noir-thriller-movie’ music on their background, she can tell that somebody was in a good mood.

He drove her to a mansion up the hill. She never went there before, though she read a document of this property a month back. It was new, his.

“I have prepared something for us.” He said as he ushered her in, she immediately noticed that
there was no one else presence but the two of them.

This new place was (surprisingly) delightfully, intimate. None at all cold and distant like his monochromatic office ... and wardrobe. A jet-black grand piano was spotted near the dining hall (she bet he can play it well). Though to make sure that she wasn’t in the wrong mansion, right above the fireplace, proudly mounted on the wall were varied of archaic double-edged swords. This time completed with a gilded horned helmet on top. Was it Viking? Celt? Germanic? Beats her, she just wished that it was for fashion rather than function, because it was quite a dumb idea to have had horns on your helmet in a battle. Wouldn’t those provided a firm holding for when someone is about to slit your throat?

“Nice helmet, I bet it’ll look good on you.” She teased.

“You have no idea.” Loki replied with a smile, and a wink.

A wink. *A wink??? Fuck! Brace your heart Lewis!*

He finally stopped before a pair of double doors, snapping her from drooling over his pretty smile (and naughty wink). When he swiftly opened the doors, she couldn’t hide her gape, seeing where he took her, what he had set for her.

It was beautiful. It was perfect. Exactly what she would imagine and what supposed to happen instead of what really did weeks before.

A table for two was placed so beautifully sophisticated on the wide balcony, over viewing the city shone with lights so bright they bellowed a mock to the constellation up above. But the candles took the trophy for the night, for they cast magical lucent to this autumn scented little sanctum, transporting them into another time and place. A place where fairy tales abide and their princes, reside.

The food must have been exquisite (the green-eyed host/hot butler that cater to her was impeccable) though her mind could no longer assess them with proper clarity, she just chewed and swallowed on command, telling her stupid-self to stop swooning and her heart to stop somersaulting. Which clearly, wasn’t working. Not with the way he licked his lips and definitely not with the way his smoldering gaze was locked on her like a homing missile.

“To what do I owe this night?” Darcy asked as she dismissed the champagne and took a bite of a fresh sweet strawberry into her mouth. A lover’s song faintly playing on the background (Sinatra). Lulling, inviting.

“I believe we haven’t share a proper meal and a dance that night.” Loki said, as if it was a good answer as any, but then he added a dab of truth, “A celebration Miss Lewis, I think you know what’s coming.”

She gave him a long stare before she answered, “I do.”

Of course she knew, she was never a fool. She knew exactly what her boss was doing, with his hostile takeovers, barreling decades old pillars that upheld the golden citadel, bribing (and by all means, blackmailing) those viceroys seating on high. The lone wolf sunk his fangs, clawed his way up and beyond, taking any measure needed, decency be damned.

At the end of the day, it was clear what this ominous devil had desire, what had awakened his hunger, his dangerous appetite, for he was trying to swallow the very empire his family owned down to the very last bone.
“Then let’s cherish the moment.” Loki said solemnly.

As if it was our last, for soon enough, a storm will come, chaos will roam.

“And no business talk, not tonight.”

Yes, no business talk, she agreed pensively, because he’d be piss if he knew what she did earlier today. She prompted Dr. Foster, on an impending catastrophe formulated by her ‘dearest’ brother-in-law. She knew there was no stopping him, and a heads up would hurt them no less, but still it would be better than reading it from the morning newspaper.

“No business talk, then what, we talk about personal stuff?”

“I thought you don’t do ‘personal’?” He raised his brow.

She shrugged nonchalantly, “I could say the same about you.”

He smirked, humor in his eyes, “We have so many things in common, don’t you think?”

“Oh I beg to differ.” I happen to have a heart and I’m not a control freak like you and your stupid rules!

“Is that so?”

“I’d share mine if you’d share yours.” Maybe.

“Were you bargaining on my table Miss Lewis?” He asked, thoroughly amused.

“I’m a fast learner and I do have a fantastic teacher.”

“And what would your teacher say to that offer of yours?”

Darcy huffed, “Well, he’s kind of an asshole. So perhaps he’d say something like ‘I don’t do tit for tat’.” She said the last line thick in his accent.

A dark chuckle rasped from his throat, his face light up. It was fucking distracting, she had to look away from that pretty face. She wanted to lick that pretty face. Damn him.

“Then I have to say that you indeed have a fantastic teacher.”

Both at work and under the sheet, she mused, the best one indeed.

“Was the food to your liking?” He set down the silverware with impeccable table manner.

She can’t possibly tell him that she was too busy swooning to be a culinary judge so she just waved her hand to her now empty plate and licked her lips from the remnants of honeyed nectar, “You think?”

“Dessert?”

“I’m in the middle of it. You want some?” She took one more strawberry and when it reached to her mouth, she deliberately stalled her movement, running it slowly on her tinted red lips before
taking a bite.

His jaw clenched and suddenly his suit felt a bit too tight at the sight. Minx. “I will … soon enough.”

She cleared her throat and looked at him through her lashes. “So … with all these candles and pretty things and no business talk to boot, does that make this a date?”

It was a stupid question that even the celestial moon knew the answer, she just wanted to throw it out there.

“You can call it anyway you like darling.” With a devil-may-care attitude he raised his flute, saluting her way before taking a long sip.

She lightly nodded, not giving away anything on her expression, “Very well then, this is not a date.”

Coming with that agreement, he took her hand for a dance. Their first dance. He gathered her close, lining her lush body to the hard planes of his. His fingers momentarily caressed her cheek, scanning her fair face for any trace of bruise (there was none).

“The rose, the first one. It was different.” She stated, breaking the scrutiny of his eyes, they were closer to blue than green now under a different light that cast.

“Perceptive eyes you have. It was. Did you like it?” His touch kissed her spine. The plunging V-line on the back had given him access to a smooth, silky treat.

“I never saw one quite like it.”

“Obviously.” A playful smile rose on his beautiful face, and she immediately thought if any of this was real, “I took it from my mother’s garden. It was a hybrid of the old breed and the new. Maybe one day I’ll take you to them, to their birthplace, to Bulgaria.”

She replied with a bright smile, “It was beautiful.”

“As you are.” He said demurely, his voice was molten gold, rich and languid with magic untold.

Her cheeks flushed. “I could say the same about you.”

“Is that so?” A feign confusion on his face.

“You know you are. And you smell nice too.” She nudged at his chest.

“I smell?” He arched his right brow incredulously.

“Yes, you do.”

“Of what?”

“Of old money, and old books.”

He laughed at her remark, a careless and melodious laugh, “I suppose you love those?” He knew she does, he saw those books filled her small flat, lining in her shelves, on her desk.
“Oh I do, I do love old books.” It was one of their shared interests, she noticed.

The song changed its tune, and he twirled her softly, it felt like he took her floating through the air. With every move, every friction and every effortless weaving of their steps, this felt more and more like a foreplay rather than a dance, but then again, maybe it was.

His seamless movement didn't surprise her. He was one great dancer (would be such a crime if he wasn’t with those long legs of his), she saw him danced before, albeit not often as he doesn’t like crowd or parties, with some social butterflies, some actress/model wannabe, whereas she, the ever-presence P.A. posed as a wallflower, preferably standing near the buffet table.

“Ah … I know this song,” She said when a familiar melody emerges in the background, a French cover. “My mom, she often sang it to me before I went to sleep, to chase away bad dreams.”

Darcy mumbled a line, the one that she memorized the most when he suddenly broke into a fit of laughter.

“What?” She raised her brow.

“You - sang off key.” Widely grinning, Loki unapologetically said with an amused expression. She slapped his shoulder, “Oh, like you don’t?”

Loki held their gaze, then he began to lick his lips tentatively before he leant close to her ear, merely a breath apart. Her heart started to flutter frivolously, like bird wings on a stormy flight. His tempting lips hovered on her lobe, the hot vapor from his breath sent tingles of heat all over her body, then he whispered ever so softly,

\[
\text{Ce souvenir je te l'prends} \\
\text{Des souvenirs comme ça, j'en veux tout l'temps}
\]

\textit{Holyshitballs! He even sings beautifully!} Her jaw dropped to the floor (well, it would if she was Betty-Boop), her cheeks helplessly burning as the melodious foreign words drifting fluently from his lips.

“How did I score?” He teased, smugly grinning.

“Shut up Loki.” She wittingly steps on his toes, eliciting another chuckle from him.

“Besides, I compensated my lack of tune in other areas.”

“I’m sure you do.”

“\textit{Not} the one you have in mind.” She narrowed her eyes.

Darcy felt adrift, her racing heart wasn't ready for this kind of assault. Cold, ruthless and distant she can handle without a sweat, but \textit{not this}. She took a mental note that he can be charming when
he wishes to, and it is equally (maybe even more so) dangerous than his usual malicious self.

Their conversation flowed like endless stream, it was pleasantly chipper, colorful. They talk about the adventures in her books, the tragedy on his (they argued a bit about that one), about the food, the flowers (and how terrible he was with his apology), and every other mundane bits revolving their petty life in this centuries old world.

His laughter laced throughout the talk. Yes, laughter, Loki Odinson, laughed (she feared for another thunderstorm tomorrow), earnest and without abandon. He looked so beautiful, too beautiful. She would suggest him to do it more often, but decided to kept it to herself. She wasn't a masochist after all.

“It’s quite surreal isn’t it Miss Lewis. You without you claws. I rather like it.” A crooked smile lit his lips, adorning his striking feature.

“And you without your scowl.” Though it’s hazardous for my sanity, I rather like it too.

“Are we dreaming?” She finally uttered the million-dollar question, the one dangling on the back of her mind since the beginning of the night.

Loki tilted his head, his fingers swept a tendril of hair off her face, his thumb rubbing circles on the low of her back, “Perhaps. Should I wake you up?”

Darcy’s gaze lingered on his mesmerizing eyes. With an absolute certainty she replied,

“Never.”

A pause before his touch caressed her face. He said nothing when his thumb grazed her lips, and silent still when he descended to capture her lips with his. She instantly closed her eyes, wanting to bask in this magical moment with her soul.

He tilted his head for deeper admission, his tongue invading her parted lips. His hold around her body tightened as her feet tiptoeing and her fingers reach to grab on his silken lapels.

It was sinfully sweet, intoxicating, it sent her toes curling, her heart, thundering. She can taste the heady champagne on his tongue and considering the possibility that somehow the remnants of the exquisite taste of the pale golden liquid in his mouth got her drunk, because the room was spinning, her heart was flying.

The resonant of their kissing and her sultry whimpers assaulted his sanity. This stunning woman, there was something enticing about her, something even words could not begin to describe and he found himself lost, helpless in the novelty of her charm and wonder. Her mouth tasted like strawberries and pure bliss. Loki can feel his need surging with unabashed greed. This dress she wore, encasing not a single tease on the front, but the flowing softness of the fabric sculpted her curves exquisitely, like a second skin, he cannot wait to peel it off her.

She aligned her hips with his pelvis, the growing need between his thighs didn't escape her notice. Every nerve ending in his body alighted with each friction of hers, as he kept their slow dance flowing, kindling the heat, building it into inferno.
“More?” His voice ragged.

“More.” Darcy answered with a sigh. She can feel his erection probing between their clothes, leaving her hot and needy with dripping want. His runner thigh was now nudging between hers, spreading her stance.

“Now?” He asked again, his breathing panted as she nibbled on his jawline.

“God yes, yes.” She reached to tug his raven hair, tipping his head, claiming his lips along with her desperate answer.

Soon enough their world will condemn him, and by tomorrow comes this moment will be nothing but a faraway dream, but tonight, let the raven crows, let the hellcat prowls, because tonight, tonight was theirs to savor.

His teeth sunk into her nape, softly, nibbling, laving, licking, “You’re so sweet, so soft.” His fingers reach down to the hidden zipper lining on the side, peeling the dress off her shoulder, exposing more flesh for him to feast upon.

Loki cupped her breast, the most amazing pair he ever saw and tasted. He ran his thumbs in circular motion on her nipples until the softness turns to taut. “Beautiful …” he roughly whispered, his eyes darken completely.

She was whimpering aloud, desperate for more, her hands holding on tight to his lapels, “Kiss me Loki …”

With pleasure. His hands coiled around her ribcage, tilting her upward, and he bent down to bring one nipple to his mouth whilst keeping the thigh that was spreading her legs, rubbed on her folds. Darcy threw her head back, surrendering into pleasure, enjoying the feel of his lips, his tongue, when he licked, when he suckled. It felt as if he was pulling a taut invisible string straight from her nipple down to her core.

His tongue was circling, dizzying, a nip, a bite, again and again. “Yesss … mnhh!” She moaned, biting her lower lip, her hand reaching down to his pants, palming his straining erection over the fabric.

“Bedroom?” He offered, his breath heavy.

“No. Now, here, take me here Loki.” She cupped his face, holding her eyes to him under her lashes, taking his hand in hers, placing it between her legs.

Here? Now? Gladly. His face instantly darkened, his blood roaring at her request.

Loki backed her up to the stone parapet facing the city, kissing her with burning desire. Hot, molten, liquid fire. His tongue lingered before he went trailing softly down her nape, her delicate collarbone, her breast, her torso, before finally settling down between her thighs. He grappled a handful of her skirt, hauling them up for better access, was expecting to tackle her undies only to find that there was none, he was greeted with her naked flesh instead, “My … my, you naughty girl,” He said with his wolfish smile, hunger in his eyes.

Her cries of pleasure interweaved with the night wind when his mouth finally touched her there. His tongue ran along her folds, on repeat he flicked and sucked at her core in all the right spot, up, down, all around. His thumb gently pressing, circling on her clitoris while two of his fingers easing in and out of her.
“Darling, you’re so wet, I want to bury myself in you.” He hoarsely whispered to her cunt between the movements of his tongue, it sent instant vibration all over her body.

Fuck! Fuck! FUCK!

“Loki! Oh god!” Her eyes fluttered, blur in her vision at the struck of her first orgasm. Without stopping his tease, he coaxed her though it.

He rose up, hands on the buckle of his pants, there was no longer a tease on his face. Desire had taken over him. Watching her shatter, calling out his name. His cock was painfully hard and pulsing, he desperately wanted to drive into her, enveloped by her heat. He turned her over, placing her hand on the railing, “Hold on Darcy,” He said promptly as he unzipped his pants, then he sent her dress falling into a puddle of mess down the cold stone floor.

She was standing naked on her high-heels, her back to his chest, the horizon as their curtain, velvety black, twinkling with lights. He drank in the marvel, the beautiful goddess that took his breath away, standing right in front of him, and at that moment he decided to savor their affinity instead of surrendering into his own greed.

His finger trailed on her glowing skin, along the S of her spine before he rounded his hands to her hips, canted her to him, sliding his cock between her thighs right under her throbbing wetness. Then he started to move, grinding, rubbing, lubricating her. She hissed and whimpered in response.

“Loki, I want you …” Darcy pleaded as she glided her hips backward.

He kissed her shoulder, tasting her with his tongue, “I want you too … mnhh feel that?” He gravely whispered, he set a maddening rhythm with his movement along her folds. “How much I want you? How hard I am for you?”

Goddamnit! Wide-eyed and desperate, Darcy reached down, touching him, touching where he ground onto her, “Now Loki, please …”

With every seductive push of her hips, the soft breathy whimpers from her mouth, Loki gave in. She said the magic word so sweetly after all. He easily slided in with one push. She was so wet, so hot and sleek, so tight and exquisitely delightful. They sigh in unison when he finally drove in to the hilt.

There was something raw and intoxicating, having him moving, writhing inside her while the stars, the moon and the city watched as their silent spectators, and the faint singsong from the crickets and the jealous sigh of the drifting wind played as their music.

The tide inside of her was building up again with every push and pull of his body, her hands were grappling on tightly to the coarse railing as she canted her hips backward to meet his every thrust. He kept the pace slow and steady, “Darcy … Darcy “ he gritted out her name in low moan.

Loki reached to her breast, fondling them under his palms as he took her flushed against him, her back curving against his toned body. One of her hand went up his head, tangling her fingers to his raven hair, gripping to his soft locks each time he drove back into her. She can tell that he was on his edge too, feels him pulsing inside, growing even harder, his movement rising to crescendo, his breathing labored.

Knowing that she was the sole cause of his delirium, a sense of pride soaring in her chest. Her right hand reach down, her fingers rub to her clit, chasing her own peak, wanting to share his intimate release. It wasn't that hard, hearing him crying out praises (curses too) and her name with his
velvety voice, it was the most arousing music to her ears.

“Darling … Darcy, Darcy,“ Language had left him. There was no longer a finesse in their movement.

How he loved this, needed this. She tasted like the evergreen of spring, the seduction of freedom, she made him feel anew, as if she wielded a beguiling enchantment, undoing every knotted string that gnarled on his soul.

“Come with me Loki,“ She cried out, clenching in tighter.

Within the next push he finally let go, rising up before crushing down in absolute satisfaction. His blood rushing, thrumming in his ears, their chest heaving with contentment, slowly he pulled out of her, their heavy breathing mingled as they round their hands into each other embrace.

Loki dropped kisses atop her head before procuring a handkerchief from his jacket pocket. He cleansed the sticky fluid on her thighs, softly wiping her skin ‘til she was clean.

“That was one fine dessert.” She blew out a breath.

He planted his nose to her tresses, breathing in her sweet scent, “Delectable. Exquisite.”

“Hmm … seemed like someone got his glorious vocabulary back.” Darcy teased, leaning her head to his chest.

“Let’s get you to my room, see how you can mess it up once more. I personally requested another four poster bed, the one that you loved so much.” He steadied her on her feet, placing back her dress and his pants properly before lifting her up again, carrying her inside the house.

She snaked her hands around his neck, her knees weakened at his sweet gesture, “Said the man who tied my wrists to the post.” She kissed his cheek.

He squinted his eyes, looking down to her, “I remembered it quite differently. Maybe we can arrange a reenactment? Just to be sure.” His long legs strode, the steps were clapping down the mosaic ceramic tiles, his hands were firm around her body, effortlessly carrying her as if she weighs close to none.

“I love how your brain works, Mr. Odinson.”

“Tsk-tsk Darcy, darling,” He pushed the door, “I think you need another reminder, on how to properly address my name.”

He closed the door behind them with a swift kick. And boy, reminded her he did. She cried his name aloud, throughout the room, throughout the night.

Loki ... Loki ... Loki

***

“Where did you get this?” She traces a scar on his forehead as she rests half her body on top of his
naked chest. His bed is amazingly soft and comfy, the thick duvet enveloping them as one.

“Old tale, long story.” Loki tugs her palm to his lips, kissing her knuckles.

“Were you a bad boy? Was this from a fight?” She wiggles her brows.

He chuckles, “A bad boy? You’d be surprise darling, I was a very good boy, every mother’s dream.”

“Liar!”

“Then don’t ask.”

“Oh come on! I’ve already signed your goddamn CDA!”

Another laugh erupted, his chest trembling softly, “The one you inked in virgin-blood?”

For a split second he noticed her eyes widen at his trivial words, a foreign subdued emotion tinge underneath before she replies in her usual playful tone, “Ah yes, I nicked it from a convent. Now don’t change the subject, I want answers.”

“… As I said, long story.”

“I got all night.”

“Still won’t be enough, not for what I have in mind.”

“What do you have in mind?”

“You. I want to get drunk from your taste. Will that be alright Miss Lewis?” He answers, his face sly and dangerous.

“I’m intrigued. Go ahead.” She smiles, running her naked leg to his.

Turned out, he wasn’t kidding about getting drunk. Like a man on a (depraved) mission he rose from the bed, all proud and naked as he sauntered off the room and back with a bottle of Bollinger in a bucket of ice.

That looks like fun, she licks her lips in anticipation.

“Ready?” He smirks, raising the bottle at hand.

She answers with a crook of her finger, commanding him to come closer.

He pours the liquid to a glass filled with ice cubes, he takes a large sip, all along keeping his eyes locked to hers as he prowls around the bed before settling right next to her.

“You know how beautiful you look right now? My very own goddess, so enchanting and all for me.”

She knows she shouldn’t let it affect her, those pretty words (lies) he uttered, but nevertheless, those still got her blood singing in a happy tune, her belly clenches in a delicious turn.

Loki keeps the glass steady on one hand while he’s looming over her. His mouth descended to kiss her nape and she instantly squirms in delight, feeling the coldness on his lips. He pours a few drops from his mouth to the valley between her breast, the liquor instantly pooling to her bellybutton, he
licks them clean then he repeats the process over and over again until the whole glass was empty and her head was giddy.

He refills his glass, took a long sip and trails his wintry kisses all over her and went further south, he paused to took another sip, a cube on his hand. His eyes were twinkling with mischief and wicked promises. “May I proceed?”

Darcy holds her breath, a cheeky grin on her lips when she said, “Fuck yes.”

*Oh yes, it’s going to be a lot of fun indeed.*

***

An hour later, after the invasion of his maddening hot/cold assault, Darcy rests her head on her hand, watching him as he serenely sleeps beside her. She was about to leave, slipping off the unmade bed (he kept the limo on the ready) when he suddenly grabbed her by the hand. ‘Stay’ he whispered, ‘Please’, then he pulled and curled her tight into his embrace and went back to sleep without another word. It was warm, so much warmth radiated from his body, at once, her will to leave crumble and fall.

She wasn’t sure if he was aware of what he just said or did, but enfolded in his arms, all her reasons too, had fled. Just a little while, a little while longer, she thought. For all she knew, everything may only be a dream, so sweet, yet so cruel and mean.

Her eyes drank in his peaceful face, he almost looks like a different man, a younger, carefree man, gone the harsh lines and bitterness on his face.

‘I was a very good boy.’

He *was*. She wasn’t sure why, but she believed those words. The question was, what happened to that boy? Where did he go? Or worse yet, who killed him?

The time he set on the bomb was ticking relentlessly on the eleventh hour and she couldn’t stop vexing about it, about the aftermath of his action, about what the future holds for him.

Hell didn’t just spit him out of its pit for god’s sake! *He has reasons*, she told herself. There’s just got to be something more to it. Something in the past must have cut him deep, deeper than the scars across his skin (five in total, she counted).

*And none of it was your damn business Lewis!* Her logic tried to warn her (she told her inner-self to shut it).

Perhaps it wasn’t, but her heart recognized him, recognized his pain. From the outside, he might look like he owned the people and the world he lived in, but those lonely eyes, they spoke of a different story.
Such a mercurial being this man is, the more she sinks into him the more questions arise, each one trickier than the last.

There is another thing niggling on the back of her mind, troubling her, since the first time she spent the night at his place, on her birthday (the worse one yet). She saw them on his nightstand, on his bathroom cabinets too. Pills, the amount was alarming, lining in plain tubes, there was *not* a single writing on them.

*What were those for? He’s not sick isn’t he? Or was he -*

No, that cannot be, Darcy quickly dismissed her wayward presumptions.

She runs her fingers to his hair, softly combing them off his forehead. He stirs a bit but not rousing from his slumber. A crinkle formed on his brows, gently, she smothers it out under her fingers until his expression softens again.

“Bad dream?” She mutters.

People might not see right through him and she can’t blame them. The impenetrable scornful mask he wears is made of steel, but she knows. She knows what he’s been hiding. That there’s gentleness lays dormant somewhere beneath the thorns, and the Tin Man, he actually owns a beating heart.

“Don’t worry, your little secret is safe with me,” She kisses his temple and faintly she lulls to his ear, the song he sang earlier.

Darcy thinks, even when not a soul in this whole city was in his favor, without a doubt, she’d give him hers. It would only fair, since he after all had cast away her heart despair (her dragon wields magic, she knew that too), and maybe this way, for once, he wouldn’t have to stand on his fight alone.

No. It was not love. Love is ephemeral, a fairy tale written in books, nothing but a child’s prayer. This connection between them, this is different, this is real, substantial, and never before she hand it out to another soul.

It was trust. Hers.

Despite everything, she decided to give it to him. Knowing Loki, it was a terrible decision really, but she believed in her gut.

Darcy snugs even closer into the crook of his neck, closing her eyes (*just a little while, a little while longer*), sniffing his scent, one of her favorite smell in the world. She lied. It was not of old money, not of old books. He smells like rain.

*Come what may, for they will be ready.*

*Come what may.*
Meanwhile, in another part of the town, inside a paneled library in a magnificent neo-classical estate, a fair brunette with her doe eyes slam-shuts her laptop.

“Thor, there’s something I need to tell you … maybe, you need to sit down first, no, on the other chair.” She wearily eyed her vintage crystal vase as she points to another chair for her husband to sit on.

That skinny bastard! Slapping him squarely on the face is one thing she'll do when she finds him, Jane Foster vows to herself.

***

* Translation on what he sang to her:

This memory, I take it from you

I want memories like this all the time

* What she lulls to him:

Sweet dreams ‘til sunbeams find you

Sweet dreams that leave all worries behind you

But in your dreams whatever they be

Dream a little dream of me

***

** The same melody happens to have two lyrics in a different language with different meanings (though similar). The one that Loki played was the French version while the one in Darcy’s memory was in English, sang by Ella Fitzgerald & Louis Armstrong.

(Originally it was: Dream A Little Dream, 1931)
*phew* That was quite long wasn't it? I hope I didn't tire your eyes out. At first I was gonna split it in two but I couldn't cut the flow, it wouldn't feel right.

Just a short blab about this chapter:
The thing she said about him smelling like rain, it was of the feeling of it instead of the literal sense of the word. I hope it didn't come as weird, because for me, it feels/smells divine, soothing, as if the sky was saying, it's okay, everything's gonna be okay.

I portrayed Odin as an ex Don Corleone, with history of ruin and blood, just like the war in Asgard. In this fic, just as in TDW, Loki, he's the anti hero, he already got over the adoption thing (sorta), he was just dealing with the pain. His background will be more fucked up than that of Darcy's, he is after all - Loki. The kidnapping that he mentioned, the one that he said started it all will be explain later in chapter Four, or was it Five hmm (I must take a peek on my word docs).

In short, Loki wasn't just planning to topple Asgard, but hand in hand with Nicholas (Fury) he also conspiring for ... Ragnarok (well in the modern setting anyway), bringing all down with him. I called it Eternal City (located right across Gotham City ;p), since I am not that creative, Asgard - realm eternal, also, it stands as a moniker for Rome, which links to Caius Martius (he too, wanted Rome to burn) which links to Tom ... and now I'm rambling whilst imagining him covered in blood and dirt, man, those two things, they should never, and I mean never (should ever) looked that good on any men before.

Random unimportant bit, I sent Loki away to London for college because there's just got to be a reason for his (super sexy) accent and I'd love to think that at some point during his stay, he met and befriend Sherlock (just because I love emotionally impaired bastards with crazy godly bone structure and fluffy dark hair).

And let's not forget, the suit pornspiration for this chapter, the one he wore to the Olivier Award back at 2014, Alexander McQueen, befitting like a sin, damn amazing:
Liked/Hated it? As always, comments are most welcome, though if you hated it, do let me know too, so I can keep the rest of this crazy plot tucked inside the safety of my laptop along with my other silly stories.

* Side notes :
~ There's a sliiiight chance I couldn't slip a sexy scene in one of the future chapters due to (said) plot, but you are most welcome to change that by sending me as many as hiddlesporn available in this realm for umm ... inspiration and research purposes, my tumblr is eternally open for those things.

~ I am sorry in advance bec. there will surely be a delay for the next chapter, other than doing my usual muggle job, some family will be visiting from out of town, and most probably they'll tag me along from one place to the next as most tourist and normal human being do. I might update a chapter on my other fic since I already finished it weeks ago.
Tumbling Dice

Chapter Summary

“Thank you.”

Chapter Notes

Extra nervous each time I'm about to press the post button (I slapped my hands away from it repeatedly), this one was not an exception. Bear with me gals, it's gonna be another long one (oops).

Enjoy darlings!

xxoo

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The morning after their not-a-date, Darcy Lewis woke up to an empty bed where his side was already cold. She cursed her stupid-self for staying too long, she should have never succumbed to his request to stay in the first place.

Once, in the wee hour of the morn, in the haze of her sleep, she faintly heard it. A heartbreaking melody playing from afar. She was certain that it came from the piano downstairs. At first she questioned the verity of the moment, just as the rest of her night before, but the haunting notes kept on dancing, eerily crying, until at some point, somehow it lulled her back into slumber. By the time she woke again, soft lights of tan and gold drenched her lids, but both the song and the man playing it were no longer there.

A note was left by the nightstand, his cursive writing on it was short,

‘Thank you’

$L$
That was it, nothing more. She understood what he meant. Plain and simple, he re-drew the line he crossed the other night.

Relieve didn’t flood her conscience at his gesture. She thought it would, as it should, because she couldn’t afford losing both her trust and her heart, especially to him.

Luckily, she didn’t have much time to think it over because by the next Monday, the fire he kindled finally went aflame in matter of hours.

Their starry night dream, the candle-lit night, the illusion he wove out of roses, moonlight and kisses, they had ended the way she had predicted. She didn’t need a soothsayer to spell it out for her.

This morning, Darcy noticed how her boss was giving her his usual ruthless-self. And not just that, for once, Loki seemed to be out of his element. Not that she could blame him, with the arising tension and adrenaline ceaselessly pressuring him. The clock hadn’t strike midday yet and they already got two meetings successfully tucked under their belts.

On the second meeting at the conference room, Loki, as he had precisely crafted, won more than half the votes from the company shareholders. The battle was conquered before it even begun, though the situation heated still as they went head-to-head with some old folks and their unwavering loyalty to Odin. However, no one ever stood a chance. Loki executed his game through and through. Hitting the stock exchange was just the icing, he did something else, something fishy Darcy couldn’t put her hands on. Those men voluntarily giving out their votes were visibly terrified of him (her gut was betting on foul play). In the end, the joint C.E.O structure that was once fairly divided between the brothers - crumbled, and it's now solely lie on his hands, just the way he wanted.

She wasn’t deaf to what her conscience was shouting at her, that she was working for the wrong side, that everything he did was unfair, but … once given, her trust was steadfast and firm. She knew him, knew where she chose to stand, and stand tall she will.

***

Admittedly a goddamn sleep was what he badly needed, because chaos, it had begun. Loki rubbed his bloodshot eyes as his feet take large steps down the adjacent corridors. These last few days, the media had been covering nothing but his treacherous ways. He was ready for it, for every thorny words, speculations and (not so) false accusations thrown at him by the lot of them.

“You’re messing with the balance son of Odin.” Drawled a female voice in her foreign accent, calling him from a paid phone last night.

The voice belongs to his liable, if not, best informant from the other side. Helena Sheol, widely known as Hel. A charming nickname. Together with her partner, Heimdall – they run the most ancient business in the history of mankind. Yes. Prostitution and human trafficking. Every single cathouse, from the rate of just a hundred bucks up to vast thousands per hour were at her feet. Virginal, Dominatrix, BDSM, you name it, she’d make it happen. She’s the fairy goddamn mother
for the sick and twisted. For the right price, she could make your every perverted dream come true.

Though she may not be your average every day acquaintance, leave it to Hel to give you all the juicy details to every man (and woman) in the city. All those dark kept secrets, the long list of each and every sinful bastard in this hellhole. When it comes to the art of persuasion, those kinds of secret were proven to be more effective than shoving the barrel of a gun down one’s throat. The game was easy, Loki had nothing to lose. They on the other hand, had everything.

‘You want me to send these photos to your daughter Your Honor?’

‘Tsk-tsk, Commissioner, did your wife knew about this? That you prefer young boys over her?’

People knew how Loki Odinson fought. He fought fierce and dirty. He wasn’t even ashamed of it, especially not when it served to his purpose.

*Messing with the balance*, he darkly smiled to himself. *That* he did, it was his initial purpose. To burn, to rip things apart. Things that, due to a jest of fate, never belonged to him since the very start.

He convinced himself time and again that it wasn’t all for his personal retaliation (he knew Nicholas held one of his own, concerning his first partner) that it was for a greater good, but that would only mean a blatant lie. He didn’t need that, not another lie. He was already so sick and tired of it.

*Lies*. He was nurtured, grew from them, lead to live and believe in them, and how in the end, the simple truth had broken him. Sadly, wisdom comprehension was too grand of a feat to be sitting on his puny shoulders back then, but now, he was old enough to master it, to manipulate it, for no longer shall betrayals ruined his heart, leaving it shattered in shards and tatters.

But now wasn't the time to linger on past memories, *fond* as it was. He left all that behind the day he shook hands with Nicholas. The stake was even higher now, he had to keep his sharp senses on high alert and his keen eyes open wider.

“Sir? Miss Brown said that your lawyer is waiting in your office,” his P.A. broke him from his reverie.

He nodded tersely, took a side-glance to the woman furiously typing on her pad beside him, reminiscing the way she fought with him, *for* him inside the conference room. She really was an anomaly of mass proportion. Despite everything, she had shown him loyalty and kindness, more than he could ask for. The undeserved trust shone from her eyes unnerved him, her ability to make him smile, as if he was just another man, a simple man without a fucked up past and an even more fucked up future, frightened him even more.

Loki didn’t like it, he didn’t like it one bit. Unlike Thor, life was unkind for him. He was raised to be a predator, to kill or be killed. There was never a savory choice, no in between. He remembered more than vividly what the old man had taught him. His every lesson came from his teaching. Loki was an eager student, always craving for more, because more meant knowledge and knowledge led to power. And what would Odin say regarding Darcy Lewis barraging his barricade?
‘Trust no one Loki, no one but yourself.’

‘Be cautious Loki, the fairer she looks, the more demons she hides within. She’ll bury her blade deep into your throat in moments you never expected.’

Of course Frigga was never included in his twisted lecture, for her mother too, was an anomaly, a bold and tenacious one.

As time went by, he learnt to live with it, to embrace it, and by now he was so used to the world of intrigues, of hatred, of lies. Everything else was only means to an end, to gain more power, more control, including her.

Supposedly.

It was so much easier when she was a part of that cycle. Somehow, as moments passed, without warning, she turned the game on him, made him vulnerable, almost human in fact. Everything was getting too much that it actually scared the shit out of him. He cannot let her in any further. He was safe before, comfortable in his solitude.

“Have a break Miss Lewis, looks like you needed one,” in an icy tone and a look of unreserved disdain (more to himself), he dismissed her and walked away without a second glance.

***

The tower had never been more crowded since the first time she worked there. He pulled the trigger exactly a week before the company’s 45th anniversary (the irony, he liked it, he’s a fucking drama queen), of course the news loved it. It went haywire like wildfire through every media, how Loki Odinson had single-handedly, in cold blood, overthrown the old king - his own father from the company’s throne.

The phones were ringing endlessly on each floor, it almost looked like the goddamn Wall Street had moved in to their pristine cubicle farm. The once polite answers were now rose into a simple snarky ‘No Comment’ (and at times, ‘Fuck Off!’).

Outsiders were just hungry for an entertainment, something they could gossip about during their lunch, but for thousands of employees that were working under the Odinson’s name, they were genuinely worried, knowing Loki’s track records, on how he dealt with those companies he bought.

Folks from the P.R. and Legal department looked very much like the walking dead with pallid complexion and dark circles under their eyes. The nerve-racking situation even ceased Fandral from making a pass at every female in the building. Well, almost every female in the building. For an unknown reason he seemed guarded each time Darcy was around, which actually was a good thing. She couldn’t think she would be able to hold a straight face looking at his silly moustache and his over the top saccharine speech. Darcy never trusted his type, ‘sweet’ people are the scariest (they do bad things sweetly too).

Not fifteen minutes and an empty cup later, she heard an unmistakable dispute from the double
“Damage control? Damage control my ass! Looks like you haven’t change one bit Loki. Ever the graceful sonofabitch!” Fandral slammed the door, tearing himself away from the usurper's lair.

Darcy glanced from the glass separator, setting aside the empty paper-cup from her hand. She refilled her cup twice already, because according to someone she clearly needed those caffeine shots to jolt her back to life (to her, those words teamed with the look in his eyes were translated as ‘you look like shit, go have a break’). That bastard. She couldn’t fathom the way his brain worked. He was pretty well-off on his own. Clearly, this had absolutely nothing to do with money. Asgard Industries was not his final aim. There was something more. When it comes to Loki, there was always something more, hidden in his chamber of secrets. She saw no proud laughter of the triumphant (not even his usual self-satisfied grin or evil chuckle). Loki’s mood remained ominously volatile, his nerves were aflutter. She doubted he had a good sleep or even a good meal these last few days, judging from the shadow cast on his face and the deepening juncture of his sharp bones.

From the news airing on the flat-screen TV mounted on the wall, she can see that those reporters were still swarming at the tower’s front entrance (probably on the back too). They paint the situation viler than necessary, creating more damage, which actually wasn’t that hard, mulling over the fact that the infamous Loki Odinson’s past acts were mostly the furthest from valorous.

The labels they given to him were rapidly escalating from the usual (i.e: heartless bastard). Judas one referred to him, Brutus the other printed. Odin should have never adopted him in the first place, one source said. Adopted. Actually, she heard about it more than once, though the truth behind the story was of course, debatable considering it came from the provoked mass media.

Not long after Fandral left, Thor came rushing in. The usually charming big guy was frowning in distress (considering the situation, he was entitled to).

“You stop this madness at once brother!” His voice boomed with suppressed anger and disappointment as he yanked open Loki’s door.

“Oh boy, someone’s gonna get beat up pretty bad, Darcy sighed as Thor slammed-closed the doors.

That was the last thing she heard beyond the wall, the rest of their conversation was no longer audible to her ears (not that she was eavesdropping), but a loud thud before Thor finally exited Loki’s office was an easy telling that her premonition just came true.

“Here, this might help,” she handed out an icepack as she sauntered back into his office a few minutes after his brother's departure. She was right, Thor did punch him good. A trace of half-dried blood on the corner of his torn lips and the beginning of a bruise appeared on his sharp jaw.

He took the icepack without a word, placing it firmly on the throbbing spot. She was taken aback when, out of the blue, he started to laugh. A bitter laugh that spoke of pain and grieve, she noticed ruefully.

She really didn’t know what to say, because in retrospect they both knew that he deserved it - all of it. So she did the best thing she could. Slowly, setting aside the folders from her hold, she tentatively approached him. She bravely placed a hand on his shoulder and gave it a gentle
squeeze, conveying her silent support. Her heart faltered a bit when his posture instantly tensed under her touch.

Loki gradually stopped his hollow laughter, placing down the icepack, “Foster had a meaner jab.”

*She smacked you too!*? How Darcy would love to be a fly on that wall. “What do you expect? She tamed the Thor Odinson.”

His answer came in a wry smile as he vaguely looked away to his decorated walls.

“I was surprised you didn’t dismount any of those,” she said, following his line of vision. He rewarded her with another smile, a smile that didn’t quite reach to his eyes.

“Those swords are precious collectibles Miss Lewis, and blood, is very hard to clean,” Loki answered, aloofness in his tone as his thumb wiped away the remnant of dried claret from the corner of his lips.

She quirked her brow, *was that experience talking?*

“Loki … we must leave, the public notary, you’re expected to sign the final document in two hours. With the crowd downstairs, I say we better hurry. I already arranged the limo.”

“Of course, give me a minute,” he brusquely brushed her hand away, stood up and head to the ensuite bathroom at the back of his office.

***

*It had started.*

*He tipped the scale, broke the omerta,* the words echoed in his head.

Loki gazed to his own reflection on the mirror above the sink, a pair of hollow eyes were staring back at him. There would be no turning back now. The first step was perfectly executed the way he had plotted, though facing mother would be a challenge he’d like to postpone until much - much later.

He cupped his aching jaw, looking at his torn lips and faintly smiled. It had been a while since Thor’s fist landed on his face. From the feel of it, he hadn’t lost his barbaric touch. It left his ears ringing and his head spinning for a few moments, but the best part was that it had awoken him from his stupor.

Loki wasn’t expecting to feel anything out of this ‘conquest’. If any, he was counting on satisfaction, for defeating the old man in his own game. After all this time, for all that he did, those lies and callous words that he planted on his young soul, but no, he felt none of it. Blanched, emptiness was more like it.

People said that revenge was a dish best serve cold. Now that his tongue had tasted it, he simply thought that it was a dish best not served at all.

Considering that in a way, they both lived in the same world, and as the years went by, in his search for a sense of peace, freedom from his old demons, deep down he understood (or at least try
to) of what had molded the old man. The reasons behind his actions that made him the monster that he was. As the saying goes, of people living in glass houses, maybe he shouldn’t throw stones.

Still, understanding didn’t make everything that had happened in the past justifiable.

Putting Odin and his malicious ways aside, he had finally set the wheel in motion, ready for the grand scheme. This was the moment of truth for both him and Nicholas, after their long years of waiting, of calculating and planning.

‘Give me something real to work on, and I promise you, you’ll get your revenge, fair and square. Those motherfuckers will never see it coming.’

Pretty soon everything that the ‘All-Father’ owned would be his, including those secret old archives buried in his vault. From those he could find the answers to his dread while Nicholas could procure enough hard evidence to chain those bastards. It was time for those old snakes to receive their long adjourned lawsuits.

Still, vengeance hadn’t completely blindsided him. Out of the equation that he had carefully calculated, when he first dived into this silver sea - innocent casualties were the price he had foreseen. He knew that Nicholas meant what he said, that he would seize them all. But mother, Thor, those kind souls, they didn’t have to deal with any of this shit. And the moment he owned Asgard, brandishing his name as its new ruler, they wouldn't have to. It was a risk worth taking, as he had said before - he had nothing to lose, he’d go down alone if he had to.

Summoning courage he acquired from lessons he’d learn all his life, Loki washed his face and quickly changed into a clean new shirt and his fitted dark plaid suit before heading out the bathroom. No one should see the storm brewing inside him, he had to keep his armor intact at all times. A crack meant weakness, and he refused to be associated with one. With steady steps, he held his head high and walked outside.

“Oh Miss Lewis, we don’t want to be late.”

***

The man clearly has many faces, Darcy steals glances as she paces beside him. Looks like he had killed and buried the troubled soul that was entering the bathroom earlier, the one that carries the weight of the world on his broad shoulders. In place is this invincible domineering devil in his sharp suit, his usual self. The dragon, her paladin. He walks with total poise and grace of that a cat, ready to face the condemning world, answering their call for a fight.

Side by side, they walk in silence toward the private elevator, after a long day of upheaving ruckus, the sound of people endlessly talking, screaming and the insistent phone ringing, all narrowing into a distant commotion to their ears.
“Loki!”

She stops on her track, she knows before she turns on her heels that the angered voice belongs to Dr. Foster. From her clothing, it seems like she comes straight from the campus.

“Ah, my darling sister, delighted to see you.”

Darcy is so tempted to slap the smug off Loki’s face at his witty response.

The pretty brunette scoffs in disbelief as she keeps on striding closer with apparent fury on her face. Within seconds she's standing right in front of them, her nostrils are flaring, her eyes are burning.

What happens next is too fast to comprehend, though in a split second - Darcy saw it coming. When her former professor lifts her slender arm and swings it Loki’s way. What she couldn’t explain is her own response.

**SMACK!!!**

That blow - it lands on her face. Her feet was moving without her consent and she found herself standing between the two, shielding Loki from the woman’s burst of anger. *Fuck*, he was right, Foster had a mean jab.

“*Oh my god* Darcy! I’m so sorry!” She gasps in horror. Her hands covering her mouth, muttering curses under her breath, her eyes darting awkwardly from Darcy to Loki.

“It’s fine Dr. Foster, I’m fine,” She musters a bright smile, adjusting her glasses. She can feel the pressure of his hand tightens on her back, though he doesn’t say a word.

“I really don’t get why Thor still stands up for you, have you got no conscience? You disappointed them, your mother, your brother!” She rants furiously.

At least they wouldn’t be too shocked, being a disappointment is something he was born into, he silently broods. “Dr. Foster, I’m sure your time is as precious as mine, and though I’d love to be your punching bag, I’m afraid I cannot endeavor to do so, not at the moment.” He answers in a honeyed tone, a well-practiced façade, but his piercing eyes cold as ice while he keeps one hand firmly on Darcy’s back.

“He’s right, I’m so sorry Dr. Foster. We’re expected downtown.” And *that’s* the defining moment where she joins the dark side of the force, Darcy muses as the words left her mouth.

“No, no, it’s not your fault.” The woman shakes her head and glares daggers at Loki, “I’m here to tell you … father, this morning - he had a heart attack.”

Darcy gasps, her eyes widens in shock. It’s suddenly clear on why Thor hadn’t been there for those important meetings. She looks over her shoulder and catches nothing but utter indifference etched on Loki’s face.

“So I’ve been told. I shall come over once my business is done.”
“You – you knew?” And yet you don’t come? “Okay, you know what, I don’t care! This is not over, you better fix this Loki!” She points her finger to his unapologetic face before retreating to where she came (after another sorry and a big hug for Darcy).

“That was unnecessary. I could’ve handled it myself,” he breaks the thick silence as the elevator takes them down from the 88th floor. His fists are clenching and unclenching on his side, unsure of what to do.

“Why, you’re welcome,” she sneers, looking straight ahead.

“I – …” he stammers, his tongue sweeps on his lips, his jaw clenches.

She peers to his troubled face and she immediately recognizes it, understands the discomfort that she had caused. “For the record, I didn’t do it for you, I just happen to have good reflexes.”

Technically, that wasn't (entirely) a lie. For safety reason, she took some basic self-defense night classes (for a few times. Okay, three times!).

“Thank you,” he finally says it, curtly, briefly, taking the easy way out that she had offered.

His hands finally reaching to her waist, turning her closer. When her face is right under his vision, he tenderly cups her cheek, blows out a heavy defeated breath as he repeats the words in a softer tone, “Thank you.”

“Heard you the first time.”

She can feel his smile on her skin, “I know. I just wanted to say it again.”

“Well, don’t let me stop you then.”

“Thank you.” For being here, for being you. Screw the media, screw those people, screw everything, he already knows he’s one hopeless, selfish bastard. Standing here, holding her tight, breathing in her scent, just for a few stolen moments, he wanted to forget about it all, about his game, about the chaotic world, about the perilous future.

Her face flushed, she noticed the rendered emotion laced in his gratitude. After days of his cold demeanor and even colder words, at once, things felt right again, the axis of her world was right again.

“Did they bother you too Darcy?” He suddenly asked, still caressing her reddened cheek.

She shook her head, knew he was referring to those reporters, “Nothing I cannot handle, don’t worry, those penalties on your CDA, waaay scarier than them.” I won’t give you away to those hungry wolves.

“Brave girl,” he laced her fingers with his and took them to his lips.

Her breath hitched on her throat at the way his gaze burning into hers, at the way he dropped soft kisses over her knuckles.

“Do you have any idea how badly I wanted to kiss you back at the conference room?” His nose nuzzled to her forehead, his mind replaying the scene where she actually silenced the whole room (she looked so beautiful when she was mad), told those loyal old bastards to shut it and listen to
what Mr. Odinson had to say. Gold.

“In front of those idiots?” She replied, trying to pacify the increasing tidal waves inside her heart.

He chuckled, “I should replace their seats with you.”

“I’d never pass on a chance of getting a raise if that was what you were offering.”

“Brave and clever.”

“And incredibly funny, gorgeous, riveting, shall I continue?” She batted her lashes.

“Let’s add modesty, another favorite of mine.”

“As I said, learnt it from the very best,” she winked.

Her words sent him back into their starry night dream, “I wanted to take you right there and then, on the table.” His low voice laden with dangerous promises, his hand rubbing up and down her spine as he kept nuzzling on her skin.

“You know I could sue you for even thinking about it?” She teased as her hand traces along his jaw, trailing to his quirking lips, “Does it hurt?” Two fingers tenderly grazed at the split.

“Nothing I cannot handle,” he threw the words back at her with his lopsided grin. “Now, to avoid future lawsuits, do I have to ask a permission to kiss you?”

She grinned, “Damn right you do, ask me nicely.”

“Miss Lewis,” his tilted her chin upward to face him, “May I have the pleasure of kissing your beautiful lips?”

A chuckle before she nodded, “Yes, yes you may.” Her feet tip-toeing to reach his height, her smile collided with his. It was cute and silly and sweet, almost too sweet, but then lust rammed its head to the doors of self-restraint, their kiss grew restless, urgent, full of need, the curbed tension from the last few days erupting in full force.

“Darcy,” his tone was dripping with desire, he backed her to the wall behind her, jutting his leg between her thighs, ground his pelvis, palming her breast over her shirt, rhythmically running his thumb over the fabric and her lacy bra. She moaned to his lobe before she licked it.

Fuck! “Darcy, cancel the appointment.”

“Seriously Loki? We're in a goddamn elevator!” She swiftly caught his hand when he was about to press the red ‘emergency stop’ button.

He cursed inwardly when on cue, the doors slided open, exposing the sparse parking lot, where the limo awaited.

Loki took her hand in his, guiding her with large steps towards the vehicle only to dismiss the waiting chauffeur and head to his usual coupe instead.

As the door slammed shut and they were back in a personal space, he pulled her in, so close, even closer, a breath apart. His hands gathered at the back of her head, entangled in her hair. “Postpone the appointment. I’m taking you home.”
Home? “My place?”

Shit. “Mine.”

“We can’t, the reporters,” she shook her head, her mesmerizing bright blue eyes engulfing him.

_Curse those blasted idiots!_ She’s right. “Your place then.”

He switched the ignition and the steel roared to life, “Buckle up Darcy, and stop looking at me the way you do now, or I assure you, I will pull over and fuck you on the backseat.” Actually the scenario didn’t sound so bad, in a way it would be a dream come true, quite literally so (not that she needs to know).

When they finally arrived at her place (within speed limit that was _not_ advisable for safety reasons) his intention was clear, his passion was burning still.

Her fingers clumsily turned the key, trying to gain entrance into her sanctuary. The moment they set their feet inside, he backed her to the door, slamming it shut on the process. Both his hands planted on each side of her, trapping her whilst his lips devour hers in a searing kiss. It was hot, intense, her head was spinning, her feet melting.

They were moving along like a pair of savage from the door to the lining walls, kissing restlessly, feeding off each other hungrily, she shed his clothes off, jacket, tie, shirt, all fell to the ground. She backed him to the bookshelf the way he did her at the door, she heard a few thuds as some of the books freefalling down the carpet. He pushed her back again, his fingers dug to her hair as he moaned incoherent words into her mouth. Their feet stepped across the living room, stumbling, laughing, faltering as they head to the kitchen counter, then he trapped her between his hands again.

He sent one stool splintering down the floor, hands moving to sculpt her figure, not breaking their kiss all the while. With long nimble fingers he traced the curve of her face, to her delicate neck, her collarbone, her breasts. She whimpered when he kneaded both with his hands, teasing them until they were full and heavy, begging for more. As if he read her mind, in the next second, he _tore_ her shirt open, “Send me the bill.” A naughty smile adorned his face as he found his way to her naked skin.

The cries of pleasure echo in her small flat, she threw her head back in abandon, her fingers entangled tight into his sable hair as his lips, his teeth caressed her nipples, not bothering to remove her lacy bra, he just slipped both globes out of the containment.

“Loki,” She panted, liquid heat dripping between her thighs. “- ask me again.”

A lopsided smirk danced on his lips, “Darcy,” he purred languidly, his hands reaching further back, zipping down her skirt, “… may I have the pleasure – “ He sent the fabric pooling down her feet before his thumbs slid at the hem of her knickers, his face a breath apart from hers now, “… of fucking you senseless here?”

“Yes, yes you may.” With that, he kissed her again as he ripped her (polka-dot) knickers. Then he cleared off the counter behind her, lifted her up to the flat surface, it has the perfect height for what he had in mind.
In other time, he’d definitely savor the moment instead of rushing into thunderous pleasure, but that time is not now. It wasn’t a lie when he said that he wanted to take her on the conference table. He had waited long enough. In lightning speed he took off his belt, pulled down the zipper.

Darcy took him in her hands, hard and ready, stroking from the bottom to the seeping tip, positioning him firmly on her throbbing cunt, wet and waiting, giving him permission to proceed.

His locked his eyes on hers as he pushed inside, inch by inch, keeping her hand in place, letting her feel the way he entered her. There was not a sound but their sighs and whimpers but he can read it in her eyes, as the pupils dilated completely, as desire taken over her completely, “Fuck! Ngggh - Darcy!” The tightness burnt his throbbing flesh, it was perfection beyond any comprehension.

“Slowly Loki, take me slowly, I want to feel you,” she sighed wantonly, twirling her hips, squeezing her walls.

“Touch yourself Darcy,” he cited gruffly as he moved, slowly, firm and steady.

“You wanna watch me?” She licked her lips.

Loki nodded, again, all words, sense and logic had left him. Her fingers started to play with herself, and he watched her, gods how he watched her. The view was exhilarating, captivating, mind-numbing, he didn’t think he could hold back the pace.

“What does it feel Loki - inside me?” Her eyes were watching him, how his face was contorted with agony, of pure lust, pleasure and pain all at once.

His short answer came with a struggle, in between his gritted teeth, “Crazy.” It felt so fucking crazy he wanted to explode inside her, marking her, making her his.

She laughed at his honest response, the sound drove him to the edge, he nibbled at her jaw, her nape, his thrusts getting faster, harder, “I can’t – Darcy, I can’t –”

“Aah … me too, fuck, I’m so close Loki,” she could no longer focus on pleasuring herself, not with the ferocity he was giving her. She held on to the brim of the counter, welcoming his fierce movement, in and out, in and out, it gotten more frantic each time, their senses heighten, their pulse quickens, heartbeats clamoring inside her head.

Yes, yes, yes, this is it, oh – Oh, “Loki! Loki I’m coming – fuck, oh god!” He thrusted and thrusted a few times more before he too, let go, soaring, bursting inside her. Technicolor exploded into millions of psychedelic hues, and for one moment, time stood still. It was perfect, too damn perfect, that was how he knew that none of this was his, and just like that, reality crept in and broke the spell. It sent his feet back to the ground.

“I have to leave.”

“The hospital?”

He shook his head.

“I’m sorry for what happened to your father.”

Without a word, he shook his head again, right when she thought he wasn’t going to say anything, he faintly answered, “Don’t be.”
She took him into her embrace, caressed the taut muscles on his back up to his (sexed-up) messy hair, “Don’t worry. He’ll be alright, everything will be alright.”

He was rendered back into silence at those words. Worry? Was he worry for Odin’s sake? No. Never.

But then … why did her words resonance into the depth of his heart? His logic questioned him. He wasn’t sure on how to answer the undeserved sentiment, he wasn’t sure he wanted to know the answer either.

Slowly, he let his eyes meet hers, right then, he noticed it again. Her blinding trust, shone bright as the ever-sun. This wasn’t real, this cannot be. She was just another mirage, a beautiful dream for another life. He’d learn his lesson. As much tempting she was, he wouldn’t claim to own what wasn’t his. She was too good for him, her life would be much safer, better without the likes of him. She deserved more, and he cannot give her more.

With sheer will he tore himself away from her sweet embrace, gathering his scattered clothes, “You think you can trust me?”

“You think I can’t?”

“I think you’re smarter than that.”

“I am.” What? He thought she wouldn’t notice what he did behind everyone’s back? When he reinstated those unemployed scientist to a better lab out of town, or when he transferred massive funds under an alias for child and health supports to those ex-workers from the company that he took over?

“Darcy, don’t,” he jutted his stubborn chin, his jaw clenching again.

“Don’t what?” She squinted her eyes.

“Don’t fantasize, don't fool yourself. You’re mistaken. You think I care about Odin, about you, about anyone? I don’t.”

*Keep telling that to yourself, “Okay.”*

His brows furrowed, miffed by her light response. “This thing we share, it means nothing, we agreed upon it. Our rules stay. Do you understand?”

She tilted her head, “Did you hear me professing my ‘undying love’ to you lately?”

Loki’s face was stern, unreadable, “Keep it that way.” As he put on his suit and tie, he placed the mask back on. He cannot deal with her trust, her affection, but this, this he can handle, it was one thing he’s so good at.

“Call the notary, tell them I’m on my way,” he was halfway to the door.

“Wait, I’ll –

“No, you stay,”

When it came down to his bare instinct, between the thin line of truth and lies, it was always better, easier to choose the latter. And that was what he will continue to tell her, to tell himself, to get his heart the hell away from her.
"Don’t fall for her Loki, don’t fall for her."

***

An old man’s tired eyes randomly gazing at the painting on the wall, the monitor beside him beeps and pulsed along with his heartbeat, the smell of antibiotics, of cold sterile saline heavily lingers in the spacious room.

Odin never doubts the boy, on what he's capable of. Out of the two of his sons, Thor is the heart, while Loki is the brain. He's always such a brilliant boy, a special one. Odin saw too much potential and likeness the boy shared with him, that was why he's so hard on him. But what he feared most was the hatred, the one that he caused, that still haunted his nights, would in the end consume Loki, lead him astray, down the bloody path he threaded decades before. No matter what Loki thought of him, he never wanted such future for any of his sons.

“I trust him,” declared his wife. Unlike what people think of her youngest son, she knew deep down, beneath the frozen fortress he built around him, he hid a kind heart and she refused to believe otherwise.

“I know Frigga, I know both of them too well. I’m just worry for him, he’s playing a dangerous game,” Odin knew what he was after all along, Asgard was just the tip of the iceberg.

“I wish you knew better,” Frigga retorted curtly. Though it no longer matters now, it was all too little too late. She just wished Loki knew what he was doing.

***

Meanwhile atop a towering building at D.C.’s skyline, an agent was sporting a satisfied smirk on his face, looking out the horizon of black and purple with his one good eye, a phone on his ear.

“The boy done it, Odin’s down - yeah, I’m on it. Soon.” Nicholas knew Loki would deliver, he’d seen it in his green eyes, a sheer determination that spoke of anger, fueled by his thirst for revenge, even years ago when he was nothing but a gangly boy.

“Yes, Pierce. We’ll fold everything down within the next month.” Soon old debts will be settled, he could put Coulson’s ‘unsolved’ murder behind, let him and everything rest to peace. He will send those old demons back to hell, where they truly belong.

***
Chapter End Notes

The suit pornspiration for this chapter:

Uh-hum, the thing Darcy did in her flat was exactly what I wanted to do to him when I saw him wearing that dapper checkered suit on that Jaguar ad. #notevensorry

* Short blab about this chapter:

Sheol: Hel in Hebrew
Omerta: The code of silence in the Mafia, from the Italian word for "humility".

I made Hel and Heimdall a pair in this universe, because they clicked, they just did (humor me), in a badass kind of way, the man with all seeing eye and the lady that rules the dead, aand according to the myth, he di keep his sword at Helheim for Ragnarok. I also named Darcy's mom (Geanna Morrigan) after another goddess of Death though from a different lore, and it wasn't without reason *winks*

There were lots of thank you in there, all with different meanings. Also some nods to the previous installment, The Devil Wears Armani.

There were also (and will be more) lines shamelessly snagged from the movies, again, I'm not sorry ;p

Those words Odin said regarding dangerous women, it was on the prose too (well, not precisely, I deliberately tweaked it according to my will, just because I can!), I took a pic and posted the whole page I read from 'Norse Myth' book on my tumblr soothsayerstale ... that is if anyone wants to read it.

I hope things were getting clearer after a few chapters, on where the story will lead (was it?). Loki as a double agent, was aiming to be the leader of the pack, to fill the empty throne the All-Father left behind, having those old mobs and their bloody secrets in his grasp and hand them over to Nicholas (Fury). Their alliance was a hush-
hush, obviously. Yes, Fury's late partner was *the* Coulson and yes, Fury was talking to *the* *cough* asshole *cough* Pierce on the phone, so we knew where that would lead.

Liked/hated it? I do hope your answer is the former. As always any input/insight, kudos, comments, rants are most welcome :)

Btw, last Wednesday I finally watched AOU, and this is me after the movie ended (less the pretty):

*split a log with my bare hands*

Ooh and I do have an answer for Kimmel's Family Feud, the worst place to turn into a Hulk? The goddamn movie theater, after you sat nicely and tolerated 'stuff' for 2.5 hours, patiently waited for the end-credit to roll only to found that Loki.wasn't.there.

My deepest condolences went to a certain ship than sunk in that movie, really, my heart pained for you guys.

Anyway, thanks for reading, have a great weekend all :*

* Side note:
Gifs credits to those who made it, but especially, to the Lord above, also Diana and James for creating such beautiful creature, namely, Thomas William Hiddleston.
Chapter Summary

“Fuck the rules.”

Chapter Notes

I tried and tried to make this shorter ... it got longer *sighs*
And can I trade the smutty goodness with fwoof this one time? No?

Enjoy darlings!

xxoo

P.S :
~ I'm not sure about the fwoof though ... feels would be more likely ... probably.
*crossing my fingers*
~ As always, not beta'd

See the end of the chapter for more notes

‘You’re always so perceptive about everyone but yourself.’

With morose in her eyes his mother said to him the other night when he finally faced her on his visit right after his business was done. Frigga, she rendered him silent, still one of her finest trait after all these years, deciphering his scorns, cracking his mask.

‘Stop this Loki. Hatred is too great a burden to bear. In the end, it will ruin you. Forgive him, forgive your father.’

How he wanted to wipe away the dread in her expression, to let her know that there were more to this, but that would trouble her further, hence he did what he always did. With bleeding heart he sneered at her concern.
'Did you not hear what people said about me? I lack compunction. Least of all, you should know better than trying to tell me what I should or should not do. You have no right. None of you have, he’s not my father as you are not my mother.'

He scrunched his eyes at the memory of his mortifying words. At that he wished all those curses thrown at him were true, that he was one heartless bastard. Heck, maybe he was, that was how he got this far.

Owning Asgard Industries was just the beginning. The rest of the Lernean hydra hiding in their pits, those old bitter losers, they won’t sit still. They either will offer a ‘peaceful’ alliance or declare a war against him. He was aiming for the later, to bring them all to surface as he had planned with Nicholas. He knew they grew restless in this time of peace, no one can deny their blood calling, their basic instinct. Those men wanted the old world back, wanted their old ways back.

One of them already made his move. Malcolm Keith, a smart slick snake. His family was one of the Nines, and was widely known to be the archenemy of the Nidaves that company Loki bought a few months back. Malcolm wants in, to secure his place in the ‘new’ world’s order. Loki flat out refused the kind request. No one could buy his way into Loki Odinson’s good book, besides by now everyone should already know that he’s not one fond of sharing. Though he also knew how relentless those people could be, they are after all, birds of the same feather.

That is exactly why he will need more of his sharp mind and wit during the next few weeks, this time, even sharper than his suits and sabers, to be more than just a survivor, to have things ended up in his favor. Though everything usually does, in good time, because unlike most men, he had no choice but to make patience his best of friend.

Only, he wasn’t expecting his mind to be troubled with other thing but his grand plan.

‘Did you hear me professing my ‘undying love’ to you lately?’

‘Keep it that way.’

He said that, he did, proudly, with conviction. He wasn’t aware until those words left his mouth, that the line was one of the greatest lie he had to deliver to date, one of the hardest too. And he wasn’t aware until she had said it out loud. That her words would jag like thorns.

Loki placed a palm on the rise and fall of his chest, feeling the steady thumping under it. The woman radiates so much light and warmth, and her smile … it was the brightest ray of sunshine, the kind that makes you feel as if you were invincible, untouchable to the rest of the damned world. The taste of never ending freedom he drank from her, it is now thriving, ceaselessly pumping in his veins. For the first time in his fucked up life, it made him wished for the impossible, for things to be different, that things were … normal. That way perhaps he could dive into her deep blue sea, searching for answers, uncovering secrets underneath her skin, to explore the many possibilities, unspoken promises that lie between them. But this time, though the bejeweled treasure stands right there, in front of his eyes for the taking, he could not afford to be the conniving thief. The thought
perturbed him, it shouldn’t, yet it did.

He rose from his king-sized bed, with his thin black drawstring pants hung low on his hips, not bothering to grab a shirt. The rain had stopped, the thin slit moon blurred behind the thick cloud, maybe it’s nearing dawn, he wasn’t sure since the murky skies had swallowed most source of light except for the artificial ones. The cold air kissed his skin, just the way he likes it. They serve as a constant reminder of his pain, nurturing the monster within. Not letting his mortal brain forget on what happened in that eventful night over a decade ago, an ancient incident nearing the end of his fifteen years of living.

Yes, it's not the time, not the place for useless sentiment. First and foremost he must finish what he had started. His fingers grazed a silverying scar on his right temple.

‘Was this from a fight? Were you a bad boy?’

A memento - that was what it is. The main reason on why a cold, wet season had never been good for his sanity.

Loki eyed some scattered pills on top of his wooden nightstand. Those little fuckers did nothing to soothe his anxiety, lately he’d been taking them more than usual, perhaps enough to sedate an elephant, heck even the whole zoo! Hence, he chose to fervently gulp the Scottish Vodka straight from the bottle instead.

Like a tidal wave, the memory came crushing back, clear as a summer’s day, harsh as the winter’s wind. A human mind is after all a playground for the wicked and the mean.

‘You hold the wrong boy I’m afraid. He’s not my son. Have your way with him, whichever you prefer.’

A sound of a disconnected line followed the definite stone-cold statement.

‘You hold the wrong boy I’m afraid.’

Leaving the pale skinned masked monster on the other line in a stun, piercingly gazed down to the tied raven-haired boy, almost beaten down to pulp. His glassy eyes staring lifeless to the vacant desolation of the old abandon warehouse. But the skinny boy, he didn’t cry, he didn’t beg, and he was proven to hold more wit and fire inside despite his frail frame, as three of the men that tried to captivate him, got slashed pretty nasty with a stiletto hidden inside the boy’s left sock (a nifty trick he learnt from his mother).

‘He’s not my son.’

Those callous words were his guillotine. The supposed to be his savior turns out to be the very traitor. The trigger hand that released the mouton, letting the blade fiercely falls. The telephone line wasn't the only thing that died that night.

‘Have your way with him, whichever you prefer.’

The old man’s distant and sharp tone, his unattached soul-less voice, Loki vividly remembers, every intonation, syllable, replay it in high precision, word after word in his mind, even after all these years.

Loki shook his head to shove it from his memory. Yet it lingers, gushing, throbbing.

No, don’t let it get to you, not anymore.
To be governed still by that despicable old man was pathetic. The boy survived, he moved on. But as always, mother was right. Indeed he had traded his heart for hatred, for a purpose, to keep him going through another day. But in the end, it blighted, gnarled down to his soul, suffocating him. He needed to breathe, if he could, he really wanted to forget, to get lost, for once not to be reminded on who he was, what he still is. Perhaps someday, one day, there will be time for everything to end, as for now, he needed the hatred to keep on striving, to keep his head straight, and his plan right on track.

A continuous ring from his personal phone breaks him out of his trance, he puts his glasses on before he scans the number. With narrowed eyes he answered the line, “Odinson.”

“What?! When? I’ll be on my way.”

***

Safety was none of her concern as of late, because most of the nights, she knew he sent one of his men to ‘escort’ her home. She even tazed the man once (thought he was a pervert) but that was then, now, they’re coffee buddies, her and Fen, though the silver-haired man made her swear (if possible with blood) not to say a word to Loki. And Loki, that bossy tyrant did tell her to move, many times, to get out of her tiny flat and it’s shabby neighborhood, to go look some place safer, closer to the office (or to his place, what a smug bastard, how could she possibly afford that option without whoring herself?), some place decent. And each time, she had told him to shut the fuck up. But maybe, she shouldn’t, because for once, she really should have listened to the guy.

It all began after the heavy rainfall, though the dark sky was still grumbling. She steps off the lonesome subway, then she noticed. Footsteps. Footsteps that weren’t hers or Fen’s (because he told her he was off duty for his daughter’s birthday tonight). The echoes of their heavy boots follow her every step down the wet empty street. She was trying her best not to give in to panic as she keeps on walking. But each time she took a left turn, a right turn, they keep on tailing her, and it was getting harder to maintain her cool. Darcy thought (wished) she was imagining things, darkness does that to you sometimes, but damn, she wasn’t. They are following her (whoever they are), she dares not look over her shoulder. At the revelation she promptly fetch her tazer from her bag, keeps it steady on her grips and walks faster all the while chanting prayers inside her battering heart.

Go to a crowded place, her brain instructed, and she was going to, to take a turn to a local farmer’s market by the street, the only store that opens until ten, two blocks away from her flat. Five meters away, just a bit more. That was when a pair of large hands grabbed her arms from behind.

Darcy gasps, her heart jumps, but her hand was steady. She stabs her heel as hard as she can to his right foot. The man instantly groans and in his pain involuntarily lets her off his grip. She swiftly turns around, kneed the man on his gut and tazed his neck. The man cries out and tumbles to greet the gritty pavement.

As a girl who grew up on her own, she was no stranger to stuff like this, hence, despite scared shitless she was ready. What she wasn’t ready for was the second incoming. On her attempt to run away from the first man, another one stopped her on her track.
“You bitch!” He charged towards her like a bull, she instantly backed away, she thought, _crap_, he was going to hit her! But no, he only slapped away the tazer off her hand.

He was wearing a mask, sort of a ski mask, and attired entirely in black just like the other man. She couldn’t catch anything out of his face but his cruel and savage light blue eyes staring at her with an icy glare as he grips her by the lapel of her trench coat while his other gloved-hand roughly covers her mouth, silencing her.

“Tell your boss to fuckin’ watch it, or we’ll carve the smile off his pretty face, and yours too, you got that?” He gruffly whispered to her ear, voice dripping with foul intention, the smell of smoke and cheap liquor pricked her nose.

_Loki? They were trying to threaten Loki through her?_

Refused to be intimidated, she glared daggers to his eyes, challenging him. Her body was trembling but anger swallowed her fear at the words he told her. She no longer scared, she was furious. Furious to be outnumbered, furious to be the victim, the witless prey yet again. If he thought she was going to meekly cower, prepare to be disappointed, because Darcy Lewis doesn’t bow on nobody’s feet.

The man smirks, noticing her defiance, “Looks like he got himself a brave cunt, lucky guy.” He leans down and disgustingly licks the side of her face.

She tries to wiggle herself away, fingers clawing to his face, kicks aiming at his crotch, trying to attack him with little that she has.

A raspy laughter erupts from his throat, “Feisty one aren’t ya” He roughly shoves her down the rain-soaked pavement, right beside the other assailant who was now trying to get on his feet again.

A swoosh and a splash followed her fall, the muddy puddle welcomes her hide as she tumbles backwards. The chilling cold barraged into her trench coat and soaked to her skin.

It felt like a divine intervention when they decided not to take things further as she watched the second man stepped away from her and went to help his friend instead. Or maybe it was just as he told her before they left, a warning. Took her more than five minutes to gather her composure as her quaking hands and wobbly feet refused to cooperate. At first she blamed it on the tension until she realized that she actually sprained her right ankle when she fell. Fantastic.

With mud all over her body she practically hobbled her way home, all the while cursing those men and their threats. She knew Loki had lots of foes, but that was the first for her. Nobody came for her before, and she knew exactly why. He may not be a man of many (kind) words, but in his own way, he takes care of her. Just like that time, when he left her to the public notary himself, it was for the same reason as those times he kept her off the radar on various public occasion, be it parties or his weekly inspection to the Odinson’s branch of casinos along the Old Town. He wanted to keep her safe from his world. To think that no one gets that about him aggravates her, though considering all those twisted people he was dealing with, perhaps hiding away kindness was necessary.

_And what now?_ Should she call him, tell him what just happened, deliver him the ‘message’? Her head was still dwelling over the subject when she opened the door to her flat. The relieve she thought she’d encounter after she reached the safety of her home shattered. Her heart instantly sinks to her feet at the sight. It seemed that they ‘visited’ her place too. It was a picture of chaotic mess, her bookshelves, the books, table, chairs, plates, everything was ransacked out of place, as if a small scale hurricane just hit the entire room.
She really really wanted to hit someone, or something, anything. Only she got no more power left in her. Her chest was burning, her throat tightened, she drops to her knees and the dam finally cracked. Hot tears streaming down her face, her shoulders trembles, she clutches both hands tight around her body as she let the liquid fire flow and flow. And as if the universe could feel her pain, the wind howls and the sky cries along with her.

Out of twenty-six years of her life, shit happened a lot more than once, but none had her heart calling out for another to mend things for her, to tell her that everything will be fine, because she was always fine on her own, strong enough to look after herself, but now, she finds it pathetically calling out for one name.

The short light rain stops and the police came fifteen minutes after her (sobbing) call. Neighbors flocking about, snooping their nosey ears and eyes to get a glimpse of the scene. After a few hours all the report on the incident was filed by those nice officers, they scoured the place for evidence, they even offered to give her a ride to a friend’s or some relative’s place. She’d take it if she had one. At that they promised to keep a look around the perimeter and stay for the rest of the night across the street to keep her safe.

Now the flat is empty again. Darcy scans around the room, as small as this place is, it was her sanctuary for the last two years, but after what just happened, she felt alienated, violated as if the place was no longer hers.

She curls her feet, balling herself on the couch, staring at nothing in particular, absentmindedly she reached for the remote and turn on the TV, just to hear another sound besides her clamoring heartbeat. She must’ve looked like shit, like a cat from a litter dump with swollen red eyes. A bath would be lovely, but she doesn’t think she’d be able to do it now. No thanks to those fuckers. Who did they think they are anyway? Trying to mess around with Loki, pfft, must be a bunch of amateurs!

… Loki!

Oh no! She sprang on her feet, limping her way to the scattered books on the floor. Her hands frantically flipping over one book after the other, until she found the one she was looking for. The Nutcracker. She brought it back to the couch with her. She flips the old book until the midsection, in between the flimsy pages, there lies that one special rose, the only one she secretly keeps. All dried but beautiful still …

‘As you are.’

What was her decision earlier? She abstractedly bites her lower lip. Should she call him? Text him? She knew she wanted to … but, the man needed more rest than she does. Besides, She was no damsel in distress! There was no urgency now that the police took care of everything. She can manage, she always did. Just for the night, keep it together for tonight, she’ll tell him first thing tomorrow in the office, that way would be much … proper.

Coming with the conclusion she opts to sleep on the couch, with all the lights on. She was about to get up from the couch to fetch a blanket inside her room when the front door suddenly slammed open with a loud bam. She couldn’t hide her shock, and cried out like a bitch (she might regret that later).

Then she recognized who came barging in, even without her glasses. Was she - dreaming? She drops her palms off her mouth. Loki? He’s really here. He came. For her.

It usually took him twenty minutes driving to her place, but after Fen called in with his hasty
report, he got there in ten. Never before he felt this much fear, he thought his pounding heart might burst, his brain combust. The pain constricts in his chest over the battling fury and worry inside was agonizing, and the sight he was welcomed with was not pleasing.

“You didn’t call me.” Anger dripping as he drawled the words.

“You did not call me.” He repeated, punctuated each word with fury. Unlike most times she saw him all perfectly sleek and suited up, this time his hair was in a curly mess, and under his black leather jacket was a casual navy V-neck shirt teamed with dark jeans and boots.

“Loki …” Was her only reply as she was still reeling at his sudden arrival. Under those reading glasses, his expression was dark and taut, and completely pissed off. Oh boy.

There must be something in her face (other than dirt) or the brittle in her voice, because in the next second she saw emotions shifted on his face, and at once he strides to where she sat and drop to his knees, took her into his warm embrace, caressing her from her hair down to her spine, “Are you alright? Did they hurt you?” His voice was strained and tight, as if he was genuinely worried for her.

Darcy shook her head delving in his soothing familiar scent, at once, she felt safe again, “I – I’m fine.”

“You should’ve call me, I would’ve come sooner.” The short drive he took was horrid, it was the longest ten minutes of his life. Worst scenarios danced inside his head, tormenting him, because usually, that was what happens to good things in his life. The worst. And now, as much she looked so wounded and fragile, he thanks the gods that he doesn’t believe in, that at least she’s alive.

“I’m sorry,” the calamity of the situation finally seeps on her, and drop by traitorous drop, inescapable tears bleeds down her face at his tender gesture. “I’m so sorry …” She repeated with a tiny sob.

“Oh darling, Darcy darling,” He pulls her closer, cradling her inside the safety of his fortress. “It’s okay, it’s alright. I’m here, you’re safe now.”

He lets her spill her emotion, pouring her tears ‘til they wash away her shock. There are mumbles of incoherent words, of what happened, a lot of rants and babbles, that she broke her glasses, that she should’ve take martial art classes, and of course a lot of curses too. Which means, his witty Miss Lewis will be alright.

In all honesty, Loki never did this kind of thing before, the thought of it alone was galling. But right at this moment that was not what he feels, far from it.

“Let’s get you to my place. You’re not staying here any longer.” He finally said when her tears were finally ceasing and her sobs were dissipating.

She pulled herself away from his chest, looking straight at him with big glassy eyes, “No, I can’t … we can’t.”

“For gods’ sake Darcy! This is not the time!” He snapped, flash of anger back in his eyes.

_Not the time?_ She stubbornly pursed her lips. When would be the perfect time _hmm?_ After he successfully flips her world upside-down? Turns her into a love-sick fool? _Damn it!_ He basically came rushing in as if he was some sort of a knight in shining leather jacket, swooping her off her ass, but then what? What will happen to her next? She learnt her lesson. This was no fairy tale and she was no idiot, she knew he wanted nothing more, but she was too afraid that she would want
more. More of him, more of things that he couldn’t give.

“Loki … I can take care of myself.”

“Fuck! I know you can take care of yourself!” Utterly frustrated, he rakes his long fingers to his raven hair. “You just don’t have to!”

Even with the buzzing TV, heavy silence took over the room as the two most tenacious souls unrelentingly gaze at each other.

“I … I’m scared.” She averted her eyes. Stupid stupid man! *I am scared that I’d fall for you. I’m scared that you might push me away.*

His expression grew soft again, his thumbs rubbing circles on her cheeks, resting his forehead to hers, “Darcy, I will not hurt you.”

*Said the lion to a deer.* But she nods anyway.

“Trust me?”

“I do trust you Loki.”

“Then what the hell is the problem?” *Women! Must they speak in riddles? He’s not a bloody psychic!*

She sighs audibly as she closed her weary eyes, “We … have rules.” *And I will definitely fuck it up the moment I let you take care of me!* She’s not made of steel, there’s only so much her foolish heart can take. The stupid rules they made were her safety net. It’s what keeps her perspective balanced.

His eyes steeled at her words. *Rules.* Those goddamn rules. His jaws clenching as he took her by her stubborn chin, angling her to face him squarely on the face.

“Darcy Elizabeth Lewis. Hear me close.”

She blinks repeatedly at the way his tongue drewled her full name in a commanding tone. That was the first.

“Fuck the rules.”

“… What?”

“I said – “

“Damn it! I heard what you said. It was just an expression! I was referring to what you mean!” She shoved his chest.

He lightly shook his head, “Don’t make this complicated. Take it as it is, it means what it means...
and I mean what I said.”

*Ha!* The cryptic bastard is back! “That was - the shittiest answer, if I ever heard one.”

Loki tentatively licks his lips, musing over his own words. Did he scare her? Was she afraid that he was asking for more? “I’m not asking for a chiming bells relationship if that’s what you fear.”

“… You - didn’t?” *He didn’t?*

“No. I’m merely disregarding the rules.” He’d rather have this talk later, but apparently he was stupid enough to always surrendering to her every request.

*What the hell?* “I’m pretty sure you’re messing with me right now – “

His thumb ghosting on her lips, stopping her line. By the look in his eyes, Darcy was pretty sure that he wasn’t. “We made it personal, you and I, I cannot deny that.” He holds her gaze, though what she hides under the blues remain a mystery. “Henceforth, we’ll do things our way, no more boundaries. We’ll just blindly follow where the road may lead us. I’ll be honest Darcy. I can’t and I won’t make promises, but if you say yes, I’d cross out every line.”

The erratic thumping of her heart was escalating wildly, flush crept to her cheeks. Was he really proposing this to her on bended knees? Through the entire line Darcy thought that this might just be the continuation of her starry night dream.

“There. You got my answer. Can we leave? Though I personally think all those dirt do look good on you, I’m sure you’d prefer otherwise.” A tug in the corner of his lips.

He pulls away and starts to rise from his kneeling position, offering her his hand. “You can come with me on your own two feet or I can haul you like a cave man to my car. Which I’m sure would shock those poor officers downstairs. The choice is yours.”

“I’d like to see you try!” She slaps his hand away.

Loki caught her palm tight in his, “Can we do this later? Preferably in my place?”

“No! About your … *ummm* about what you said, I – I’ll think about it.”

“… You’ll think about it?” A twitch in the corner of his eye, “By all the gods, Darcy! Are you trying to drive me mad?”

She raised an eyebrow, “Trust me, with you, I’ve been through worse.”

He curses some more, mostly towards the ceiling, or perhaps he was cursing the gods again. “Let me stay at the office, in your flashy ‘gloom-room of vanity’.” It was way bigger and holds more variety than Carrie Bradshaw’s, he literally could manage to go through a month there without having to fetch any clothing item from his penthouse.

He ignored her tease, narrowed his deep green eyes, tried to penetrate into her mind, to see if he could talk some sense into her head, bend her will. Of course, he knew her better than that, and looking at the state she was in, Loki didn’t have the heart to prolong their foolish argument.

“One night.” He relented, through the hard lines on his face she knew that he was not amused at the decision. “I’ll give you one night to think it over and that is all.”

“One week then I’ll give you my answer.” She caught the bottom hem of his leather jacket,
“And until then, I’m staying at the office.”

“Don’t push your luck Miss Lewis. Two days.”

“Three.”

“… Darcy.”

“Don’t tempt me to make it four. Three.”

“Fine!” Did he just cede? Again? This woman will be the death of him. “Now, would you please, for gods’ sake, come with me!” He offers her his hand again.

Soft laughter flows from her lips at the frustration shone on his face, and finally, she enclosed her hand in his, “Careful Loki, the god of thunder might strike you for your profuse blasphemy.”

He scoffs at the words and gives her a smirk, "He wouldn't dare."

That self-satisfied little smirk of his always does inexplicable things to her and momentarily she forgot about her ankle situation, until she tried to rise from the couch. She immediately winced and wavered at the sudden weight she put on her right foot.

Swiftly, he caught her by the waist, “Are you alright?” His eyes scanned her feet and caught her swollen ankle. Murderous intent shot through him. Bastards.

“It’s nothing really, I fell and sprained my ankle.” She holds on to his upper arms as she tries to steady herself.

“I’m taking you to the hospital.”

They shared a whole lot of argument over that matter too, but once again, she came victorious (obviously). In the end, he lifted and carried the blushing lady into his car and took her to his office as she had asked. But not before he insisted her to finish the chocolate milk shake and a double-cheese burger he bought for her on their way there.

***

Staying in the tower late at night or early in the dark morning wasn’t a new experience for both of them, it was practically their second home, hence the hollow and dim place didn’t bother them the slightest.

He dismissed her request to put her down until they reach the destination. Between his two strong hands and hard chest, he carries her up to his office. He also managed to tug a small bag she brought with her. Under the close proximity, she wished for the darkness to cloud the heat of crimson (which no doubt was apparent) on her face, away from his eyes.

After he unlocked the door to the back room, his feet took five long steps to the Chesterfield leather couch and carefully placed her there. Then he promptly left to find the first aid kit and runs the bath.
Her eyes scans the wide room, there was no bed, only this huge black leather couch she was sitting on, which surely was more than enough to accommodate a good sleep for the next few days. The rest of the room was as impressive as she remembered (she wasn’t here much), a small crystal chandelier, mirrors along the walls, lines of suits, leather shoes, racks of ties and watches … and – a dress? It hangs on a different rack and looked completely out of place in this man-cave. Off white and simply cut, yet it was the epitome of elegance and class. A very Audrey Hepburn-ish kind of dress.

A few minutes later while she was still ogling on the pretty dress, he’s back with the kit in hand and placed it on the floor beside the couch. “Let’s clean you up, I’ll tend to your ankle right after.” He doesn’t wait for her reply instead he lifts her up again and took her to the en-suite bathroom.

He paused before the big bubbly misty tub, “Do you … want me to leave?”

Does she? She bits her lower lip before giving him a firm ‘no’.

At that he tentatively puts her on her feet, setting her hands on his shoulders for support and begins to shed her dirty clothes one layer at a time until she was standing there, bare naked.

“Come,” He said as he guided her to the bathtub.

Hot water welcomes her taut muscles, untangling the cords. It felt incredibly amazing. But he didn’t stop there, he took a sponge and soap, scrubbed her clean, from her curling toes up to her tousled hair. She noticed how he keeps his eyes avert from her naked breast, he didn’t even linger when he cleaned them (and down there too). Warmth floods her whole being at his thoughtfulness. She was right, the man does have a good heart.

“Loki, whose dress was that?” She finally asked him while she lets him scrubs her back.

There was a moment of silence before he replies hoarsely, “Yours.”

“Mine?” her brows furrowing.

He cryptically nods. It was actually his first choice for that night when he took her to his parents’ wedding anniversary, but he made a different call at the last minute. He wasn’t sure on why he keeps it, but after a while, he no longer care. “We’re done here, let’s get you to rest.”

When he was about to tug her out of the tub she grabbed him by the neckline of his (wet)shirt and he intuitively rounds his hands around her body. A second passed, then another as they gazed into each other’s eyes, their clamoring heartbeats and their increasing choppy breaths interweave with one another. Gradually, she leans closer to cease the gap and seal his lips with hers.

His kiss was different, his soft pliant lips caressed hers with utter care as if he was afraid she would break and shatter at any given moment. She pushed in, nipping his lip, teasing her tongue over the surface. Once, twice, until she breaks his restraint and he surrenders into the kiss. With a low grunt Loki tips her head to one side for better penetration, deepening their kiss as his tongue invades in, exploring into the depth of her. He wanted to take it all, take it all and make everything his, all her pain, her fear, her grieve.

Oh god yes! Her heart rejoice as he kissed her thoroughly, passionately and the fire he fused burns everything anew, brilliant colors that she never knew existed danced before her closed lids. He unravels her, swallows the hurt, and she lets him, for once there was not a barrier, not a fight given from her part.

One of his hand was eagerly trailing the side curve of her body when suddenly ... he stops.
Why the fuck did he stop?

Their heavy breathing uneven, his eyes were still closed as she looks at him with apparent question on her face.

“You need rest Darcy.” He opens his darken eyes.

“Loki, make me forget, please.” Her fingers cup his sharp jaw.

*Keep your eyes up Loki, up!* But, *fuck* … those cherry lips, and those breast, those are magnificent breast and those rose-pink … *fuuuck*! She’s making this very *hard* for him.

With a herculean effort he finally says, “No Darcy, you need to sleep.”

He quickly grabs a robe and a towel from one of the rack, attentively drying her, all the while not meeting her eyes or a certain part of her body, he just brusquely dressing her like a doll. There’s a limit to his self-restraint, and standing there toe-to-toe with a gloriously (wet and) naked (and now pouting) Darcy Lewis was pushing it. *Fuck,* someone should bestow him the title of a saint if he managed not to devour her in the next hour.

But no matter how adorable her pout may look, there was no arguing him this time. He lifts her up, back to the couch again. He could feel her burning gaze as he kneels to tend her ankle. There will be time for what his body was telling him to do, and she doesn’t need another beast, not tonight.

*Did that just happen?* Bewildered still, Darcy looks down on the man kneeling before her (for the second time that night) compressing her ankle with ice. She didn’t take him to be this kind of gentleman. Of course she knew he was well mannered (most of the time), but his earlier gesture was rather … too damn sweet! Loki and sweet shouldn’t belong in the same sentence! Who is this man and what did he do to her ruthless boss???

After a short while, the cold air caressed their skin, took away their burning desire and replaced it with mutual contentment. Him, for seeing her there safe and sound. Her, for being there with him, without a care for the rest of the cruel world outside this room, this moment they intimately share. There was not a sound but their humming breaths, but she felt complete, she felt right at home.

Her bind was done in no time, he placed her feet on the couch, with stacks of pillow underneath them. “Don’t move around too much, keep your feet up - ”

“You’re leaving?” Incredulously, she cuts him mid-sentence as she watched him backs away, tucking his leather jacket, car key and reading glasses.

“There’s something I must do.” Detachment laced in his tone as he puts the glasses back on.

“Can’t you … stay with me? I – I don’t want to be alone.” She fidgets on her seat while looking at him with big pleading eyes.

He sighs, there was no winning those blue eyes, and it really pains him to see his usually brave P.A. looking so vulnerable, her petite frame almost swallowed by his huge couch, and it was all because that incident. That. Incident. Those bastards, Fen and Jor are already on them. Though he could easily guess who was the culprit behind it, there was nothing he can do until they’re back with the task he gave them. Slowly he placed the items back on the coffee table beside the couch and settle beside her.

“Thank you.” She laced her fingers to his hair, nose grazing on his as he lowered his body and tugs her downs along with him, enclosing his hands tightly around her limbs.
The heat and familiar scent he emanates was like a tranquil spell, she curls closer, letting her body molds to the hard contour of his, and it felt so damn good.

“…”

*What was that? Did he say something?* She looks up to find his troubled face, his lips were … mumbling? “What are you doing?”

“Tongue twister.” He was actually reciting goddamn sonnets. In three different languages. Chanting it over and over like a mantra, trying to curb his desire. He is after all, a red blooded mortal made out of flesh and bones.

“What?”

“Do shut up Darcy, sleep.” He cuts the small gap between them as he pulls her even closer, planting soft kisses atop her head.

Close your eyes and forget everything. For once, let me take care of you, all of you.

***

Hours later, at the other side of the city, a man was treading his way home with a thicker pocket. Big boss told him and Kenny to threaten a cunt. Of course it was easy, thanks to him (all Kenny did was got his stupid ass tazed), mission accomplished. But he didn't expect to get caught, not twenty-four hours after the job, and it was not by the police.

Two men that looked like mercenaries in sharp black suits dragged him to a black van where teary-eyed Kenny was already there. They tied their hands and feet, gagged their mouths and took them to a rooftop of one of the … Odinson’s tower.

There a tall dark-haired man facing the gray jungle of concrete awaits. Even before he turns his face, they knew who was waiting for them, the infamous Loki Odinson. At first glance, he was no more than a slender rich chap in a designer’s suit. That was until they look into the devil’s eyes, it was a bottomless pair of green fire that conveys horror and painful promises. A spine-chilling smile hangs on his face as he gaits closer to their kneeling position.

‘*Good evening gentlemen.*’ Smooth and even voice greets them. Their tongue stuck inside their mouths, intimidated by the forbidding power he emanates, as if there was a raging storm ready to set lose underneath his impassive cold face.

When the first bash of his sledgehammer fist rams to his face then to Kenny's, he instantly knew this was no ordinary slender rich chap. No, he’s the grim reaper, and they just fucked up a wrong dude.
Malcolm Keith : Malekith's alias from the comic.
Elizabeth : If her first name was Mr. Darcy, her middle name should be Elizabeth (Bennet) period.
Oh and I like the meaning too, originally it was taken from the Greeks and it means : My God is abundance. Plus I already searched over the internet, for Darcy's profile, and got nothing for her middle name.
The Nutcracker : the old Germanic tale which I love, which also was kinda sad but, the broken Nutcracker, the unlikely hero, it suits him so well. I fussed a long time for this little bit (weighing between this and 'The Happy Prince').

I never thought there comes a day where I would stand up for Odin, but in this story, what he did, he'd do the same thing if Thor was in Loki's place. As a man in his position back then, he didn't want to show other people his weakness, his pressure point, which surely would be abuse time and again shall he ever relent even once. Though there were other ways, more subtle, gentler ways to make his point, but he was Odin, and Odin was ... Odin.

Suit pornspiration? Are you kidding me?? Unleash the cats? He fed Kingsley's bow-tie to the Jaguar! or a black leopard, it didn't really matter ...

Spare me from doom, search for it on youtube, I literally can't even with that new Jaguar ad, it was too damn hot, it fried my silly fangirl brain into oblivion. It was even bigger than AoU ... I don't even know what I'm saying ...

Anywaaaay, I do hope you liked it ^_^ or perhaps, dare I hope, even loved it.
Thank you for reading , and thank you for all the kudos and kind comments, those are like my fuel to keep on writing and sharing.

Have a great Sunday all!
Out of breath and cold with sweat, Darcy woken up with a gasp. An old memory was paying her a visit. She found her hand was already gripping the tazer she intuitively reached out while she was battling her nightmare (she always keeps it near).

The night was grim and ghastly just like those nights, many years ago. Darcy stared blankly to the high ceiling, blinking repeatedly until the blur shifted into solid shapes, she completely forgot the exact moment when she drifted to slumber, most probably caused by the painkiller pills Loki made her drink before he left. She took a deep breath to curb the painful thumping against her ribcage. For a moment there she was back inside that small gloomy basement hinted with mildew … and broken dreams.

That basement was her home, which, she hated to admit, made Loki’s every attempt to look after her downright ironic, because the place she was brought up was far viler than any place a man like him could ever imagine.

After her mother passed, her father opted to drunk away his sorrow, until one day, he handed out little Darcy to his sister. Only, her aunt was not anyone’s typical aunt, that when she was wearing an apron it wasn’t because she was baking you cupcakes or cookies. It was a part of her ‘occupational hazard’ (she could be a maid one night, a nurse the next) as she was working at the lower district. Yes, Helheim. Old Town got nothing on that place. And people don’t usually stay there, they visited Helheim for two reasons and two reasons only. One, you’re a prostitute, and two, you’re looking for number one. Needless to say, her childhood was brimming with colorful memories of indecent working activities. Despite all that, aunt Kat was an angel, she
was the kindest soul she ever met, and they looked after each other’s back fiercely. Darcy got her first tazer from her, ‘just to be save’ she said that night when she left her for work. The gift was proven to be quite useful from time to time.

Helheim’s clientele were varied, more than once she came back to their room with cuts or/and bruises across her skin. Darcy was shocked at first, but after a while she got used to it, she was the one that tends to those tokens left by monsters who dared to call themselves men. Each time Darcy did, while they sat across each other on the sofa, with first aid kit on her small hands and whiskey on rocks in her aunt’s, she repeatedly reminded Darcy that she should study hard, be better, be great, as not to end up like her.

‘I never got a choice sweetie, but you, you’re special, you’re different, you can be anything you want, reach for the stars, got it? And while you’re at it ... take one for me.’

Darcy vowed inside her heart that one day she’d make it big and bring her aunt away, to a much nicer place, a real home with flowers on their porch and white picket fences over their little garden. Too bad fate got a different call. She got ill, very ill, until one night, she too passed away. It was a week after her not-so-sweet seventeenth. No one was there for them but the ever presence of the whistling cold wind and the pale moonlight shyly peeking from the windowpane of a third class hospital they were in. That was when she realized, in this world full of people, she was truly alone, without anyone to count on.

People said that darkness and silence too hold a language, she never heard them until that moment when she was wandering lost by the empty street, unsure of what to do and where to go next. They spoke to her, they whispered, ‘be strong little one, this too shall pass’. They were right. Though many tears were secretly shed and many stories left untold, with the money aunt Kat gave her on her birthday, she moved on, life moved on, because time, it waited for nobody.

If only time charged the stain away, because after years living at that brothel’s basement reeked of lust and sin, watching how men treated those women, each night, bit by bit, she felt something inside her withered and died.

Back at her senior year, while her friends were chatting about their first experiences (regrets mostly because Noah Calhoun didn’t exist), that they should’ve waited, for the right one, or at least someone who actually knew what he was doing instead of losing it to some jackass jock who valued women like trophies, but couldn’t even last for more than ten minutes in the backseat of his father’s car. Darcy laughed, made some jokes even, but honestly, to her embarrassment, she couldn’t relate to any of those stories, because she never done it. Ever.

How could she? With memories so appalling, they marred her and the damage was incorrigible. It wasn’t like she didn’t try, she just found herself unable to, to kill the monsters inside her head. There was never a touch, a kiss that left her toes curling, her insides floating like those she read on romance novels. It was always the total opposite.

A few years back the thought to seek a professional help to sort this ‘performance issue’ did cross her mind, but then again, it’s not like there’s a white knight in shining armor, wagging his tail in eager, waiting at her doorsteps to swoop her ass to a happily ever after, because she knew, real life holds no gods, no princes, and no happy endings. A life lesson she had learnt along the way, a bounty earned from bruised elbows and charred knees, on how to run along at the highlands with pack of wolves, or how to swim away in a sea of sharks.
Life, Darcy Lewis made it quite far and she managed in doing so without losing her compassion and her wit, two most quintessential things in this short life, according to her aunt ('If you cannot change it, don’t let it change you, never let the world change you sweetie'), thus she left all those bitter baggage behind the day she forged herself a new document, a new life.

After she was fully awake, she rose from the couch and walked over to the small counter, looking for a glass of soothing water. Waking up alone in a foreign surrounding never felt so empty, she missed his warmth, his tight embrace enclosing her. Thankfully, the room was heavy with his scent and it got the piercing chill both inside and out slightly bearable.

A few hours earlier, once again, the sky was pouring with a vengeance, it had dissipated though leaving the horizon outside clouded with fleeting fog. It’s been a while since she dreamt about her past, maybe the trigger was the unfortunate ‘event’ she encountered two nights ago, and the rain wasn’t helping either.

Darcy took a hefty gulp before placing the glass back on the counter, and there she spotted the book, the only book she brought from her flat, with the rose inside. She only kept that special one (the rest of his over the top apology went to the hospital, to each room in every wings, she even got a new moniker from the nurses, Miss Doolittle). Time may have stripped their short-lived vanity but the message within was delivered, loud and clear. Their scents lingered in her memory, even after she got rid most of the flowers. For days her humble abode smelled like autumn, spring and summer had visited all at once, there was no denying how beautiful her small world looked and felt. Too beautiful to be true.

He was the one, the one that ignited the spark inside her abyss, the only one that her body sings to. A single touch of his finger was all it takes to resuscitate her. He may not noticed it … but he was her first, and she’d be lying if she never wished that he’d be the last.

Their first left her in total awe, that after almost twenty-five years she finally got to feel it. It was glorious beyond words and totally worth the wait (not like she was actually waiting, but, details).

Every touch, every sigh, every thrust, e-ve-ry-thing, she can replay the monumental scene vibrantly inside her mind. Even reminiscing about it set her nerves ablaze.

In a way, his touch felt like the rain in early spring, it cleansed her, but in other time, it felt like pure fire, redeeming her from all the hurt and all those life satire. Until somewhere between those nights they intimately shared, the dragon slayed her monsters, and at long last, her roots were no longer bounding her soul, and she was no longer her past.

Now the pertinacious devil had finally learned to play nice, not just nice, now he wanted more, had offered her for more.

‘Fuck the rules.’

‘I’d cross out every line.’

Darcy knew what his proposal entailed, it wasn't a road that leads to a fairy tale ending, obviously. What they have was … different. Each knew they were not meant to be together, that their exhilarating endeavor would lead to nothing further than physical satisfaction. But somehow, it
works, the aberrant oddity in the equation actually made their dance so in tune with one another.

*Two wrongs don’t make a right.* Perhaps. Though people tend to forget the last part of the line. *But don’t three left make a right?*

Those wrong turns they took, entwined their paths, bring them closer together. Some could say that they’re the blind that leads another blind through a desolated maze, yet she wouldn’t have it any other way. Like a natural disaster, it was inevitable. She can’t tear her longing craze for him, he’s the sweetest malediction that she can’t seem to get enough. Perhaps it’s true, that everyone got an addiction, something to take away the pain.

Since their first encounter she knew, he was the sole reflection, the kindred spirit to her soul. She recognized the mask of scorn and hubris that he proudly displayed, like a badge, a shield. But those sharp eyes, when they gazed into hers as their body moved as one in the grandest symphony, they tend to forget their own lies, the throes that prowls within those mesmerizing shade of green, where he locked away the remnants of his humanity, his grieve, horrendous old wounds and nasty scars. She saw it, she saw him. He’s a survivor, just like her.

She knew what took the innocence off her heart, but she can’t help but wondered, who (would dare) took his?

The clock points to 8pm, she looked over her shoulder to the window where the thin moon was hanging low. The ball must have already started, the annual Odinson’s party to celebrate their 45th years of succession. Many had suggested him to postpone it (including herself), considering the negative hype that circulating still. Of course, being Loki, he had neglected those suggestions. She knew he was trying to make a statement. To let everyone in this city know who owns it, and that the new ruler, is even more ruthless than the last.

Loki specifically told her not to come, said that his mother already arranged himself a date for the night. If she didn’t know him any better, she’d be tazing his tight ass the moment those words left his lips, but no, she knew what he was doing (again!). He’s fighting his fight alone, like he always did before.

*What a stupid bastard!* Who did he think he is? She’s an adult! She doesn’t need anyone to keep her safe, most definitely from him of all men! Hell no. If he wants to do this (whatever this is), she wants it all, the good, the bad, the worse, the whole deal, without boundaries, without promises, but most certainly … without regrets.

Her feet tread to the back of the lining suits until she was standing in front of that gorgeous dress.

‘*Yours.*’

Darcy thought he was kidding, until she tried it on after he left, and it fits like a rich man’s glove. With two fingers she traces the silken fabric, “Looks like I get to wear you after all.”
Fucking boring.

That was what he felt throughout the gleaming evening. A good thing that none of the other Odinsons were there, because the ballroom was crowded with hungry beasts hiding underneath their sharp suits and haute couture dresses. Every player was present, those corrupt politicians and so called businessmen/women that run the country, including representatives from the other eight families, even those who usually prefer to lurk under the shadows like those Italians in the corner and those Chinese at the bar. They were here for a purpose, to secure their lot. Words do travel faster than plague. They were whispering the lies he conspired. That Loki Odinson will start a new era, begins with undoing the last command his father made long ago.

Drugs. Narcotics. Heroin. He’ll break loose the iron gate, re-incite an open market for all variants of hallucinogen available out there, no more hiding in the dark.

Odin banned those venomous junks from the streets, they were a band of crooks and sinners – yes, but to ruin the next generation was never an option. There was quite a fight back then, but no one could stand against the All-Father. If there was anything he admired from the old man, it was that, he knew how to stand his ground. Throught after years passed, leeway and holes were made, transaction behind closed doors, people got the stuff around, and on his lowest point, Loki got his share of the goods too. Until Odin sent him away to London after a few bad trips he had. He’s clean now, been clean for years, and the thought of getting inside that crowd again, even for a façade was repulsive. Should his and Nicholas plan works, things are going to get a whole lot more complicated in the next few weeks. Especially after he sent those two dogs back to their owner. Fuck. Those men, they brought out the monster in him.

‘Kill you? Did you hear that Fen? Why do people tend to think I’d do such horrid thing?’

Three steps and Loki was once again towering over the first man, he crushed those thick fingers under his Italian leather shoes eliciting a loud agonizing cry cuts through the calm milky twilight.

‘Who said anything about killing anyone? No - no, how can I? I’m a businessman.’ He leaned down to level their eyes, ‘You’ll send my reply to your master, I give him two days, and not a moment more, to come apologize on my feet. Tell him that Loki will be waiting - most impatiently.’

When there was no answer he bashed the thug’s head once more, ‘You got that - ? I’m terribly sorry, where’s my manner, what was your name again? I didn’t quite catch it before.”

More silence, those men were practically sobbing by now, crimson dyeing the gray concrete under their knees.

‘ANSWER ME!!!’

‘T-Tommy’

‘Excellent, Tommy,’ Loki smiled and patted him by the cheek, ‘Let’s make a deal, me, you and your friend there. Nod if you agree.’

They weren't planning to take a trip to suicideland anytime soon, thus, both compliantly nodded.

‘Good. Listen very carefully. Never come near her again, o r have no doubt that I will hurt you, I will hurt you ‘till you wish you were better off dead. Do I make myself clear?’
Nicholas might not approve what he did (and what he’s about to do). But people like them are worse than circus animal, they need to be taught, with force. Loki was going to play it subtle, but now, it's time to show them who’s in charge. Still he got to admit, getting his hands dirty was not a smart move. It’s been a while since anger swallowed his logic, turned him into such low brute that resolute in violence act instead of levelheaded negotiation (at least he did both). Indeed things are going to get more complicated, not to mention bloody messy too. And being the moron that he is, what did he do amidst of it all? He brought an innocent woman back with him instead of pushing her away. Fantastic.

Perhaps the universe revels in his agony, purposely turning him into an idiot when they sent her drifting to his life, and not just meekly drifting like the lazy summer’s wind, no, she was a goddamn hurricane. When it comes to her, all logic and reasons left him. As much as he tried to cover their involvement from the eyes of the media, somehow it leaked, which wasn't entirely surprising, there are many traitors in the house of the Odinson, which lead to that night’s incident. He couldn’t imagine if she got home when those men were still inside, what would happen to her then? He closed his eyes, focusing on casting the thought away, not to let the evil dance inside his twisted imagination.

The Baccarat in hand was his third flute, he was chugging it down when he saw the petit figure gliding from the corner of his eyes. He immediately sets the crystal on a passing tray, because a goddess in white is walking straight at him, with the flowing fabric as her wings and the play of lights as her halo. Loki never saw anyone so bright, so captivatingly beautiful in his life. He thought, it must be the alcohol that lends that surreal unearthly luminosity radiating around her, but perhaps, the glow was hers alone. As she steps closer, he sees a satisfied half smirk on those plump lips (she caught him ogling like a fool) and determination shone from those pair of stubborn blue.

“Da – “

He never got to finish the word, because she stretched on her toes, laced her arms on the back of his head and stole his breath away with a searing kiss. At once everything pales away, the crowd thins out into insignificant blur, the music fades away into feathery whispers until he can only hear his own heartbeat (or was it hers?). The kiss grew restless, unrestraint, deep and hot and wet. She takes as much as she gives. It feels remarkably amazing, as if the earth was spinning only for the two of them.

After some moment that felt too much yet too soon she tore her lips away. Gradually her eyes fluttered open, and with unchaste passion written on her face she said, “That … was my answer.”

Like a fool without a brain he just looks at her, trying to shift back his composure, and damn was it hard, he felt tight and throbbing all over. Especially down there.

"What are you doing here?" He glowered.

"You said three days. I'm keeping my promise." She ran her tongue along her lower lips.

Why does this woman never listen to a damn word he said? He clearly told her not to come! "Yes, but - "

She cut him, "I will never be your coy mistress Loki. If you want this, I don’t want to be kept in the dark, I want in, I want you to trust me too.”
Without waiting for his reply, she continued, jutting her chin, hands flat on his chest. “Can you do that?”

A weary sigh left his thin lips, his face darkened, “I told you that I’d be honest Darcy.”

“You did and I decided to believe you,” a wistful smile tugged on her face.

"You know that was a terrible decision? Do you even know what you're asking?"

"Oh for god's sake Loki, stop being such a drama queen! Are you trying to talk me out of this? Out of your own bid?"

It's an on-going battle of conscience really, she had no idea how hard the fight within. “I cannot give you a guarantee, a promise, or a future, a forever. What I’m offering you is now.” Apart of him doesn’t want to put her existence in jeopardy, but the other part, the selfish bastard doesn’t want to miss a single moment, because those fleeting seconds might just be their only chance.

“Loki … “ Darcy raised a palm to the side of his face, her thumb dabbing on his lips charred with her rouge and goddamn, he looked so sexy and thoroughly debauched. “Don't make this hard … I’m not asking for those things. I don’t need your promises. Can’t we do this one step at a time? Give me this night, then tomorrow, you give me another, can’t we do that?”

“… One at a time?”

She nodded timidly, “Yes, start with tonight.”

“I thought you already knew,” he covered her palm with his, “Most of my nights were already yours.”

“Is that why you’re here alone, without the date you said you’d bring?” she looked at him under her lashes, “I was so ready to kick that skinny bitch’s ass for stealing my spot.”

“With that ankle? I don’t think so,” his expression lightened.

“You know it’s a terrible move to underestimate me, I could easily kick yours too,” Darcy tugged his bowtie.

“I wouldn’t mind if you do,” a wicked smile finally broke on his bewitching face.

“Pervert.”

He arched his right brow sassily, “Oh … I am, but you like it.”

Oh dear heaven! What is it in him really? That an arch of his brow was all it takes to kindle the fire in her? She cleared her throat and steeled her face despite the tingling dampness she felt between her thighs, “Don’t stall, you haven’t given me your answer.”

A few seconds stretched before he started, “Darcy, what happened the other night … I don’t - “ He pinched the bridge of his nose. Loki found it hard to talk about it still, the image of what happened was still fresh inside his memory, “I’m trying to keep you safe, don’t you get that?”

“I do. Thank you, though it was not necessary. And, I think it’s my turn now.”
“Your - turn?” Bewildered, he moved his hand away from his face and placed it on the small of her back.

“I’m not the one who needs saving.”

He scoffed, “You’re going to save me? From what?”

“You yourself,” she leaned in to whisper a tease, a breath apart from his lips, “I cracked your secret vault.”

“Did you now?” He narrowed his eyes.

She blinked, “Yep, right there.” Darcy placed her palm to his chest, right over his heart. “You buried it so deep down there.”

“Darcy …” his desperate voice grew softer as he backed away.

“Tell me I’m wrong and I’ll tell you that you’re not as good a liar as you think you were,” her beautiful tresses bounced as she cocked her head.

There was a sea of doubt in his stormy green eyes, “… Very well, you want answer?”

“Duh!” She glared sardonically.

With one hand he reached to his chest, to cover her palm with his, “You said you cracked my secret.”

He asked again when she smiles wittingly, “What’s in there? What did it say?”

Tentatively she brushed aside their adjoined palms over his heart and placed her ear there (which made his heart race even faster), then after a few seconds she looked up to him, her face was beaming brighter than the stars,

“It said … fuck yeah Darcy! Please - oh pleaseee save me Darcy!” He was sure that at least ten other people around them heard that, she was on point with her theatrical impression of a damsel in distress (like in those old movies).

He laughed, melodiously carefree, just like that night and she thought she never saw anything more precious in this world, that she’d do anything to keep the laughter on his face.

“It’s not like you gave me a choice by showing up here unannounced looking like an angel, then straight up giving me the devil’s kiss.”

“Did I? Blame it on my fairy godfather, he was awesome, he left me this pretty dress for a ball.” Not to mention smokin’ too, Loki in a tux is a novelty, a true vision of excellence. She couldn’t believe that she got to be the lucky lady that will rip it off him later.

“He got fantastic taste. Will the spell break after midnight?”

“I guess we’ll just have to find out,” her flirty smile suddenly interrupted with a wince.

“Does it still hurt?” He held her tighter, scanning down her feet with a frown. “You really shouldn’t be here, let alone wearing those damn heels.”

“No, not really I - wait what are you doing?” What the hell! Getting carried when no one was looking was embarrassing enough, let alone in a room full of people!
He peered down at her with an unreadable expression, “I thought we made a new agreement? Of course we need to seal it, as soon as possible. I’m taking you home. Now.”

“I can walk by myself! Put me down, this is ridiculous Loki, people are looking!” Though clearly they were trying not to.

“Let them, I don’t care.” There was no point in hiding anymore the moment she stepped inside the scene. They all could wildly interpret things as they like for all he cares.

She huffed, "Careful, don't let me get use to this."

"Why not? I like having you in my arms," he winked and at once, flattering scarlet lit her whole face.

Long steps took them out from the crowd, and in no time they were the only pair in the vast deco style corridor. “Have I told you how exquisite you look tonight?” He knew the dress would look stunning on her.

“Why did you buy it? When?” She rounded her hand to the back of his neck, fingers playing with his curls.

“I thought it would suit you, that’s all.”

“Bullshit.”

“You need to stop doing that. Asking me questions but not taking my answer.”

“Then you need to stop giving me stupid-ass vague answers,” she slapped him on his back, but leaned in to land a peck on his cheek.

Loki took her to the elevator, down to the hotel private parking lot reserved only for the owner. He never allows valet services went anywhere near his ride, even at his own place, you could never know who you can truly trust.

A jab knocked her gut as she looks over the mirror, at the picture perfect couple cast on it, him on his tux, her on her white dress. And she regretted it almost instantly, she didn't need another reminder on which ground she agreed upon. “Put me down Loki, please.”

Finally, he does as told, slowly easing her down, but keeping his hands tight around her waist. Once her feet were settled firmly to the marble floor, he backs her to the corner of the elevator, tipping her head and seized a kiss.

Carnal moans and whimpers resonated, their lips and tongue eagerly tasting each other as their body start to rock wildly, all hard planes to soft curves. In the air, he could almost feel the growing weight of her needs, hard and heavy as his desire. He was so ready, so eager to have her writhing under him, on top of him, all over him.

The ‘ding’ of the elevator stopped them, with choppy breath and heaving chest he took her hand as they race to his car. He opened the door for her and promptly followed. Immobile inside his coupe, separated by the hand-brake and stick between them. He drew out his hand, caressing her smooth cheek down to her collarbone, sculpting her into his brain.

“Thank you for the dress,” her voice but a whisper.
“My pleasure,” long fingers were tracing lightly on the outline of her breast.

“Mine too,” she gasped when he trailed his fingertip on one peak, “- have I told you how much I love seeing you wearing a tux?” She crawled her hand to his thigh, knew he was still very much affected from the kiss they shared, not that she could blame him, because her parts were undeniably wet and pulsing too.

“You can always tell me again,” the green in his eyes were completely shifted to soot.

“I am telling you now … “ Ever so slowly she traced further down to his wide apart knees, his inner thigh, until her fingers rested around his bulging crotch and he instantly hissed, his face tauten when she started to add more pressure, rubbing him over the fabric, up and down, side to side and circling on where the crown was positioned. “Can you feel it?”

He throw his head back to the headrest, shutting his eyes as she stroked him harder. “Darcy, let’s go back first,” but he made no move whatsoever to stop what her hand was doing, clearly both his heads were thinking independently.

Watching him helpless under her touch was erotic beyond measure, her insides were clenching with aching crave, and honestly, ever since he said he’d take her in his car that night, Darcy was itching to do just that.

“Oh … wow, I think you really do need my help,” she wrapped his ample girth around her fingers, the tip of her tongue teasing the engorging head of his rock hard cock.

He could barely think, let alone speak, thus he just holds on tightly to the steering wheel, giving her free access to do as she desires. She continues to touch him a bit more before she begins to lave her hot clever tongue along his shaft.

“Mffh … gods, Darcy! Fuck!” She swallowed him, deep. Loki really wanted to stop her, take her back home so he can properly, thoroughly fuck her on his bed. Only, it was easier said than done, especially when this woman was on the verge of fulfilling one of his fantasies (she stars in all of them).

“Oh … wow, I think you really do need my help,” she wrapped his ample girth around her fingers, the tip of her tongue teasing the engorging head of his rock hard cock.

She was smiling, he can feel it, she’s good with this, stellar in fact, she knew just where to push to send him off the edge. The sloppy sound of her kissing him and her senseless moans was enough to get him off, but still he tries to hold on, though it was getting harder by the second, painfully so, especially when she swirled her tongue and ngggh … pulled out as she intently sucking him before she went down again.

Oh fuck, he’s not gonna last. “No - no, darling, I want to be inside you.” He placed a hand on her shoulder, trying to stop her as waves of pleasure washing over him, drowning him. He desperately wanted to turn her over, to plunge deep and explode inside her, filling her with his seeds.

She pulled out with a pop, “Technically you were.”
Playing the seductress, with one hand, she (very carefully) pulled down the side zipper of her dress, displaying her naked breasts (which got the rest of his stutter left unsaid). She pinched both nipples until they hardened, kneading the heavy globes, rolling them under her fingers for him to see, all the while not breaking their eye contact. There was a sharp intake of his breath before he swiftly took her by the waist and suck on those delectable pert buds until she was panting, crying out his name, with one hand tugging on his hair while the other planted on the window.

“Loki, wait - ” she nudged when one of his hand was travelling south, from the daunting look on his face, she knew he was so going to ruin the dress, but this time she won’t let him, “I want to kiss you … “ Hungry blue eyes were peering down his lap again, where the pants were left open and the prize was there, waiting hard, big and proud.

“Are you trying to kill me woman?” He doesn’t think he can handle her further teasing without a shattering release.

She laughed as she trace kisses along his clenching jaw, “Don’t exaggerate. Patience darling, all in good time.” As much as she was dying to ride him, first, she wanted to watch him fall apart, lose control. To ruin the man under the impeccable tux.

“I want to taste you,” Darcy went down again, “… let me taste you,” her face a minuscule apart from his tip and she licks the pre-cum seeping out of it before she sucked hard and engulfed him once more, pumping what’s left of him down to his balls with her fingers, until finally, after series of gritted curses and incoherent growls escaped his lips, there was nothing he can do but let go, let go as he let her hold him while he burst into million pieces of mixed pleasures and thrilling gratification.

Every glass window inside the car was blurred with hot vapor, the only sound echoing inside was their ragged breath. He cups her face, tipping her to face him and whispered a thank you as he dipped for a soft kiss. He can taste himself on her, he wasn’t sure who was marking who, but what he was sure of was that he’s going to return the favor, throughout the rest of the night.

They ride home in silence, but he kept their hands linked with firm grip and a prominent promise burning on his eyes.

Later, later he will bring the tempest her way, turn her world upside down, inside out, on his bed.

***

“He was giving you a hard time, wasn’t he?” The mock dripping in that soft voice didn’t escape him, and Malcolm was not one like to be ridicule.

“I can handle him,” he answered with disdain.

A chuckle on the other line, “Not what I heard.”

“Old man, you heard wrong.” That fucking asshole! Last week, those 'ogres' said they would
handle it, it was nobody's secret that they got an unsettled old debt with the Odinsons, thus he let them, he'd rather have his hands clean anyway. A few nights ago they sent two of their men to do the deed. But clearly, it wasn't working out, those men were sent back. Alive and breathing, yes, but Loki Odinson killed the fire in them. They were as good as dead. He knew he shouldn't have let those buffoons handled it, they never got things right, not since Laufey was out of the picture.

“Listen boy, your daddy might be one of my old pal, but in this line of business, I do not tolerate mistakes. You go in and break him apart, or I’ll do it myself. Think you can do that?” The tone went threateningly low.

“Yes – “ If only he has more power, he wouldn’t have to bow his head down to this man. Alas, situation at hand did not present him another option. At least he will play along until the Odinsons were out of the game, then he will finish this arrogant old timer himself.

“Of course, Pierce.”

***

Meanwhile at the town cemetery nearby, a lean petit woman in her velvet Prada coat standing before a humble gray tombstone under the swaying branches of the sycamores.

“I owe you Katherine. I could never thank you enough.”

The one lying six feet under was the sole caretaker of her only daughter that she left behind twenty years ago. If only she could go back and change the course of time, she would take the child away, just the two of them. But she knew it was impossible, the man was too powerful, he’d find them no matter how far they run. That was why she left. So they could live. Promptly she dabbed a tear off the corner of her eyes, this is not the time to weep on old memories, she had enough of pain and grieve, plenty to drown the city.

Aloofness masked her inner turmoil as the woman turned and curtly commanded her chauffeur, “Take me to Helheim.”

First she’s going to visit Helena, her protégé, that cunning woman sees everything, even things that are not meant to be seen, if you’re looking for something, anything, there are no better place to start but Hel's.

“Yes Madam.”

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Chapter End Notes

I think I managed to meshed in plot with smut in there, can I give myself a big hug?

Suit Pornspiration:
(don't get me started on how perfectly cut the lining and the trimming was, and that matching bowtie, and how amazing that waistcoat looked on him... Just. Don't.)

Bonus:
And (in my mind) this was Miss Lewis and her dress.

Pardon for the late update, my initial plan for this fic was for it to end before June with one chapter update/week. Turned out, real life got another idea. Here is a proper depiction on how real life laughs at my plan whilst throwing random responsibility and obligations at my face:

A short blab about this chapter:
I kinda wanted to paint a stark contrast between them, both with their own character flaws, for each to experienced some kind of pain from their past so there's this unspoken connection, something she can relate to in him and vice versa. And to point the different path they took based on that pain, whereas Loki chose to be bitter, but Darcy, even if her life was shit, there was no reason not to keep on fighting for a better future while still keeping your positivity intact (though a bit screwed up in her view on men, but that's where Loki comes in and hopefully, where the tasertricks sparks bound to happen).

Anywaaay *nervously sweating* what do you think? Hope you liked it, like, really really liked it XD

Thanks for dropping by with all your kind comments, kudos, bookmarks and stuff, those really made my day!

P.S : We'll talk about the (latest) CP trailer on the next chapter, I'm still a bit shaken and stirred over that.
They trade kisses after smouldering kisses, fingertips brushing each other’s faces. The ever-changing moon shifts its pearly light, casting translucent shadows while two lost souls were dancing along the brambles. A song of lark, a traitorous warning endlessly chiming inside his head, a knife-sharp truth runs and twists through Loki's conscience. He really shouldn’t let any of this tumble deeper, yet he’s recklessly tumbling, catastrophically, disastrously deep.

“Promise me one thing Darcy - ” He pushes her flat against the wall to his bedchamber, panted breath ghosting on her skin. “Don’t fall for me”

“Afraid I’d start giving you silly nicknames? I’m very good at that,” A wicked smile on the side of her lips as she licks the column of his neck, while her flimsy fingers peels him out of his impeccable designer’s tux.


“Nibbles? Really? Fascinating,” His snigger turns into grunts the second her mouth languidly suckles on his lobe and she rocks her pelvis to the straining bulge on his pants.

His next words came out choked, “ - but that’s not what I mean and you know it.”

“Okay then, humor me,” One push and she turns the table, trapping the devil against the cold wall. “What am I really, amidst of it all?”
“Darcy …” It wasn’t supposed to be a conundrum but she caught a faint of awe and bitter blue clashed on his eyes while he contemplated for an answer that came out almost too poignantly, “ - you’re one thing I cannot afford.”

“Why? You don’t think I’d be strong enough?” She cocks her head, a dare in her tone.

“No- no, sweetheart.” There’s an agonizing longing in the way he looks straight at her as his hands sculpting the side curve of her body, “ - you’d be marvelous, more than strong …”

“I’m sensing a ‘but’ somewhere in there, what? You said no lies.” She lifts her hands, crosses them above her head, wantonly surrendering to his admission, letting his fingers work on loosening her dress until the smooth fabric pools around her feet.

There’s a brief pause in his touch, “I’m in the middle of a … business affair, no – nothing to do with the Odinsons, or Asgard Industries.” He told her before her mouth uttered the question.

“This one is different, one I wish to finish on my own, which I hope you’ll understand or this thing between us - won’t work.”

He’s stepping back again, she noticed, giving her the easy way out through the back door. She’s not going to let him slips off her fingers, not that fast. “I didn’t say anything about falling, but –“

She steps out of the puddle of fabric, taking his hand in hers and laces their pinkies together, “I can promise you this, I’ll loathe you a little less each day. How ‘bout that?”

“I think that’ll work just fine.” He curls his little finger to the clutch of hers and without a word, she pulls their adjoined hand in and drops open kisses on them. It flares the flame in him in less than a second. His ravenous gaze rove over her body covered in nothing but her high heels, unguarded and completely naked before him (and she returned the favor).

“I’ll loathe you a little less each day too.” Strong hands came reaching out for her waist, he leans down, lips tugging on hers, gently sweeping on the top to her bottom plump, again and again, whisking her desire.

“It’s a deal then?” Her question poured in a choppy breath.

A kiss instead of words came crushing as her answer, a kiss so fervent that it got her head spinning, round and round, turning her world upside down. His silken tongue laved like burning ember to her parted lips.

Not breaking the connection, he lifted her off her feet with his hands around her waist, to the edge of the bed. He sat her there and in his gloriously naked state he pulled away to kneel before her.

The view displayed was simply the epitome of male perfection, those hard and tight muscles that ran along his lean torso down to his long legs. Marble David doesn’t come close to this. However, to perceive the beauty within was much more complex. He was like an old book of poetry, which to comprehend, one didn’t need to understand but ought to feel. She thought she figured him out most of the times, though sometimes she wondered if she had been reading the signals all wrong, That what was stirring inside her, that by now had coalesced into something much more constant and solid than a fling, wasn’t mutual.

Did she make him feel what he did to her? Because whenever, wherever their skin touched, just like this moment, in this cold black night, fireworks bursted inside, and her foolish heart, it took flight.
With nimble fingers he rubbed circles on her ankle, "So this ... starts tonight?" Though the room was dark, she could clearly catch the glint in his eyes as his fingers work their way on one of her foot, pulling off her heel before placing it down the floor, “No promises, no regrets?”

Darcy giddily nodded, “Carpe – “ She stretched her weaken knees slightly apart, “ – noctem Loki.”

A smirk arose as his intense eyes devoured hers. Those were the exact words he said to her on their first night together back at Paris on a business trip. That misty night was remarkably marvelous. It was grander than sunrise and sunset combined. She was exceptionally different from anyone he had ever touched.

“Then all of these …” he pulls off the other heel, ghosting kisses on her toes afterwards, “ – are mine alone now?” His lips reached to her calves as her heart was doing a series of mean Olympic-gold medal-worthy somersaults.

_They always are you stupid ass! _ But she kept the detail to herself, instead, with a flick of her ankle she lightly tapped her instep to the side of his face, “Only if you’re also mine and mine alone.”

“But of course, we’re the selfish ones aren’t we?” He went higher, up, up, trailing kisses along her legs until he reached the juncture of her thighs and lingered there, "I am yours and yours alone.”

“Loki,” She called out in panted breath, “ – not now, I want you, “ She spread her knees widely apart, completely exposing her naked-self. An invisible string drew even tauter, electrifying the cold night air with sparks and bubbling desires. Her cries beckoned to the sky as his fingers found their way to her opening, his thumb calmly massaging her dampened folds before he slide in the pointer, his middle came next. Darcy whimpered aloud with increasing pressure that he incited, “I want you in me,”

Gradually he withdrew his fingers, running those soaked digits to his lips before he took one in and licked it clean, “Ask me again, properly.”

Darcy leaned forward, her hand reached down to his massive erection, covered it firmly in the grasp of her palm and began to stroke the straining length as she said, “I want _this_ to ravage me, I _want_ this to fuck me ‘til I can’t stand, have me on my side, under, on top, ‘til the sun comes up. There, how’s that for proper?”

The Chesire grinned wider at her bold statement, “You never cease to amaze me,” Swiftly he removed her provoking hold on him and climbed on top of her, reclaiming her lips and pushed her back until she was completely horizontal on the bed.

“Lock your feet around me darling,” he gritted the words between fiery kisses. Darcy promptly (and happily) complied. To her delight, he threw away the usual tease out the window and with firm ferocity, rolled his hips and pushed inside with a gasp and utter delirium brimming on his face.

It was the oldest rhythm in time, one that their bodies were so adeptly in tune. He dauntlessly, repeatedly dove into her core as his irises bore into hers and there their souls collided. At once, all the things their logic denied and his ears refused to hear, were plainly written there, pure, raw and bare, with every touch, every kisses, every push and pull of their bodies.

When his hold grows tighter and his expression tauter, she knew he was as close as she is, “Let go Loki, come with me, come inside me” He growled out at her request, leaning down to steal a kiss, and another. Darcy cried out as she canted her hips to welcome the carnal gyrate of his pelvic thrusts, eager fingers digging on his rear, urging him on, deeper, harder, faster, until they fly,
soaring high and fall apart with a contented sigh.

They lied on their backs, fingers entwined and there was not a movement but the rise and fall of their chests. Outside his floor-to-ceiling window they watched the constellation twinkling up in the raven-black horizon. There was something magical when one looks at the world’s marvel. They seemed to swallow whole your every doubt. All your sorrow, your anger and despair, those were but a spec of dust in this vast universe.

This hush silence they share holds no room for lies or reasons, that was why she always finds it easier to delve into him when he says nothing at all. In this she was certain that he too feels the same.

It took a short moment before his breathing even out, she turned on her side, one hand propping her head as she watched how the faint light limned on his stark feature. This enigmatic man was (probably) right, their future were as constant as the breaking ice, but she lived long enough to know that nothing built to last. Considering that, weren’t they one of the lucky ones? At least with what they shared now, even for a moment, things were real and to her, that was all that matter.

***

Some people said the reason one got lost was so somebody could find them. He never thought he was, but she found him nonetheless. She discovered hidden pathways, deciphering his labyrinth. Not many were able to do that. But then again, it was a long time coming.

When the first drench of golden sunlight visited that morning, Loki thought he was dreaming, a pleasant one instead of his usual nightmares. He didn’t feel as cold as he used to either. He knows exactly why. He can hear the soft sound of her breathing, the source of his serenity. His hurricane was still fast asleep, gentle as a drizzle, sending a tranquil lull to his ears. He peered between half opened lids, stretched out his hand, ran it along the outline of her face. She adorably purred and leaned closer in response to his quiet touch and a stupid grin smile broke on his face, this morning couldn’t be more perfect even if he tried.

The long and winding road of this borrowed life is full of surprises. As he gets to know her, he discovers that life was not as black and white as he used to think. Never in a million years would he guess that he could feel this much content with simple happiness, getting in touch with a sense of peace he lost all these years of his cynical sojourn, as if (dare he says) he’s right where he belongs, that his black twisted heart finally found … a home.

This fierce tide of sensation that came crushing at his shore, never ceasing, ever increasing, turning his barricade into nothing but a castle made of sands. He gave her another warning, but deep down, he knew the joke was on him.

Loki had seen a lot, been through a whole lot more. He knows which fight he could win and which he could not. That was how he realizes, that there was no winning this, because how can a man dodge the sun from caressing his face? Or tell the wild wind not to blow his hair a trace? One can only try, and he’s done trying.

Confounded and slowly unraveled, he was beyond frightened, yet could no longer care. If there were gods, they may condemn him to all Hel’s fury, because looking at her, curling up naked on his bed wearing that blissful look on her face, really, what could be more right than this, than
making her his? If this isn’t real, then what is?

She feels it too, he can see it in the way she looks at him, the way she kisses him. Though there were times when she was discreet like the moon, only letting him see the part she wanted him to see and keep the rest hidden away as if… she doubted him, or herself. What was her secret? Would she share hers if he share his?

Perhaps in closer proximity, in one of these nights he’ll find out, the key to her riddles. Fortunately now he got a solid reason to keep this tenacious woman near. He was beginning to miss her presence each time she left before the morning came, dreadfully so. She told him to take things slow, still, he was a helpless thinker who always plan things five to ten steps ahead, thus he couldn’t shake it off his head. Can he figures this out for them? Will she let him? Maybe he can, maybe she will. He only have to keep her out of harm’s way, by not letting her out of his sight ever again.

There was lots of ‘what if’ and ‘perhaps’ battling inside him, but the monsters within haven’t lost their ground.

No. It can’t possibly be that easy, or this good. It never was.

A languorous smile tugs on the corner of her lips and he instantly pulls her closer, tighter, casting the bitter thought away, refusing to be the victim of his own poison. He breathes in her sweet scent, and is glad to found that by now, has melted with his own.

“Good morning,” Loki entangles their naked limbs under the warmth of the duvet. “How’s your sleep?” He drops kisses, on top of her head, her forehead, down to her nose.

“Give me two more hours – “

Velvety chuckles tickle her ears as his fingers trace random path along her abdomen, just her kind of a wake up call.

“Darling, was that even English?”

“Ugh … Loki, it’s weekend, no one should be awake and you wore me out, give this girl a break.” She still refuses to open her eyes, but surrendering helplessly to his embrace. What time was it anyway? They really shouldn’t be up this early considering what they did last night (‘till early this morning).

“It was you who wore me out and do you hear me complaining about it?” He cozily nuzzles to the crook of her neck, tickling her with his breath.

“It was not a complain you dumbass,” She gives him a gentle slap when his hand’s starting to tread into dangerous places. “mmmnh … great, now it’s impossible to get back to sleep.”

“We don’t have to leave the bed just yet.”

“That’s – “ Her breath hitches when he rolls his fingers on her nipples one after the other, “You’re short circuiting my brain, this is not even fair, oh god – anhh …”

“I’m not known to play fair.” He smiles wickedly as he watches mixed emotions dance on her face.
“I – I don’t think that’s something to brag about.”

“Is that so? Shame. I’m quite proud of it.” His other hand went lower, dipping on the apex of her thighs.

“Oh – hum, ahhhn… oh, Loki – “ Two of his fingers easing in while his thumb stroking gently on her clit. Her wet and throbbing center is yearning for more.

“I’m sorry, should I stop?” The beguiled charmer asks.

“Holyshit - don’t you dare! Keep on going, oh – yes, yesss!”

As she's about to break apart, he pulls out his fingers and turns her over, trapping her under him. But he wasn’t advancing further, instead pausing the heated moment, his face searched for hers. There's a sense of awe, of reverent mirrored there. Finally he leans down, grazing her jawline, hovering even closer, his lips ghost on the shell of her ear, “I think you have bewitched me Darcy,”

Blush creeps on her skin as her body writhes under him, “You sure it wasn’t the other way around?”

A crooked smile (with that lips licking thing he often did) before he answers, “No darling, I’m positively sure that it is I that is under your spell.” He bumps the head of his hard and ready cock on her opening but not yet entering, prodding repeatedly, maddeningly.

Highlighting his words with gentle shoves, he continues to tease her. “I can’t –“ Nudge. “ - seem to,” Nudge, “ - get enough of you,” Nudge, “… mmh, all of you,”

“Oh Loki, Loki - ” She cries, tilting up her hips.

With one swift movement, he pushes her to her side, her back to his naked chest. Holding on firmly to her waist. Silken voice dripping with sex assaulted her ear as he prolong the torment in a whisper, “ - your honest charm, your intricate grace, and your wicked bravery.”

Oh god this is a bittersweet torture! “Not my – ahh, magnificent bosom? Are you sure of that Shakespeare?” She leans her ass back, lift one leg higher, sending him her consent to take her from where he lies.

“That too,” He cups her breast, “ … and this,” his hot breath ghosting on her nape, he moans aloud when he finally dives in an inch, “ - soft, tight, quim … ”

“Sloowly, mmhhhn … “ She’s clutching tightly to the Egyptian cotton sheet, her body curves and stretches wider to welcome his and even with the sore he left before, the sensation he evokes still got her body merrily singing.

“As the lady wishes,” then ever so softly his hard shaft goes halfway in, prodding, reveling on her narrow walls, “I’ll be – nggh - gentle, oh gods, you’re so tight, so tight - ” He grimaces with a grunt, trying to hold himself back before he invades some more, gently, slowly as he promised, until he's all the way inside, envelopes by her blissful heat. He stays there, immobile, relishing the way she engulfs, pulses and clenches around him.

Heartstrings mingled as their bodies fused. She can feel it, she can feel every sensation, how he fills her completely, seizes her mind and body, all those cold hollow places inside her that no man
ever gone before, in ways that are much more deeper than he could ever know.

After a short moment, he starts to move, locking their fingers as he eases out with a sigh before plunging back in with a gasp. She tightens her inner muscles to clench him harder in retort.

“Gods, keep doing that and I’m not going to last” He grunts.

“You mean – this?”

His jaw clenches as he rolls his hips, keeping his slow rhythm, firmly pistoning in and out of her, “Fuck! Oh fuck yes yes yes!”

“Are you close?” She whimpers, sensing the beginning of her orgasm. Unchastely, she undulates her hips, dancing along with his rising tempo.

“I am now,” he answers breathlessly before he chants her name like a prayer, Darcy, Darcy, Darcy!

Afterwards there are no more coherent words, their heart pounds in unison as their movement grow frantic and wild, her hand was reaching back, nails digging on his scalp, his mouth nibbling on her neck as he moves in perfect precision, hitting that one place she loves the most.

Together they’re racing, fast, even faster, reaching out to the edge of heaven.

As the fire bursted and their limbs went slack but glowingy sated like a pair of broken marionettes, he covered them both under the duvet again, “Go back to sleep, I’ll clean you later and get us breakfast after.”

Darcy closed her eyes and grinned, “Thanks Lokipoo, you’re a keeper.”

With one hand he ruffled her messy bed hair as he laughed, “Sleep, before I change my mind.”

She comfortably snugged back into his embrace and inevitably he thought, how was this not an enchantment?

Everything fell into place so naturally, they both noticed. It was more than just the sex. Each time they took each other to the highest clouds before collapsing all shattered bones and glistening with sweat on his bed (or hers), she mended his broken pieces as he revived hers. And to him, that was enough. What kind of an answer could he possibly want more?

***

At 3PM, Loki was standing alone in his empty office, his phone on one ear. His guest, Malcolm, left not fifteen minutes ago. His hunch about the mastermind behind Darcy’s incident was on point. The message he sent to those assholes got through, it didn’t matter how Malcolm swore left and right that it wasn’t his doing. He was just the middleman, the peacemaker that came with his olive branch to keep things from escalating the ugly way.

‘Don’t start this the wrong foot Loki, you know I got your back.’
It was nothing but obvious lie, reading through people’s bullshit always came naturally to Loki, it was one of many inherent abilities he learnt from his mother.

“You really had to do it did ya’?” A cynical voice in the other line answered him, bypassing the usual polite ‘hallo’.

Loki didn’t know how or from whom, but by now he was no longer surprise that Nicholas knows things before everyone else does. “That was irrelevant. We’re just talking, not shooting at people Nicholas.”

“It’s Nick,” He huffed, clearly annoyed. “It has been since the last time I checked. Now … mind telling me on how beating men to pulp was irrelevant? Too much attention is one thing we don’t need.” It was nobody's secret, that no one get to be the man on top without making enemies looking to tear you down to pieces.

“I gave you what you wanted, did I not? Weren’t those enough to rattle their cages?”

“Those old archives? Oh yeah, big time. But those bastards whose names were on it would soon be dead before I put a cuff on their dirty hands.”

“Funny to you?” Nick spat when he heard a chuckle, “Listen, we agreed on a term, I want them all, I want the whole bunch, I want the queens, the kings and their evil spawns.”

“That’s why I said irrelevant. Malcolm came to me just now.” He stated quietly.

“Did he?” A slight change in his dark tone.

“Yes.”

“And?”

“We’re planning on a meeting, with the other families, their successors or said, evil spawn.” Long fingers tapping on his wooden desk as he leant his hip towards it.

*Now we’re talkin’! “When? Where?”*

“Middle ground. Helheim. Anytime I wish.” It was the perfect choice, no one dared to mess around on Hel’s turf. For decades all kinds of wars and armed weapons were strictly prohibited from entering Helheim. That same rule applied both to the cops and the crooks.

*And you’re waiting for?” A fucking blue moon? The Halley’s comet?*

Loki shifted the phone to his other hand, “The right time. Patience, we’ve been waiting all these years haven’t we? What’s a couple more days?”

Nick could smell hesitation radiating from miles away, “You’re not still aiming to lure in the big guy are you? I told you many times, he won’t show, not now.” That man had been out of the picture for decades, and no foul records were made since.

Again, the agent was as sharp as he thought. Loki searched through and through those archives, but what he was looking for is nowhere to be found. The whole documents supposed to be listed in the month and year where his kidnapping occurred, vanished, as if it never happened. Those damn files exist, he was certain of it, Odin was one highly detail-oriented man, he without a doubt
documented it like he documented everything else. Therefore he had to aim his search elsewhere and there was only one more place to look, a slight possibility, but he’d take his chance. The truth he sought might be located elsewhere. Probably it the hands of ‘The big guy’ as Nick referred him, the Titan.

“Because of his statute of limitation? You think that’ll stop a man like him?” Loki walked back and forth along the length of his office.

“Yes as a matter of fact I do. Loki, let’s finish this first round, then after, we’ll talk.” If only that man wasn’t out of his jurisdiction, he would reconsider. Though going out on a war with someone called the Mad Titan would lead to nothing but complication, because Titan was the one that placed half the politician where they are sitting now.

“I don’t have a say in this matter I suppose?” Nick relented, knew they both have different agendas, and he ought to respect that.

“Afraid so.”

“They’re all gonna be there?”

“If they want a piece of the pie, then yes.”

The certainty in Loki’s tone didn’t ease his discomfort, “Notify me when you’ve come up with a date, I’ll have my men ready on position, you’re not going into danger alone.”

How sweet, Loki scoffed. “Oh was that compassion Agent?” Nicholas must’ve seen him as the kid he once was, not the man he is now.

“Don’t be an asshole. This is not up for debate.” With reasons unknown to him, this kid purposefully sought chaos. Nick noticed the disturbing fact since early on their unlikely alliance.

“Nicholas … “ They were just about to cut off the connection when Loki suddenly called out, “Did you – were everything confidential?”

“Why?” Nick narrowed his eye, looking up the tick-tocking clock mounted on the cold gray wall of his apartment.

“A bad hunch really.” Loki answered truthfully.

“Let me worry about that, I’ll be waiting for your next step.”

***

That morning, Darcy blamed the three little birds for not perching on her window because a bedazzling devil was the first thing she saw when she opened her eyes, sleeping soundly next to her. Actually, this wasn't the first time, though somehow she knew there was something different.

Of course it would be different. The line was crossed, and clearly, there will be no going back, of that she knew, she was responsible for half part of that action.

Darcy was so sure that she could handle whatever it was going on between them, because she assumed that with no promises there will be nothing to break. What cracked her cool was
when 'things' start to happen since she woke up for the second time that day. Things where Loki was being all kinds of perfect. Those actions of perfection got her seriously wondering, was this a dream? Did she knock a bolt somewhere inside his brain? Because, he was different, he was exceptionally kind and funny, and compassionate! He bathed her, even served her breakfast in bed for god’s sake! That was only one morning, how could she survive another?

The answer was easy. She wouldn’t. Not when he’s being all sweet and sexy and … – did she already mention perfect?

‘Can’t we do this one step at a time? Give me this night, then tomorrow, you give me another, can’t we do that?’

Well no shit Darcy! Now what? She should've anticipate this, that diva never did things halfway. It was always everything or nothing at all. That cheater. What happened to his ominous ‘ - you’re one thing I cannot afford’ line? She wasn't made of stone, how was she suppose not to feel anything for him? Curse him and his perfection!

Troubled and utterly frustrated, Darcy finally went out after Loki hurriedly left, in his usual impeccable self, blue shirt and a (yummy) dark suit (sans the tie). He said he was going for a brief meeting. Which was weird, she didn't schedule any, never did for weekends, but she let it slide, she needed to get some fresh air to straighten up her fitful perspective.

Of course, he didn't leave her to be on her own, even though she relentlessly argued about it. So now, Fen and this other guy, Jordy, a younger, slender and pale dude who's apparently never utter a single word were tailing her from their (it’s still funny saying it even inside her head) home, to the pharmacy (she forgot to bring her pills from that wreckage of a flat), the grocery store and lastly, to the brewing coffee shop. Poor men, bet they didn’t sign up to be a sitter.

The sun lent it slightly warmer rays today and people were happily wandering about the bustling street outside the window. The coffee shop was packed too, but they got settled in a cozy corner with a huge punny typography poster (‘The thought of coffee makes me STIR’) on the brick wall beside their seats.

“I’m fucked.” Darcy suddenly sputtered, it was supposed to be a monologue, but when Fen reacted (the other guy insisted on guarding by the entrance), she knew she was saying that aloud.

“Excuse me?” Fen was sitting right across her, a huge cup was halfway to his (now quirked) lips.

She turned her head, looking down on her coffee, fiddling with the tiny spoon, “I fucked up Fen.”

There was a pause as he measured her under his keen eyes, it didn't take a genius to guess what troubled this usually lively girl. “You mean … you fall in love?”

What!? "Pfft! Don't be ridiculous! Forget what I said, let's just drop this discussion.”

“Darcy … it’s not a bad thing, to lo- “

Flabbergasted, she cut him, placing back the cup on its saucer with a clink, “Dammit Fen, stop saying the word! Geez! I didn’t take you to be a romantic.” She pouted.

He shrugged with a teasing smile on his usually stoic face, “He’s a good man.”
“He - I didn’t - ” She stuttered but then decided to give up her pointless attempts to come up with a reason. She wasn't a good liar anyway. "Drop.It."

“You sure? I'm a great listener.”

“Don’t get smart with the girl who bought you coffee. Just finish these cups and head back.”

A raspy laugh before he answered, ”You two are smarter than me anyway. You’ll get around.”

... Will she? She admitted to trust him, like him (a lot), even care for him (how could she not?), but … love? That was one thing he forbid her to commit! What did she know about it anyway? Aunt Kat said those winged cupids were no angels, and her 'colleagues' said, ‘honey, why take home the whole pig when all you want is a bit of a sausage?’.

That was why this rush of emotion she felt bursting inside caught her in a rush of panic that swept through like a blizzard. What if he really meant those stupid words he admonished?

They better figure this out soon. The good bad news was, they'll have time to do just that because she's supposed to stay with him until he's done moving all her belongings to a new place which he said will take at least a month to finish. As usual, he insisted to take good care of e-ve-rything and left no room for argument, not that she would make a good fight on that matter anyway, she wasn’t fully prepared to clean the mess those bastards left herself -

Oh dear god almighty ... was he turning her into a sappy clingy bitch now?!

The cynical and logical Darcy Lewis was telling her to tie her running shoes and flee as fast as she could, because wherever it was they're heading to, under this current, she suspected there would be a waterfall waiting at the end of the line, another disappointment, because … well, let’s be real, first and foremost, how many people that she loved ever survived? None! Nada! She started to think that she might be a jinx. Two, it’s the Loki Odinson she was talking about, did he really want her? OK, he obviously did, only, for how much longer? Days? Seasons? Because she knew his usual M.O with those women back then (she was the reluctant P.A. dealing with the mess Casanova left, sending flowers and jewellery and stuffs). And while he could dispatched lovers as easily as exchanging his suits and ties, she on the other hand, could not. Growing up poor, owned close to nothing, Darcy always wore and kept things until the very last thread. To this day she still did.

Fuck, this is bad. She was so deep in glitter-shit!

Stop it Lewis! You said carpe-fucking-noctem! Seize the moment! Don’t make this hard on yourself!

Yes, that’s right. Baby steps. One at a time, one foot ahead of the other.

Closer to the edge of the cliff.

Peachy. Perfect, just fuckingtastic perfect!
Meanwhile, inside the study of the Odinson’s manor, Thor was visiting his parents while Jane is away for a convention. They took Odin back home last Saturday, he was still weak, but better.

“Why didn’t you tell him mother? What father did for Loki.” Thor knew about the incident, though it was too late, after their parents sent Loki to London. He overheard their conversation, on what really happened. Often he thought about it, heart broken over it, that if only he could, he'd trade his place any day.

Frigga smiled warmly, she was really proud of both her sons. What Thor had been doing, how he slowly but surely, backed away from the company didn't escape her notice. It was not because of his negligence over business matter as many had thought. No. He did it for Loki, so his brother could get whatever his heart desired. There wasn’t much that Thor wouldn’t do for Loki, and she knew without saying that the sentiment went both ways.

“Your father asked me not to, he was - not proud of his action.”

“I really wanted to hit them in the head sometimes, those stubborn mules, why can’t they just, just – I don’t know ... be more open? Be like - us?” He threw his hands to the air.

“They are more alike than they would ever admit, I give you that.”

“Aye, yet he keeps on telling me he’s not my brother.” He shook his head, somehow actually quite amused watching Loki’s attempts to shove him away. Loki may pretend not to care, but inside Thor was sure he was still the little brother he knew. The same loyal boy who lied a million lies just to keep his brash big brother out of their mother’s punishment. “I don’t know how you can handle us three mother.”

“Some would say with love and patience,” She winked before continuing, stirring the rocks inside the crystal glass in her hand, “- but I’d say, with lots of wine.”

Thor’s deep laughter broke as he nodded, “That’s a good tip. I’ll keep that in mind.”

She glided near him, placed her palm over his left cheek, “Just remember sweetheart, ice were once water too. We keep doing what we can, be there for them, he’ll need his brother more than ever.”

“Mother, you don’t even have to ask. I’m always on his side.”

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Chapter End Notes

* carpe noctem = seize the night (the equivalent for Horace's carpe diem). And you don't think I mentioned their first time twice without writing it down for you guys
later? Coz I will. After this one ends that is.

I tried to juggle smut and feels and bromance and plot on this one. Usually I would let this marinates, or to procrastinate longer like I always did with past chapters, stare/re-read it until my eyes bleed, but time is tight thus that cannot be done *sigh*. So you guys got this chapter sooner than what I have in mind. I hope I didn't mess it up.

Would love to attach those sexy cheeks and hip thrust he performed in a certain trailer, but I simply.cannot.handle.it.

Suit pornspiration for this chapter:
Mmmh ... look at that smoulder, and those cheekbones, his tight blue shirt with the top button undone, yes, yep, okay, moving along now *wipes away drool*

Dear kind readers who follow this story, I'm terribly sorry for the delay, because, well ... life happens. And I'm gonna have to add another sorry on my list, because, it's June, where holiday and series of birthdays (in my huge family) occur, which means the next chapter will be just as late. Ughh ... I really cannot wait to finish all these drafts and get us all closer to the big finale. Please bear with this amateur people, she's really trying ;)

Short blab on this chapter:
I made Loki who first came to terms with his feelings for Darcy, because from my point of view, it suits his no bullshit personality. He obviously trusts her, that means his only doubt on this matter was Darcy's safety, but he thought he got it all figured out by keeping her close.
While Darcy is experiencing more difficulties mostly caused by her upbringing and his warning which actually clashes with what she feels and her natural positiveness and that leaves her in a messy place, but she'll come around. In time.
She may have claim to know his true self, but being in love sometimes stripped you off your logic, and turned you into this silly and paranoid bundle of nerves.
Experience talking.
I keep her mom a mystery 'til the next chapter, because I want them to stay inside their bubbly little paradise a bit longer, you know, before shit happens.

Again, I really hope you enjoyed and liked this chapter ^^ All comments, kudos and bookmarks (also silent and stealth readers) are most welcome <3

Thanks for stopping by!
Chapter Summary

"Ice-Cream."

"Ice-cream?"

Chapter Notes

It's gonna be a looong and bumpy ride.
Btw before we start, remember when I said I haven't stared at the previous chapter til my eyes bleed? I fixed that. Added (about 200words lol) & deleted some stuffs from it. Just for fluidity sake, nothing fundamental.
“Where are we going?” Adjusting her black rimmed glasses Darcy lifted her head off her pad. This is the first morning where she goes off to work from his place. Frankly, she’s quite nervous on how her colleagues would treat her now that the whole building basically knows about their involvement since she crashed the company’s annual party (impulses, her life long frenemy). To further her discomfort he refused to leave separately. An easy thing to decide when one owns the company while she on the other hand, is merely working there.

“Not to the office that’s for sure.” Loki replied, stating the obvious as they just missed a left turn from the intersection. “You can continue typing that email, we still have ten more minutes before we get there.”

“There - where?”

“Patience Miss Lewis. You’ll know it in ... less than ten minutes now.”

“While I’m on it, should I type my will too?” She huffs and sighs dramatically. “I thought you said making people disappear wasn’t your thing?”

“Tsk - tsk, that would be a terrible waste darling. I wouldn’t survive a week without you.”

“Lies. Liar!” She groans.

“Ice-cream.” Loki finally tells her.

“Ice-cream?” She paused, “As in cold-and-sweet-and-yummy food of the gods ice-cream?”

Keeping his eyes on the road, he nods with a straight face, trying not to let his inner thought show. Because seeing this rare sight, catching his usually know-it-all gutsy P.A. off guard is beyond amusing, it’s endearing.
“Loki it’s eight AM! We’re expected at work. You do realize there are tons of shit waiting to be done?” She exclaimed with a look of utter disbelief, still cannot believe that she’s being the voice of reason here.

“So?” Loki just nods as if he’s getting bored with her objection. “They can manage one day without us. What do you think I pay those people good money for?”

Knowing his unwavering stubbornness, she reaches for her phone to leave a message to the tower, but he suddenly halts her mid movement and with his one free hand, takes the phone away from hers, “I’ve noted them.”

“But of course you did,” she rolls her eyes and sinks to the leather seat, throwing a look outside her window.

He steals a glance sideways, noticing how the lights illuminates her alabaster skin, “I promise it’ll taste so much better than mixing cereal with coffee.”

“Hey, watch it mister. Most people don’t get to live long after they mocked how I take my cereal.” That was not how she usually handles her breakfast. It started just like that two years ago when she had this ‘brilliant’ idea that if everything down there got mixed anyway, why waste time gobbling them separately? Guess time got tight and one got desperate when she’s working for a tyrant. Who’s now won’t stop ribbing her about it.

“I’m not most people.”

“Nope, you’re not.” Darcy shifts and turns to look at him, “The first month working for you, I thought you were a vampire.” That was no joke, she really did (either that or he’s some sort of a deity, which was even more unlikely). Aside from his pale and gaunt appearance (he wears a lot of black), she barely caught him eating and despite his incessant working habit he rarely got sick. Okay wait … scratch that. He never got sick. That last time she admitted him to a hospital for appendicitis couldn’t possibly be considered as an ailment, not to him, because he still worked his ass on his bedridden state hours after the doctors performed the surgery.

“Count Dracula?” He bends the gear and takes another left turn around the corner.

“No, no, Lestat. I always like him best.”

As it turns out, he isn’t kidding about having ice-cream. He drives her to this vintage ice-cream parlor with retro vibe interior downtown where his mother used to take them. He said, once in a while, instead of dropping them to school, she would surprise them with a ‘Children’s Freedom Day’ (she made that up) and take them somewhere fun.

The place was empty when they got there (as it should be considering the time) and the kind-faced owner treated him like a close relative, calling each other by their first name as he wrote their order. Loki Odinson, a regular in an ice-cream shop? Who would’ve guessed.

After the heavenly feast been served (mint choco-chip for him and peanut butter ribbons with fudge chunks in chocolate ice-cream plus extra cherries for her), on his third bite he quietly said, maybe to others, visiting an ice-cream parlor was just a mundane thing, but not to them. With bodyguards tailing wherever he and Thor went, school included (despite the fact that both went to a private one), fun and freedom was a rare thing. His early life spent entirely inside a cage, made of gold maybe, but a cage nevertheless. For safety reason that was out of a child’s comprehension
back then Odin endeavors to keep their activities within the towering walls. He would enroll them to one of those home-schooling if it wasn’t for Frigga’s protest.

Their home, the Odinson’s manor was more than one could ever ask for, he supposed, because whatever Thor or Loki wanted, Odin made it happen. Like one time when Thor wanted to visit the movie theater, Odin built one at their basement. When Loki wanted new books, Odin renovated a vast room by the second floor and turned it into a library. He couldn’t say there is much to complain really, but he felt that they were missing on quite a lot during their childhood. That was why each sneaking out they did with Frigga was a precious thing. Ice-cream getaway was a precious thing.

“Being careful is important. But we only live once, and to truly living it is even more important.” She said.

They just looked at her with their ice-cream smeared faces, didn’t really understand what her words meant at the time but, sweet memory lingers.

“Are you going to finish that?” Darcy purposely snaps him out of his blue. Looking at his lost-puppy-eyes does things to her inside. She’s glad to hear that at least he has a cool mom to gush about, because the privilege was lost for her.

“You want a taste?” He raised a brow and his silver spoon, small and befitting in his hand.

“You bet I do!”

Their surrounding forgotten as they share bite after bite. The passing minutes and ice-cream never taste so sweet in her tongue. Perhaps there are lots of obstacles waiting ahead of them, but right at this moment, floating ocean inside their own bubble, she feels as if they’re invincible to the rest of the damned world.

“No fair, you took my last cherry. Buy me another.” She pouts, slapping his hand away from her half empty bowl.

“Did I? How can I possibly replace such a precious thing?”

Darcy dips her pointer finger in the melting cream and daubs it on the tip of his nose. “Guess you’ll have to take responsibility.”

“I do don’t I?” Loki grabs the paper napkin.

“Uh – hum.” She snatches it off his hand. "Let me." She pushes both bowls aside, props her elbows on the table.

She brings her palms to both sides of his cheek, with an impish smile she diminishes their gap. From the way he holds his breath and the look on his darkened eyes she knows he thinks she’s going to kiss his lips but instead she lands a kiss on where she smeared the melting cream, and like a cat, she licks it. “There, all clean.” She pats his cheek before she sits back down to continue scrapping her bowl as if nothing ever happened.
Later that day, she proposed a walk (with compulsory snack stops!) around the city (they leave his too-fancy jacket and car to Fen), subway hopping from one place to another. Ridiculously (though not entirely surprising), it was the first time he ever rides in one.

“Feel like I’m taking an alien prince out on his first fieldtrip to Earth,” Darcy said over her shoulder as she swipes her card to the scanner.

“Commoners,” Loki followed suit.

“Careful, I could gather a public strike against you, you capitalist monster.”

“Not if I subjugate you first.”

She was about to rebuke his retort but their banter cut short by the commotion of people, rushing in the morning commuter. Inside the packed tube, no one seemed to recognize him (or her, since her face got printed alongside his after the party). They’re just another couple lost in each other’s presence.

If only that was what they are, how simple everything would be. She could tell him all the stupid things swimming circles inside her head right then and there.

But you’re not, and you can’t. Her inner cynic reminded her.

As the tube passes by from one terminal to another the fleeting lights go on and off, ashen black to yellow bright. When they went above the ground, the passing buildings and houses were nothing but blurs of colors painted by the wind. He pointed to some directions, of where he went to (snobs) school, where his first kiss took place (under the bleachers at the local ballpark), and his favorite hideout (a stable runs by an old friend).

It’s refreshing to be able to see this side of him. There was no reluctance in showing his emotions on his usually cold-nonchalant face. Such a contrast to the brooding evil one she’s so used to dream to punch before.

She notices what he’s doing with all this memory talks. Opening himself a bit more, just like she had asked. All the while only his own stories flow. He never, not even once, goads her to do the same, because he can read the reluctance in her bright as the day. She felt touched and guilty altogether at his thoughtfulness.

A few times she wondered, should she tell him about her past? But timing were often off and in the end, she fell short on courage.

You lack effort Lewis, opportunity won’t present itself! Stop making stupid excuses for yourself!

Not that she was ashamed of who she was or where she came from. That day when she forged herself a new life, she knew she was only fooling herself but still, it was a turning point for her and since, the ugly truth remains hidden.

You need to tell him sooner or later.
But how will he take it when he finds out that she disregarded his rule since day one? The number one rule no less. Honesty.

“You know there are more than three hundreds stations scattered about the city?” She blurted out random trivia to distract her own train of perturbing thought.

“I never got the chance to count,” He said as he tried to make himself comfortable (which he found quite impossible) inside the tight space. His long feet were bumping to hers and another stranger at his side (she nudged to his kneecap and whispered ‘Don’t sit like a whore!’ to his ear).

“We should get off at the last stop, at the Metro-South.” It’s the perfect place if they’re going to play this getting-to-know-each-other game. It’s one of the oldest parts of the city, closest to the harbor and the sea. They even keep those phone booths people no longer use. Some turned into a mini library or a charging booth, while some other stayed the same, bright red, as a memento. Those little mementos are what makes it one of her favorite spot. Also, it’s where the public library still stands, and also … it’s where she went to school.

“Anywhere you wish.”

The whole ride they stay close to each other. When there was no space, they stand back-to-chest with his hands around her waist to keep her balance and to keep her from being squash by the crowd. And when they reached the outskirt part of the city where not many else around, they sat tight with his fingers laced to hers.

Bustling sound of engine and subdued wind outside collides with people’s distant voices and suddenly, after the train passed the Rainbow bridge and the grand canal, he turned to her, slowly leaned down to level their eyes. He smiled when their nose bumped, still smiling when he tilted his head. There in the middle of a bright afternoon, inside the tube, between the 125th and 130th St., like a pair of school kids skipping calculus, sitting on the bench, he kissed her, slow and long, tender and sweet.

Darcy closed her eyes, grasped harder to his fingers, getting lost into his kiss, immersing her soul into his warmth. His kisses were always intoxicating, world-stopping and heart wrenching all at once, as if it gave her answers she thought she never sought, of dreams she never dared to long.

She doesn’t quite notice it before, how effortlessly he turns her crazy world around, and though she doesn't know when the exact moment where he fixed her dysfunctional heart, in perfect clarity now she knows what it truly wants. That right in this moment, swear by all the heaven’s stars above, this is all she ever wanted. Him. In her arms.

More than a few times she wished for things to be different, but in most times, she was glad it wasn’t. It matters little to her now, if their story is only a page, a flimsy chapter out of his book, while he fills most of hers. Because those pages don't define the memories within, and at the end people remember moments, not days. And as the moment stretched, she did exactly as she promised. She loathed him a little less each day.

To her, the epiphany comes drizzling like the rain by the second week of the month, on a humid Monday afternoon where the gentle sun shyly peeked above the thick puffs of clouds. It was the day when Darcy Lewis finally gave up the will to keep on fighting this losing battle. And for this, she doesn’t need his approval, she doesn’t need his acceptance, she doesn’t need him to do
anything at all.

Because she, may god help her, helplessly, completely and without a doubt is madly in love with him.

***

Living with someone is one thing that never crosses his mind before. Not just because he values his privacy or liking the silence, but also because he had never been involved with anyone serious or long enough as to commit himself in a domestic scene. The thought alone was not only unsettling - it’s almost nauseating. Only, now he finds himself enjoying it (as every other thing related to Darcy).

There’s a certain profoundness having someone to goes home to, or someone to curls in bed with, or even someone to just be there, not having to say anything at all.

They just got back from their subway adventure and after taking a shower together, scrubbing off those sweat and dirt from their skin (fun activity entailed of course) when, with her half-dried hair, donned only in her knickers and his white shirt Darcy went to the kitchen.

“Just trust me on this. Do you remember when I told you I compensated my lack of tune in other areas?” She forbids him to follow after her.

“I do. I just didn’t think it would involve any cooking.” He leans on the doorway of the kitchen.

“Nope, no cooking. Though I excel at that too.” She winks, “Alas we already ate, so I save the cooking for a later date.” Earlier, they had pizza before they went home (her treat, for being such a sweet date).

“Now, off you go.” She shooed him out of the kitchen.

“And whatever it is you’re going to make you’re making it with vodka and liqueur? I’m liking it already.” Loki nods to the Tovaritch! and Kahlua lining on the counter.

“No one’s getting drunk tonight Jack Sparrow. Go.”

He just smiles and backs away, “It’s Captain for you Miss Lewis.”

As he lets her conquered his kitchen (which actually never been used before), he withdraws to the grand piano. It’s been a while since the last time he played. Loki lets his fingers run along the surface of the lid, propping it up and opens the fall to uncover the lining black and white keyboards inside. They taught him how to play since the age of five and he likes it instantly, though now he only plays it every once in a while. It’s one place he can escape to without having to go anywhere at all. He just had to sit there, letting it go, beckoning his worries towards the sky with universal languages no one speaks but everybody understands.

Before he had the chance to press a fingertip on the keyboard, his phone vibrated. He took it out of
his pocket and scanned the screen.

It was a message from Fen, bringing him news of one thing he almost forgot.

Natasha Romanova.

The черная вдова whose service he paid to go digging for Darcy Lewis’ background. After all these weeks he didn’t think she’d comeback with any wayward finding. So how come Fen said this one’s urgent and important?

*No, no, no* don’t do it Loki. She trusts you. How many people in this world give you that much credit? Least you can show her the same courtesy!

He sighs, absentmindedly tapping his foot on the ground. Contemplating his decision.

But what if it *is* important? That whatever this information she holds got something to do with her safety? He still remembers that one tempestuous night when she came to him for a refuge with her bruised cheek.

The last thought decided his next action. Hesitations weighed his heart but didn’t stop him from what he was about to do. This isn’t about trust, he muses to himself as he hits reply. No. This is about doing what’s necessary, because her safety is his number one priority.

*Is it really? You? Trust her?*

He thought about it for one short moment, shifts his gaze out the hall where she’s at before settling down the soft ebony bench. He rests his fingers over the keyboard and presses one note and in response, it melodiously clinks.

*Yes.*

Then he goes to press another set of note following the first one.

*Yes I do.*

The unspoken burden flows as notes after notes fluidly dance as dainty autumn leaves with each press of his fingertips. His mind drifts away with the passing rhythm, he closed his lids, dwelling into the music, connecting further to the harmony of the universe, from within, to the wind that brought the sweet scent from the kitchen towards the shimmering sky above.

*I do trust her. With all my heart and soul.*
Momentarily he forgot about the vexing message, about his past, his blood pact, his life complications, but no matter how hard he tried, there was one thing he cannot escape from. The thought of his heart and what it desires. It no longer wants to fly, or to burn the city down to ambers, cinders and pyre.

Loki didn’t notice how many minutes passed when she suddenly came scooting at his side, backing the piano with a small plate rests on her hand.

“Don’t stop. It’s beautiful. What was it?”

He steered sideways to look at her, his beautiful goddess, smiled brightly at him. This woman brought summer’s heat to his bleak winter. Unlike him, virtue and kindness wasn’t lost in her, and he intended to keep it that way, for he’d face her demon, fight her monsters, so she wouldn’t have to. Not anymore.

“That was,” Loki shifts back, closing the lid down again. “the overture for Warsaw concerto. Ever watched Dangerous Moolight?” That was another effect of Miss Lewis, because he doesn’t usually play a sweet romantic piece (Thor thought he only played what he called funeral music, which spooked him, which amused Loki to play some more).

“I haven’t, was it good?” Darcy props her elbows on top of the lid.

“We can watch it tomorrow night if you want.” He smiles, tugging his arm around her waist.

“Why not tonight?”

“I have plans.” He crinkled his nose with a devious smile.

“Is getting you naked included in those plans?”

“I think I can arrange that. But first, where’s my surprise?”

“Right here.” She lifts the ceramic plate from her lap and shoves it to his chest.

Loki looks down, “A pie?”

“A-ah. Not just a pie darling.” She waves her pointer finger. “My aunt taught me, and it’s named ‘Russian’ for a good reason.”

“Have a bite and all your dreams will come true.” She quoted Snow White’s evil queen.

“Really?” He joins in her playful charade.

“Yes girlie, now, make a wish and take a bite.” Darcy lifts the gooey goodness and brings it to his lips.

Loki sends her a look (somewhere between, why did I bring this geek home or my, she’s so cute) before he does as told

He takes a bite, chews a few times as he softly moans (yes!) before he swallows, “Mmh … wow, so you weren’t bragging. This is exquisite, truly covers your lack of tune.”
Darcy jabs his ribs but leans closer to his chest in the process, “Thank you.” She whispers.

“Whatever for?” Within the next bite, he finishes the whole thing.

“For sharing a bit of your world with me.”

“Then I have to say mine too.”

“For?” She dabbed a tinge of chocolate from his lower lip.

“Saving me.”

Reverence held deep in his eyes as he leans down to close their gap, and the next moment his lips was on hers, cool as a gentle breeze. She tastes like chocolate this time (or perhaps that came from his tongue), sweet, sinful, addictive. He cannot get enough.

With one hand he moved the empty plate to his side and brings her upright to straddle his lap. Their lips maps each other’s, marked each other’s soul. They tug, they bend, they twine until both are drunk with the thrill of passion.

She rolls her hips when his hands come to rest on her breasts, ghosting kisses along her jawline, the shell of her left ear down to her pulse point. Her moans fill the serene darkness as he works his magic, burning ice with his fire, and she lets him, letting his heat douses it’s way beneath her skin, her veins, her bones until they crackle and cries.

There was no pretense, no resistance. He bares his soul, of what he is beneath his many masks. She left him undone, breaks his lies. It was pure bliss, freedom unlike anything he ever felt before.

When he seizes one nipple to his mouth, her body goes taut as an archer’s bow, ready for the draw. She whimpers his name, over and over, her grips tighter on his shoulders before frantically tugging off his shirt as he did hers.

“More, touch me more Loki …” She cries, wantonly grinding her pelvis wilder to the hard bulge on his crotch. His touches start the wildfire in her, the flare within burning, glittering and she wants more.

He lifted her to the closed obsidian lid, seated her there, “Oh I will love, I will,”

Then his hands came to her knees, spreading her legs wide before him and smiles between her. There was unfettered hunger glinted in his ravenous green eyes as he moves forward to claim what’s his.

Her pink flourished, hot and wet, blushing soft and dripping, ready for the taking. His tongue laves on her lips, circling around the rim before his fingers join into the feast. One finger, two fingers dive inside, dancing in and out as his mouth runs over her folds.

Darcy moans aloud, her hands buckling so tight to the edge of the piano ’til they're whiten. “Oh God, ah – anhh Loki, Loki, don’t stop – “

And he doesn’t. He guides her there, to the peak of her precipice, ready to fall, ready to fly high. Along with the tease of his fingers, his tongue strokes once, then another, and another, until soft moans turns into roar of cries.
Loki swiftly stands, took off his shirt and unbuttons his black linen pants, releasing the heat. He takes it into his palm, stroke along the hard rigid length, nudging at her entrance in circular motion. She watches, licks her swollen lips with apparent hunger.

“Ready for more Miss Lewis?” He smirks as he keeps the tease, pushing her to her limit.

Her hand comes reaching out as an answer, right on top his own, grinding, stroking him in unison to their panting breaths. It doesn’t take long, she lifts her eyes to his, ‘now’ she said, then she brings herself forward, her feet snake around his waist, closing their gap, engulfing his cock deep inside her with a sigh and a single push.

Within her, he stills, panting, relishing the moment her tight walls constrict around him, his eyes flickered to where their bodies fuse. With an arch of her body she urges him on and in another tune, another rhythm, their dance of ice and fire begins again.

“What was that Silvertongue?” She whispers to his mouth with a gasp. His crazed words were barely coherent to her ears.

His lips quirked, danger marred his expression, “I said – “ he thrusts harder, faster, “you taste magnificent Darcy Lewis. I love it, bewitched by it, couldn’t get enough of it.”

“This,” He pushed, “I love this” then he bends to kiss her lids deliberately slow, “and this,” off to her nose, “and this,” before closing on her lips once again, “and this.”

Their bodies twine, glistens of sweat dampens their skin, her nipples graze to his hard chest with each graceless movement as he chants praises to her lips.

They ride until the fire burns out, until their passions evaporates to shimmering stardust. And a short moment after the fireworks burst, they collapse together. He rests his head on the swell of her chest. She tangles her fingers in the curls of his hair.

Content and sated, together their breath heaves, the cold night wind breezes, and in silence they lay, in peacefulness they stay.

***

First thing in the next morning, he sent Darcy to the public notary to obtain some legalized documents he signed a week ago, that way he can deal the urgent matter waiting at the Ritz - the meeting point Fen told him last night, privately. He needs to get the confidential information away from Natasha before it lands in the wrong hands. If those truly are important, he’d prefer those important truth to be deliver from her own lips, in her own time.

The presidential suite was still empty when he got there. Unlike his mood, the classic ottoman inspired room was calm and bright, awash in pale cream to caramel. He walked over to the balcony to clear his head in the open space, letting the quiet murmur of the city and the drifting wind caresses his face with its cold derisive scent.
“Well, well. If it isn’t the infamous Loki Odinson.” A woman’s low velvety voice laced with sarcasm erupts behind him.

“No one ever sneaked up on me.” He replies as he twists to face the stranger.

“First time for everything.” The voice sassily retorts as she pulls the leather gloves off her slender fingers.

Loki can smells challenge from miles away, and this time it comes in a form of an elegant woman with a penchant for finer things. His rough guess would be mid fifties, though he could be wrong because her striking features are stunning still and the authoritative air she emanates reminds him of his mother, only rougher, more bitter. She glides with the grace and poise of a highborn lady, though the raw fire in her eyes did not escape his notice.

He tilts his head, noticing another petit figure tailing right behind her. Another woman. The red head he was supposed to meet.

“Sorry Loki.” The ginger viper unapologetically said.

“Who is she?” He enquires, jaunting to the room once more.

“You’ve been rudely sniffing up my tush Mr. Odinson, yet you don’t know who I am?” She throws down her gauntlet, advancing without a sound, her heels muffled by the lush Iranian carpet weaved in the color of a sand dune down their feet.

“I marvel at your courage, truly, too bad I don’t play games Mrs. – ?” Collectedly, Loki offers her his hand.

“Geanna Morrigan, you can call me Morrigan.” She welcomes it tight, but quickly drops it back as if in fear he’d contaminate her with some kind of a disease.

Like she owns the place, the brunette puts her black clutch on the table and settles cozily on an armchair in the middle of the sparse living room. After she crosses her legs to one side, she said, “Let’s not stand on ceremonies shall we? I want you to stop doing what you’re doing.”

Loki darkly chuckles at her blatant request. “Assuming you know what I’m doing, what makes you think I would?” He holds his eyes at her, sharp like an eagle to his prey. “I’m not really good with taking orders.”

“So I’ve heard. But I’ve come with a bargain you cannot refuse. I thought you’d understand as we’re both businessman.”

He arched his brow, “Ah a quid pro quo? I do understand. Though, I doubt you’d have the required checks to play.”

“Now that’s where you’re wrong boy.” A secretive smile stretches across her scarlet-tinted lips.

“Am I?” The mock in her tone irks him, but he keeps his expression neutral.

“You think you have the right to stir the peace? Think this old world owes you a debt just because of that one incident?” She knew she finally got his attention at the last word.
“People like you couldn’t imagine half of it, the ugly side of this city, the dread of living in it. Have you tasted hunger Mr. Odinson? Desperation perhaps?”

“I’m not here to waste my time.” The tension in the room peaked at her poisonous words.

“You’re right. You’re here for something more.” She crossed her hands over her Armani clad chest. “Though in my opinion, you better stop messing with things you cannot handle.”

There was something in her that keeps his emotions at bay. Something in her eyes, the way she spoke, the air around her that felt oddly familiar. “I’m pretty sure that’s none of your concern.”

“It wasn’t. Until you dragged her into this mess.” Her tone intensified.

“Her?” He parroted, still not catching where this would lead.

“My daughter.” She pulled her lips in a tight line. “Weren’t you the one who hired Natalia?”

Natasha, Natalia, or whatever her name truly is, Loki glared at the ginger, but she only paid him with a too-innocent smile and a light shrug. “Don’t take it personally Loki, we girls look after each other.”

Whatever she was saying evaporated the moment Morrigan dropped the bomb.

*My daughter.*

*Her daughter.*

Which means …

“You’re … Darcy Lewis’ mother?” A concoction of bewilderment and utter disbelief breaks on his face.

“Geanna, I’ll wait at the car.” Natalia excuses herself from the drama. She had enough of those to last a lifetime thank you very much.

Geanna nods without casting a glance towards the other woman as she leaves the room, “I am. And I’m not just that, I’m the dam that keeps things in place.”

Loki heard that name before. Not so long ago. It was Nicholas who mentioned it when they …

Then recognition dawns on him, “Did he send you? Ti – “

“Hush now. We don’t say his name aloud around here. But to answer your question, no, he didn’t. I’m here for Darcy.”

With a blank face he walks to the bar, takes two glasses and the whole bottle of scotch in his hand before he sits opposite of her.
“Who thinks you’re dead.” Loki sneers, pouring the amber liquid to the brim of the crystal glasses.

“I’m not here to justify my actions, I’m here to prevent a storm, a storm that you sought out.” Her tone elevated and her eyes hardened at his retort.

“I know what you’ve been looking for.” She continues, wearing a familiar mask he was so used to, a well-practice aloofness.

“One doesn't need to burn the whole forest to catch a mouse." She sips the fine liquor. "You will never find those kidnappers. Let it go.”

His jaw clenched at her words. Odin buried the incident so deep, no one could possibly know.

Bitterly, Loki also kept the fact that he couldn't find anything worth his time and effort in those piling archives inside Odin's secret vault that might lead him to them (whoever they were), as if someone purposefully clean the whole records of that cursed year.

“The matter was taken care of. Case closed. They got what they deserve.” An understatement maybe, but they should’ve seen it coming when they decided to mess with the All-Father.

Like a soothsayer’s would, she then answered his next question before the words were spoken, “No it wasn’t him, so I suggest you better lay it low, we don’t want him coming here just yet don’t we?”

“How do you know? How can I trust you?” Loki drops his façade. She certainly holds more valuable information than him, or anyone at all in this matter.

“Oh sweetie … I know a lot of things.” She pouts in mockery.

“But trust is something you have to decide on your own. Perhaps you can trade notes with your old man, bet he knows all about it.”

*Odin was behind all this?* But of course he was. Loki balls his fists. “Tell me more.”

There were steps approaching behind them, but they were completely oblivious under the heated conversation. Until another woman’s voice calling out his name.

“*Loki* ...”

Loki’s blood freezes, his body stiffens instantly.

“Darcy?” He abruptly stands up.

*But - she’s not supposed to be here!*

Loki pinched the bridge of his nose. “How long have you been there?” The betrayed look on her face pierced to his heart like a blade. This isn’t how it supposed to go. In the right time, he was going to tell her, about everything.

“Long enough.” She juts her chin, blazing anger in her eyes.
Fuck!

“This isn’t what you think.” He starts to explain. Poorly.

“No?” Darcy’s blue eyes steeled.

“No, it’s not. You have to trust me.” He said earnestly as he placed a palm to his chest, but her face remains stoic.

When words fail, Loki tries to get close to where she stands, but she raises her hands, motioning him to stop.

“You know what? That’s the problem. I trust you.” She clenches her fists, her voice starts to crack.

“Oh don’t worry, this is not your fault.” She cuts before he had the chance to say his peace. “It’s mine.” For trusting you!

Not a single tear shed on her flushed cheek. But Loki knows, she’ll never let her vulnerability shows, always keeping her grieve locked inside when she’s in pain.

She weakly shakes her head, flyaway tendrils escapes her usual tight and professional bun. Then a broken smile taints her face as she gradually retreats to where she came and left.

“Darcy!”

Geanna caught his arm as he was about to chase after her. “You stay. I need a word with her, alone.”

Loki weighed her words for a few stressful moments. All he wanted is to run after Darcy, but ... this woman certainly has more right to do so. She deserves to know everything from her own mother’s admission. Not from him, and surely not from those papers. Besides he’s smart enough to know that there’s no point in talking sense to an angry woman, especially an angry woman named Darcy Lewis.

“I’ve told you all you need to know, now it’s your turn to give me what I want.” Geanna halts before the door. “My daughter.”

“She’s not mine to give.”

She turns on her high heels, “Leave her.” That was not a request, he noticed. That was a direct command.

“If you love her - ” She cynically chuckled at her own choice of word, as if it was acid, “ - truly care for her, leave her, send her somewhere far.”

“You mean, like you did?” He retorted.

The woman’s face tautens, “She lives, did she not?”

“Those papers.” She points her chin towards the documents left on the table. “Her life story if you must know, Natalia brought it to me and now I hand it over to you. Do what you see fit.”

Those damned documents! He curses inwardly.
“But mark my words. Shall anything happen to her, I’ll have both your heads and balls on a silver platter.” From the way she speaks, the woman surely doesn’t need a weapon to be able to cut him.

Leaving him speechless on her trail, the lady in red walks away without a second glance into the bright corridor.

Mother and daughter indeed.

How he wanted to laugh, or smash things, or both, but he didn’t. Instead, he retreated to the chair and gulped down another glass, trying to ease the pang of guilt and concern thrumming inside his chest.

Geanna. Her mother. So she still has a mother. Judging from their fiery spirits and facial features there is no doubt from his part that those tempest are related.

For now, he’ll give the two a moment to sort things out between them. Fen and Jor can watch over them, but later he’ll find her, and later they’ll sort every dark secret they haven’t got the chance to share. He’ll ask for forgiveness. He’d beg if it comes to it. Funny when he thinks about it, that there isn’t much he wouldn’t do to get her back to where they left off.

Trust is a fickle thing, and he lost the trust he had for the world the night Odin stone-cold voice killed him. Who would’ve thought being with her had brought it back again.

Under the bright sun’s consort, Loki vows to the sleeping stars above that he will set this straight. Hurting her was never his intention. He’ll burn his pride, bare his throat in front of her, tells her about everything she wants to know. Of the depth of his feelings and of that one trust he puts in her.

Leave her?

Never. There’s no doubt now what his jaded heart truly desires. His goddess. His one and only. His evergreen, ever sun, ever moon.

***

Meanwhile under the Odinsons’ roof, two people were having a clandestine meeting inside Odin’s enclosed study.

“Mam, I don’t think this is … right.” The silver-haired man chooses his words carefully. He knew something was off when Mrs. Odinson, for the first time since over a decade, asked for his attendance. ‘Come quietly’ she added, Loki must not know.

Frigga was the one that sends him to work as Loki’s underling. Before, he was loyal to the strong dignified lady. Did everything she tells him without questions asked, because none was ever needed for he trusts the family with his life.
“True.” Frigga replied, pausing in her steps along the length of the neoclassic-designed room. “But it is necessary.”

“Relax old friend. I know where your loyalty lies and thankful for it. Besides, it’s not like we’re doing a mutiny.” Did Loki thinks she’d never find out? That boy underestimated his own mother.

“No. But it’s dangerous.” He answered grimly.

“We’ve been through danger Fenrir. *This* is nothing!” Her tone sharpens at the words, steel in her eyes, reminding him of what they’ve been through for Loki once in a morbid night. She did what’s needed to be done, and now, she’s going to do it again.

“I don’t want to hear another word. Make the call. Tomorrow night, gather the other eight families, tell them Frigga - *demands* a meeting.”

“If young master finds out – “ He still finds it hard to breath easily being around someone emanating an air of a queen.

“Then you better make sure he wouldn’t.” She devilishly smirks with apparent threat in her eyes before leaving the ex-soldier standing alone with troubled heart.

“Yes mam . . .”

***

Chapter End Notes

No suit this time, the date scene outfit came entirely from the Vogue shoot with Cara Delevigne. Button down shirt with his top button undone, 5 of his 12 chest hair making their appearance, his rolled up sleeves mmmh .. yesss
The piano was inspired by a smutty punny gift I received from my fellow tasertrickster ;) yessss I'm looking at you my queen of fluff! I thought, it would be such a waste to have mentioned it (at the 2nd part their dinner date) and not utilizing it!

I picked the Black Russian for a good reason (aside from its my personal fave), its an easy thing to make. I imagined little Darcy didn't have an oven and to make this she wouldn't need one. The chocolate filling only needed to be heated on a stove with any saucepan available and she'd made the pie shells from grounding her fave crackers with butter and let it set in the freezer. And living with a working girl, her fridge wouldn't exactly flourished with healthy stuff a mother would provide. But vodka, liquor and chocolate? Check!

Thank you for reading you guys are ze best!

Next stop : chaos.

P.S : who else have been scandalized, pulverized, agonized by Hiddleston's Wimbledon look? Raise your hand with me!
Stray Cat Blues

Chapter Summary

“Can I take you home now? I have a promise to keep.”
“Let’s go home.”

Chapter Notes

I'm sorry for the lack of fluff you'll find in this one. And another sorry for the thing you'll find at the end of the chapter. I swear to the God of Mischief, there will be a very happy ending, just - hang on with me until then.

And may I suggest you to hear this rendition of the song Loki plays for her, (played by Yiruma) it's beautiful (or maybe even play it during your read). But at the flashback scene, (inside my mind) what the chanteuse sang would be Caro Emerald's or Lara Loft's brilliant take of the classic song.

Enjoy Darlings!

xxoo

P.S. :
~ NOT BETA'D, English is not my native language but you might already noticed that by now from my (probably) unusual/weird idioms, phrases or words order. And do pardon me for that ^^
~ I posted this earlier but somehow only 1/4 the chapter showed on screen so I deleted and re-posted it, so if you happened to caught the first one, I'm sorry, here's the complete (super long) set!
~ I decided to give a title to each chapters, coz the numbers weren't matching before. I (shamelessly) took them from my all time fave rock gods.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

For the past twenty-six years life had taught Darcy Lewis a lot, it gave her strength, wisdom
beyond her age, but before he came along her comprehension of love was a bit crooked. It was inevitable since she had witnessed it firsthand from the cynical side of the coin. Her aunt once said it was almost like handing someone a blade, believing that he wouldn’t slit your throat … and he wouldn’t, she said one night with her eyes soaring blankly towards the obsidian sky, because the bastard would stab you in the back instead. Those words wrought deep into her and as she grew up she grasped that it wasn’t entirely wrong. Love was as real as those Santas she saw at the malls on December. Fake or seasonal, or worse, both.

Fortunately that wasn't the only thing she learnt from spending her childhood at Helheim, the extravagant haven of the dead and the heartless, where all kinds of sin and decadence were not only welcomed, they were celebrated. Against all odds, it actually had many perks of its own. Since early on she knew how to take care of her own person and those around her. And in doing so, situations polished her wit - razor blade sharp.

That was how she's able to read him, deciphered his lies and pretences when many other fails. Something was wrong and she couldn’t shake it off her mind. When she headed out, Loki in his immaculate dark suit was still at his study back at home, in the same manner that aroused her curiosity. She can sense the change in him since last night. However close their bodies were, there was unreachable distance hung between them. She noticed after they made love over the grand piano, he lifted her to his bed, embraced her there, tightly cocooned inside the warmth of his arms and duvet. He clung to her as if he was afraid something is going to take her away, or that she’d disappear along with the morning fog. There was no questioning it, the cold fright she felt in his touch, the tense on his shoulders.

Was it those bastards again? Did they come back for him this time? The thought angered her, but most of all it got her thinking. What the hell is going on exactly? That it got nothing to do with the company is one thing she can conclude for herself because after the take-over, piece by piece, finally everything got settled peacefully. It took a lot of work and effort but the result was worth it. Now the workers, board members and shareholders, each party are satisfied with where things are heading under the new reign. Stocks numbers is climbing once more and those bad news circulating had been tampered down, hopefully for good.

A couple of times she asked him about it, was there anything bothering him? He said no and steered their conversation elsewhere. Which only got her even more suspicious, and pissed, because really - it’s kind of an insult to her intelligence.

Was it something to do with what she heard about Loki? Those words whispered behind closed doors. That his feet are treading between two worlds. No one dares to point it out loud, therefore the answer remains hidden in the hush, of whether those rumors hold an ounce of truth or merely a perfect canard.

He’s no angel, she’s completely aware of the fact, but a necessary evil? She clenches her fists at the perplexing thought. No. There must be something more. Loki wouldn’t do such thing.

Wouldn’t he?

All she knows is that she trusts him with her life, and whatever the answer holds, she will deal with it. But right now, whether he’d like it or not, for the sake of a peaceful mind she needs to make sure that he’s alright. Waiting patiently like a good girl remains lost in her list of virtues, she’s terrible with being idle and that's the whole reason behind all of her life's reckless decisions.
“I’m not gonna repeat this Jordy,” The man was silent as always, but his sharp eyes tailing her from the rear-view mirror.

Darcy pressed her tazer firmer to his neck. “Turn the damn car around and follow the Jaguar!”

Still, he didn’t budge, his palms clutched tightly to the steering wheel. Darcy could clearly see the gears spinning inside his head.

“I wonder what Loki would say if he finds out that a woman tazes both of his best men down?” His eyes flinched at her words. Pride. The downfall of men, yet they never bother to master it. “Oh - so Fen didn’t tell you?”

That little push got him moving, but Darcy knew he would tip his master the minute she stepped out of the car, thus after the limo settled inside the parking lot she decided to do another thing.

“T’m so sorry Jordy, I really do. You seem like a cool dude. You look good in black, and - I like your tie.”

Right after those last words - she tazed him (regretfully so).

There was one truth her aunt didn’t tell her about the mercurial thing called love, that it is also about finding courage inside you that you didn’t know existed. It makes you do things you’d never imagine of doing before, like taking that leap of faith, that extra mile, and for her, this is the extra mile and she was more than willing to pay the toll.

As she entered the lobby she knew she didn’t think this through. How will she get inside? Her company badge wouldn’t suffice, and a hotel like this wouldn’t budge just because one bats her eyelashes or flashes her cleavage.

Maybe. Heck – it worth the try, Erin Brockovich did and Soderbergh made a movie about her!

Unfastening her top button, Darcy walks with confidence despite the stampede inside her heart. Suddenly a woman cuts her course, a very beautiful woman. She stands about her height but twice her grace. Regal, divine are some short words to describe her. Shoulder length jet-black hair curled in a classic pin-up 70s up do, flawless pale skin, flaming red lips enclosed in a small goddess like frame. She got that timeless look on her, like she doesn’t quite belong there, that she’s someone from another time and place.

Without a word she handed her something. Absentmindedly, she took it (still entranced by her beauty) and when she looked down to her palm her brows knitted in surprise. The woman gave her the hotel room keycard.

“Wha –“
The goddess in Dolce motioned a finger on her quirking lips, the universal language for ‘shush!’ and her head cocks to where the elevators are lining. And just like that, she left with a sensual glides of her hips, leaving Darcy in utter confusion over what just happened.

The much logical person inside her head warned her not to take the bait and just wait until Loki is ready to tell everything about it himself. But then again, when did she ever listen? Besides, she was way passed the line of propriety when she forced the sleek black limo for a sudden detour (and tazed the driver).

Without further pondering she heads up. The ride to the 30th floor feels longer that it actually is even when she presses the close button and her designated floor at once so that the elevator won’t have to make a stop during its flight. The faster she gets over with this the better.

Someone was entering the elevator beside hers when she steps outside after a ‘ding’, but she didn’t get to see who it was. Darcy proceeds to her destination and blew a sigh of relief, because judging from the lack of thugs guarding outside the room she concluded that maybe things weren’t as bad as she had imagined. She struts closer to the doors with unhurried steps. The increasing pounding in her heart almost deafens her. She lowered her eyes to examine the doors and the card on her hand.

She swipes it and of course, the tiny light blips to green and the lock silently opens. She hesitates for a second, staring considerately at the thin gap before her eyes.

Too late to back down Lewis, just do it!

Quietly she slides into the bright room, switching the keycard for the comfort of a tazer on her hand. The thick carpet muffled her movement and as soon as she’s inside, she stays still to read her perimeter from behind the separator and the potted palm tree before the long corridor that she assumed leads to the living room where the conversation took place.

There were soft murmurs of people talking and in a heartbeat she recognized the expensive drawl of his voice among the other speaker, a woman, with an accent. Her voice sounded oddly familiar though she cannot put her fingers on where or when she had heard it.

“- I’m here for Darcy.”

Wait - what!?

“Who thinks you’re dead.” She then heard Loki replied.

It doesn’t take that long for her to put two and two together. That voice and the woman whose supposed to be dead, still she tries to keep herself together, tampering the shock that’s raging havoc inside her veins.

Nauseously she tucks back her tazer and moves to get a closer look, tracing length-way towards the corridor. Her hands tremble but she listens and she listens. The raucous voices inside her head rush and pour with the passing seconds. She couldn’t believe her ears nor her eyes. From where she
stands she could only make the outline of the woman’s face, but without a doubt she recognizes whom it belongs to. It was her mother’s. A mother she only remembers from a piece of an old picture shown by aunt Kat. She was beautiful, vivacious, as radiant as the summer’s sun, though somehow her smile never quite reached to her eyes.

It numbs her to find that after all these years, all her grieve, her lonesome and her pain, everything she believes in is nothing but lies planted inside a child’s innocent mind. Though surprisingly other than shock, she feels absolutely nothing. Darcy fought through the sorrow of losing a mother and at one point the pain had shifted to brittle memories. But seeing him standing tall amidst this foul masquerade is another different story. His distrust puts her back to that nameless one-way street of masks and deceptions. She thought after everything, they grew passed that, and at the very least, he trusts her as much as she does him. Apparently she was wrong.

“Loki ...” She didn’t mean to call him, but his name escaped her lips like a whisper.

“Darcy?” She saw a slight terror on his face when he stands to face her.

“How long have you been there?” He asked, his tone was as calm as ever.

“Long enough.”

“This isn’t what you think.”

Like hell it wasn’t! “No?”

“No, it’s not. You have to trust me.” He repeated his defense in a more controlled expression.

Ha! How funny of him, speaking of the very trust he could not commit! “You know what? That’s the problem. I trust you.”

“Oh don’t worry, this is not your fault.” Darcy hates the quiver laced in her voice. “It’s mine.”

Love. Trust. How foolish, how naïve. As if life hasn’t taught her better, she fell through another crack. She should’ve been smarter than to give all of hers to a charlatan. Not a single syllable could come out as words choked and shattered inside her like the ocean crashed by the shore. She shook her head as she took a step backward and another and another.

“Darcy!”

His voice called out, but she didn’t pace down. To the elevator, thirty stories flight under. Every word played out like a bad soap opera inside her mind. The tremble wouldn’t stop, the sickening feeling wouldn’t stop, everything stirred into one, they spun and spun until her head hurt. She held her bag tighter and walked faster, she ran, wishing she could outrun the truth, when she knew that she only postponed the coming storm.

To her dismay it caught up faster than she expected, like a vulture to her neck.
“Darcy, wait.”

The voice carries a certain devastation among the quiet lobby. “Please, I need a word with you.”

***

There are two kinds of pain, those you can touch and the other you can feel. She thought she had lost the ability to feel both after what she had been through, turns out a mother’s heart never stops bleeding for her child, even one she doesn’t deserve.

They sat across from each other at the lavish Crimson lounge, two buildings away from the hotel. For the first time, Geanna finally got a good look on her daughter’s grown up face and she instantly regretted those precious years she missed. Her little princess is now a lady, a gorgeous one at that. She’s much more stunning that what she saw on pictures, even when she’s angry like she is now.

“Was that woman at the lobby one of your accomplices too? You wanted me to hear the conversation, why?” The brunette crossly cocked her head.

"That was Helena, you didn't remember her?” Her connections weren't lost just because she left. With Helena she got enough eyes and ears spread throughout the city. Besides she knew Darcy would show, they both after all, share the same blood and curiosity runs deep in their veins. But even if she didn't, she was planning to send a record of the whole scene.

**Helena? As in Helena Sheol? Hel?** Of course Darcy heard of that infamous name when she lived at Helheim. Back there, she was a deity on another level, the queen of the underworld, only the higher-ups got to see her, not the rats living in the basement like her. That was why she never caught a glimpse of the woman.

“Darcy … I didn’t mean to – “

“What? Lie to me? Leave me?” Darcy snapped, her beautiful blue eyes (just like her father’s) glared her way.

“Hurt you.” She chose her words cautiously.

There was a snort before Darcy quiped, “You got a terrible way of showing it. Just saying.”

“I’m sorry,” There’s no other word for what she had done and she’s been dying to say it for gods know how long. “for everything.”

“So you obviously knew father left a nine-years old me at a whorehouse yet did nothing. The question is, does he know that you're not dead?” She spat the question in fury.

“He left you in good hands.” Geanna lifts her gaze to look at her daughter in the eye, "Katherine was … my sister.” After his father gave Darcy away, she and Katherine thought the safest place would be the most unexpected one, a place where they could count on the loyalty of the girls living there.
The younger woman paused at the revelation. “Then I’m the only one who – “ She took a deep sigh, “Fantastic!”

“We’re trying to keep you safe.”

“At Helheim? An excellent choice.”

“There’s … a man. I – met him before Will, your father. He’s -” This is one thing she owes her, an honest explanation.

“Am I hearing this correctly mother? Were you trying to tell me a love story?” She sneered.

A tear almost spilled from her eyes as she shook her head to steel herself. “No … not a love story.”

Perhaps it once was, like every other story, it began with sparks, with fireworks, until the blinding colors shifted to gray, painted with hatred from too much disappointment and jealousy. Titan was one of those people that heart blackened, tarnished with the later.

Life was hard living on the streets, for the sun was free but the food isn’t. It got even harsher when you grew up as an orphan in a slum, everyone considered that those who lived there was a hoodlum, nothing but a waste of space in the cruel city.

They met when she was ten, a stray kitten surviving based on mere instinct rather than purpose. It was the first week of spring at the marketplace on the 26th Street, she remembered vividly. People never notice the likes of them, as they should be. To them she was just a pebble on the corner of the alley, a mere shadow, and she put that to her advantage because she and Katherine were more desperate than hungry. With adept fingers and fast feet she took what she had to in order to survive. It took a while until what she did doesn’t feel like crime. She never got caught doing it. She was very good and sharp, be it stealing fat wallets or juicy apples from the stalls, but that day Katherine was sick and she got sloppy. The afternoon was bright and the purse was purple. People were shouting, chasing after her. When she thought her world would crush, a hand caught hers and took her away.

“Rule number one kid,” There was an edge of Cockney accent to his tone. “When you can’t escape, go hide.” He said to her in between gasping for breath, hands to his knees, a roguish smile on his face.

“I can take care of myself!” She retorted stubbornly.

He laughed at her, “You got a name kid?”

“Geanna.” Her small hands were busy counting crumpled dollar bills from the purse, she was going to buy Katherine a hot bubbling soup when she gets back to their cardboard house.

“I’m gonna call you Anna.” Later she found out that it was his favorite character from ‘The King and I’ back at 1956.

“You’re fast Anna, but not fast enough. Next time, don’t steal from someone you cannot outrun, you got that?” A warning came with a warm pat on her head.
That was the first of many events to come where he showed up to save her day. All the back alley kids knew him by reputation, the bookie, the mad Titan. He was brash, but also the bravest and the strongest among the lot.

Being the oldest sister, looking after Katherine came naturally to her, for they got no one else to care for them before Titan came to the picture. Their life was full of color but none of them were listed on the rainbow, tough with him it did get a lot warmer. Together they made a family. It was always how things run between them. It wasn’t perfect but it works and somehow, they managed to get through it in one piece. One day, after years and years of endless struggle, the girl and the boy with no names and lost past outsmart every player in the neighborhood and ruled the infamous district.

As a streetwise, Geanna could read unspoken words between thin lines, one of it was Titan’s feelings for her. Though he never once said it, she knew to whom his heart belongs. Unfortunately for him, she never thought of love, it was a luxury one like her couldn’t afford, or would for that matter. Or so she thought.

The chanteuse was singing ‘Dream A Little Dream’ that crowded night when a group of men came and took the largest table. Nothing out of the ordinary, having a few fancy drinks with a couple escorts, celebrating a project’s success. Among them she saw him, the man with framed glasses seating far and alone. Unlike other’s leery and hungry gaze, in his beautiful blue she saw something deeper, something pure. He fidgets on his seat, adjusted his glasses more than necessary. Clearly he was wary and unsure, as if he was not supposed to be there. Words said that the young prude works as the chief engineer for a big name company in the city.

She was thinking someone should put a stick up his nerdy hypocritical ass when suddenly, their eyes met. People said that time stops when you met the love of your life for the first time. But it didn’t, it slowed, it stretched. However her heartbeat thrummed, it paced, it raced wild and alive like never before.

If only she knew better. That night was the dawn of doom for both of their young life. Nothing could be that perfect, especially not to her, she had done nothing to deserve life’s greatest gift.

Obviously, Titan didn’t approve of their relationship, neither Will’s family. Foolishly enough, they didn’t let that stop them. They eloped three weeks later. Everything was beautiful, she finally got a home, a last name to call her own and a love to warm her long forlorn.

Alas the blackbird flew so high, her wings soared too close to the burning sun. Just like all those love stories Hollywood didn’t bother to tell or sell, an absolute perfect tale like hers always fail miserably. Before Titan caught up, things were going downhill for them. Avoiding the search from his family and Titan, they instantly moved from one place to the next which means they never stay long enough to sustain a well paying career. Still, she was content and happy in their struggle, to her, as long as they stay together she could face anything this condemning world thrown at her. Problem was, Will never brought up living poorly, and with a child, things got harder. He tried, she knew he did, maybe just wasn’t hard enough. Night after night he came home late and drunk, reeked with defeat and the stench of cheap liquors. Doubts started to cloud her heart, and the love she thought they shared was nowhere in plain sight. She thought in time things would pass and somehow get better, but before the better came the worse. Darcy was about five at the time her past caught up with her present.

If she thinks about it now, perhaps she was too young and tired, of running, of fighting. Her bone was breaking for she took too many life punches straight in the face, time and again. Thus when she saw him, that one man who was always her constant pillar, she swayed.
“People like us, we’re not meant for things like this Anna.”

“I know.”

“You used to be smarter than this. I thought at one point you’d stop dreaming and come home to me.”

She glared at his statement though said nothing in return.

“I’m tired of waiting. You belong to me can’t you see that?”

“I belong to no one!”

“Then leave him!” He raised his voice, “Don’t pretend you didn’t see what he’s becoming Anna.”

Between gritted teeth he said, “I could fuck him where he stands, blows his head off and no one would bat an eye, but I didn’t do that, for you, for your kid.”

“Was that a threat I’m hearing?”

“It’s a warning. We both know what I’m capable of doing. I grew stronger, more powerful since you left.” An easy guess judging from the expensive suit he wore, the black limo and some henchmen, each with a hidden .22 protruding from their leather jacket, waiting outside the small dinner she worked at.

“I’m not an educated man. I've never been good with words, so let me put it this way. If you come with me, I’ll spare his life.”

"You bastard!"

She slapped him with all her might, but her heart knew there was no stopping him, not like this. In order to keep them safe the only choice she thought she had was to play along. At first he was willing to bring Darcy, but Will didn’t let her. He yelled and cried. More than plates were shattered on their walls that night. A good thing little Darcy was high on fever, the medicine got her sleeping soundless among the disastrous event ensued by her moronic parents. She finally conceded to Will’s persistence to keep their daughter, in hope that maybe he’d bring her to his home. Maybe without a disgraceful mother, his family would accept the little girl.

With a vow never to go look for them, a week after their unexpected reunion she bids Will and Darcy her farewell. Leaving them was her hardest goodbye. With that goodbye, she killed her dream. Titan also left his life and the bad blood he caused at the old vengeful city. Together they left, leaving not a single trace, and once again she found her hand in his.

Geanna was well aware that she’s no saint, and she won’t make excuses for what she considered was best for her family. After decades of silence, she thought things were doing fine, that her grown up daughter was doing fine. But looking at where the ball was rolling, she knew that peace would soon collapse, and she could not let that happen. Not on her watch.

“I’m not proud of my mistakes but I’m not here for a redemption.”
“Good.”

“But Darcy, don’t do the same mistakes I did. I fell for the wrong man, ended up with a dangerous one, hell, with the Odinson boy, you’re doing both! Didn’t you hear enough back there!”

“You’re ten years too late to be giving me a dating advice.”

“Darcy – “

“No. This is my life. You have no right!”

“You think he loves you don’t you? Darling, love begins with trust. How much trust did you think he got when he sent someone to sniff around behind your back?”

“Don’t you dare.” Her posture stiffens, her eyes widen.

“Let’s assume he does, you think a family like his would accept the likes of us?” They didn’t before and they sure as heck won’t now. They wouldn’t make an exception for Darcy and her daughter worth more than to beg an acceptance from anyone!

“That’s none of your damn business!” Darcy hissed. “You can go back to where you’ve been all these years! Because the mother I know –“ She said as she rose to stand. ”was buried six feet under.”

Unwillingly Geanna watches her leave with burning anger on her steps. The outline of Darcy’s body soon blurred with the unshed tears brimming in her eyes. She knew this day would come. She had expected her rage, only she didn’t know it would hurt this bad.

“I wish I was … I wish I could,” She mumbles to herself as she saw her disappears through the door. So many times she prayed for an end, but a fighter couldn’t stop simply because she wished for it. Knowing that, maybe the gods deemed her punishment right here, to burn in this hell on earth.

If only she could burn all the pain and make those hers alone, so that Darcy wouldn’t have to suffer from her mother’s mistakes. “I’m sorry …“ She choked, the cold mask she wields finally breaks. She covers her face as her body trembles and hot tears streaming rivers from her eyes.

*I’m sorry, I’m sorry,* she repeated her cries to herself.

***

“The weather forecast was bloody fucked up.” Loki said to her with a slight frown on his gorgeous face.

“Was that why we skipped work today? You thought this would be a sunny day for a date?” She poked her pointer finger to his chest, the white shirt got a bit damp from the rain outside.

“I’d like to think I’m a well-prepared man.” He smiled and she thought even the sun couldn’t shine
as bright.

This was their last stop - the Metro South. At a local store before the exit, he suddenly paused and dragged her in. A pair of yellow ballet flats came out as her gift. He knelt to put them for her so she could stroll in ease.

“Now we walk.” He said, looking up to her blushing face with a child-like smile.

They got to the public library and her old school, they had pizza and even had more ice-cream at a stall nearby. She was planning to introduce him to a flea market when a drizzle came. Less than ten minutes later the sky showered down its liquid cold in full force. Though there was no amount of water, not even a hurricane could wash away the smile on their faces. Grinning widely she offered him her hand. He took it and together they ran to the nearest shelter, the abandoned red phone booth near the coast. He was wrong, she thought to herself. It was a perfect day for a date. Standing toe to toe inside a tight place filled with old memories of simpler days and brighter skies, there’s no place in the world she would rather be.

“No Loki-poo. What you are is a dork.”

“Say that again, I dare you.” Loki tilted his head, feigning a fit but to her it looked more like a stupid (charming) smug.

“Which part? The first or the later?” She pursed her lips in mockery as he came closer, one step and her back instantly flat on the wall with her chest flushed to his.

“You’re a big tease aren’t you Miss Lewis,” The Cheshire smiled wider.

“You can say it’s a part of my charm.” She clung her hands around his neck, he reciprocated with snaking his on her waist.

“Indeed it is.” He bent lower, nuzzling his nose to hers. It felt divine, the warmth of his body and the scent of rain that sank to his skin. “And it’s driving me ridiculously insane.”

“You said it like – “ She leans even closer, blowing her words to the slight gap on his lips, “it’s a bad thing …”

“Oh it is a bad thing.” His lips were breath apart, his fingers traced random patterns on her lips, deliberately slow, moving upwards along her spine before they came back down.

“A very bad - bad thing,” He repeated, his mouth ghosting hotly on her nape up to her ear before he came to claim her lips and kissed her hot, deep and long.

Their gasps and moans swallowed by the symphony of howling wind and pouring rain. Despite the cold, the fire he ignited set ablaze and she couldn’t get enough. More, more, more, she recited. And more, more, more he gave her. He gave and he took away, again and again. They rocked harder than the ocean wave, his thigh between hers, and heat pooled between them.

“Loki,” she sighed as she threw her head back and clung tighter to his shirt. No one could possibly see them in this weather but … “We can’t –“
“I won’t,” His thigh grinds to her core in a steady beat, the need in his groin was begging for a release but he won’t disgrace a queen in such place. If he could help it.

“I won’t take you here, not here,” Those lips whispered sinful praises.

“I’ll take you - hard and slow, on our bed.” A palm covered her aching breast, “Taste you,” He knead one globe with his thumb tracing on the swollen peak as he runs kisses along her jaw line.

“My tongue on every inch of your skin, my lips on your glorious breast, my cock inside your tight cunt,” He emphasized the words with a thrust of his hard-on to her abdomen.

“Oh fuck – “ Her brain turned to mush, she thought, maybe she really had lost her mind because at this moment she really couldn’t think she would say ‘no’ even if he bends her down and fuck her mad to oblivion.

“In time darling,” A smirk on his face before his lips came crushing back to hers. The kiss goes on and on, it was wet, hot and maddening.

Before they know it the rain thinned out and once again, the soft golden sun hovered above the horizon, “And you tell me I drive you insane?” She plopped her forehead to his shoulder, weightless, powerless and barely could feel her legs.

Without having to look up, she knew he was smiling as he held her close, “You have no idea.”

“Can we go home now? I have a promise to keep.” He asked rather eagerly.

Home. She nodded in response, “Let’s go home.”

Home ...

Home?

Fuck!

Darcy refuses to open her eyes, knows she’d only find the well-restored living room of her old flat. She’s home alright, but the peace she sought remains lost, the only saving grace was her solitude. Funny how she feels like a stranger in her own place but not at his.

To say that what happened was horrible would be an extreme understatement. And as if screwing her sanity during the day wasn’t enough, he came to haunt her dream. Great!

Yesterday she was glad to found he wasn’t at the office when she got there after her short meeting with that woman, because she wasn’t ready to deal with him too. Not long after lunch, Darcy took an early leave for the pounding in her head wouldn’t cease.

Around 9PM he came knocking. A sense of de-ja-vu washed over her having him begging outside her door, only this time, there were no flowers or chocolate.

“Open this door Darcy, we need to talk. Please ... ” He sounded as desperate as his words.
“Go to hell Loki!” Tomorrow maybe, or the day after ... just - not now, her heart pleads.

“I won’t leave until you let me in.” Tenderly he said, "I miss you ... "

There were no more words until she heard a rustle and a light bump at the door as Loki settled down the floor outside. Then daintily a flowing music followed. He played it from his phone, she gathered. It was the very same song that he sang to her that night and played it on repeat.

To cry her eyes out over a man wasn’t a plan she was aiming, not after a long day she had. But the dampness she felt seeping down her cheeks prove that, as per usual, her heart had a mind of its own.

Hearing the fleeting melody her chest aches even more. She rests her palms on the cold surface of her door and slides down to the floor. The grim night is still, the abyss-like clouds cover the stars and the clock struck to midnight. Loki stays true to his promise. He persistently waited outside. She almost wavered. Her heart wasn’t made of steel. Her hand hovered on the cold metal handle, was thinking whether to let him in or spat him with her anger when his phone rang. She couldn’t make out what he was saying when he ran down the stairs and left.

*What was that about?* Her mind enquires as she idly sat on the couch and turned on her TV, just to hear another sound inside the moon lit room. And that was how she fell asleep.

This morning, the answer she wasn’t expecting to hear came from the news from the TV she forgot to turn off. At first she only faintly follows the intangible distant words with half opened lids, something about an explosion, a bomb planted in a car. She gradually opens her eyes, reaching for the glasses on the side table.

A beautiful blonde anchor lady in her blue suit chippers in a taut expression. On a smaller screen behind her, there was a lot of red fire, roaring, swirling and smoke fuming. Mercilessly, the raging inferno devoured the steeled vehicle whole. Then the sickening feeling resurfaces as he heart sinks deeper at the woman’s further information.

*Go to hell Loki!*

It was a black coupe she said.

*Go to hell Loki!*

A black Jaguar.

Her ears could almost hear the notes he played last night, eerily dancing inside her head, fading in before fading out to black.
Ten hours earlier at the Odinson’s family villa up north from the city central, a group of people who once were loyal subjects to the All-father came together fulfilling a Queen’s request.

“Evening ladies and gentlemen. I appreciate you all coming here despite your busy schedules on such short notice.” Frigga opens her speech, paying her respect with a nod to the elders on her right side. The participants of the discreet meeting are seated evenly on two sides of the large rectangular table while she leads on the center, on Odin’s ‘throne’. She used to lay low on such occasion, prefer all her counsel to her husband shared in their own personal space, far from the pry of any unwanted eyes and attention.

“It’s our pleasure Mrs. Odinson.” A man proclaims, she recognizes the young raven-head lad from the old MacLoughlin family, his ancestors came from Swords, Leinster.

“Thank you Aidan,” Her eyes scan the room with confidence and grace. “We gathered here for a purpose, a purpose bigger than our interests.”

“We fought hard for peace to fall upon our city, keeping our streets clean and our future bright. Thus it must remain intact no matter what,” There are murmurs of agreement across the room, some nods while the other keep their straight faces

“For that I’m willing to forgo any earlier incident.” At the end of her statement she looks straight towards Malcolm with a piercing glare and a smile, making the later fidgets on his seat. “after all we have known each other families for many years.”

“Therefore my friends, hereby I humbly ask you to pledge the same loyalty as you once gave Odin. To my son, Loki.” Wicked they all may be but unlike kids these days, the first generations of each family holds on to their words as firm as they hold on to their pride.

This is what necessary, Frigga thinks to herself. The peace of the city aside, she must ensure the safety of her son. No matter what, a mother will never let her child fight his battle alone.

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Chapter End Notes

*If happy little bluebirds fly, beyond the rainbow why, oh, why can't I?*
High And Dry

Chapter Summary

“You two will always be my little boys you know that?”
“And you, my mother.”

Chapter Notes

To those who waited, I'm terribly sorry. I wrote a few chapters along with this one and it took a lot longer than I thought it would. So, without further ado - I present to you, the latest chapter.

Enjoy darlings!

xxoo

P.S. :
~ Violence alert. Feels alert.
~ I owe this chapter to my dearest AliceMorte her cheer got me through every self-doubt I had

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Thunder and lightning came out to play as the black sky bestowed the Earth a mighty tempest and rainstorm outside, but the tangible chill seeping inside Frigga’s veins wasn't caused by the dropping temperature. No, the cause was so much worse.

It happened a week after Thor left with his friends to celebrate their high-school graduation to Europe. Everything was fine, her life was perfect. That was why she couldn’t believe her ears when one of Odin’s men came with a report that her youngest son was being kidnapped.

At first she blamed herself for what happened, she should’ve seen it coming, anticipated it. Alas it was the risk of her choice to live among vultures and wolves and she got no time for futile regrets.

According to reliable witnesses a black van and three masked men snatched Loki the minute he exited the library where he gathered with two kids from school. Six hours had passed since and her husband, goddamn him, told her to just sit and wait, nicely like those virtuous trophy wives, at home.
As if.

“I’m not going to wait any longer.” Frigga told him as she menacingly entered the study, dismissing the need for pleasantries. Leave it to the police he said. The police. Ha! Yes, sure. They’d bring him home alright. In a body bag - she thought bitterly.

Tension crackled at the way her blue eyes sharply flicked to his. Odin didn’t expect to see her with her old hunting get up at this hour, completed with her knee-high leather boots and her hair tied high in a ponytail. He remembered seeing her sun-kissed hair up just like that the first time they met and how the air about her always reminded him of Christmas' morning.

“We’ve located him and I’ve arranged some people to get him back, safely.” Odin poured her a drink he was having, which she took and finished almost immediately.

“Safe? Do you take me for a fool husband?” She scoffed, the now empty crystal glass chinked when she slammed it on the surface of the old oak table and leaned on it to look at him straight in the eye. “Don’t pretend you don’t know what that anarchist would do! Loki is our son, or have you forget about that?”

“Don’t twist my intention Frigga. We’ll get him back soon, as I promised, safely.” He lifted his hand, wanting to comfort her but she brusque him off with a glare.

“There’s going to be a massacre out there! Are you really that daft as to let your son witness it?” She knew how that man operated. Hell, everybody in this city knew! People didn’t call him the Mad Titan for no good reason. He’d wipe that place out for sure, leaving not a single soul behind.

“… Frigga, he wouldn’t dare – “

“You’re free to stay, as I to leave.” Disregarding his words, she headed to the south cabinet. From the hidden compartment she fetched a shotgun and a pack of rounds. At this point she didn’t really care of what Odin would say or think about what she’ll do next. If war was what they sought then so be it.

“Sweetheart, put that away - ” Odin rose from the baroque armchair with a guarded expression, “please . . .”

The order he gave to Titan was supposed to be a secret. Granted, it wasn’t the best option but circumstances forced his hands. The way he saw it there was no other choice. He had to, before things escalate. But of course, no one could keep a secret from Frigga, how could he forget? She always found out - and just as he feared, would take matters into her own hands.

“No.” Frigga turned, “And I will not, for gods’ sake, sit around and do nothing while my son is out there!”

“He needs me.” There was a slight crack on her tone – betraying her cool stance.

“You know what I’m capable of. Try to stop me and I’ll gladly take you down the memory lane.” She said before she slammed the door to his face and stormed out.

Odin knew which line he could not cross, especially the one she drew and this was one of it. Forlornly his eyes followed her back slowly diminishing through the lining glass windows of his study. Her usual minions were tailing behind her. Fenrir politely gestured a nod at him before they entered into separate jeeps. He watched them until the obscurity swallowed their taillights.

Massaging his forehead with the heel of his right palm, he closed his tired eyes. Deep down his
heart understood a mother’s despair, those two shared a special bond, something that was out of his comprehension since the first day he put Loki in her arms. But for her to think that Loki’s well-being was not as significant to him as it is to her was rather unfair. Words may not be one of his vices but to him the safety of his family, each one of them – matters, and Loki above all, matters.

Being with Loki all these years had taught him that to become a family, the thickness bond of blood was no longer a necessity. He watched him grow from a small, frail babe and through the years, came to love him. Looking into those deep green of his eyes and his smile, it was impossible not to. Though he admitted to have applied a stricter discipline towards him rather than to Thor. If he could reason, it was because he was worried. Worried of the boy’s wit and wicked nature, and of his intelligence that reminded him a lot of his lost brother. Furthermore, looking back at Loki’s origin, on what would become of him when the combinations of those qualities got out of control (Frigga was never helping with her encouragement).

The man grunted when he pulled out his bottom drawer, the cigarettes he kept hidden inside were no longer there thus he got himself another drink. With a heavy sigh he sank right back at the armchair.

‘He’s not my son.’

‘Have your way with him, whichever you prefer.’

Mortified at his own words he slammed his fist to the desk. He meant none of those. It was just an empty bluff to fright those cowardly bastards.

Things weren’t that simple now that he has his own responsibilities to carry, an encumbrance he could not escape from, unlike back in the days where he was just a young protégé of his great and fearsome father, Borr. This city strived under his hold and through his endeavor, truce achieved and the war ended. Then compromises made, because peace and freedom – they never come for free. Now each decision had to be thoroughly considered until he could find a possible loophole from the bigger picture on whether the situation could gain more than he’d lose, not only for his own good but what he thought was best for the sake of his family, the city and their future.

This time, he knew exactly what they were aiming for. From the edge of their seat they were waiting for him to break, to eventually, destroy the pact the generations before him made.

Another thunder roared, leaving a deafening silence on its wake. The tick-tock of the clock echoed inside the room and his eyes immediately ran to the digits shown on its face. Never before he felt a minute ran this excruciating long or his conscience tasted this wrong. Nevertheless, he already signed the deal and Titan will deliver. It was a petty bargain really, for each end was a loss cause for him, but this time, he chose to be a father instead of a good brother.

***

‘To build a better world sometimes means having to tear the old one down. And that makes enemies.’
Pierce’s words echoed inside Nick’s head, which despite the pills he took, was still pounding madly ever since the hospital begrudgingly releases him. Making enemies is definitely one way to put it. Last night he barely escaped from a murder attempt condoned by hired gun. It might not be just an attempt shall the bullets flew two inches closer to the left. The masked assassin left yet another puzzle to solve, because those shots he made were Soviet slugs, no rifling.

To top it all one of his undercover field agent reported about what happened to Loki. A C4, went ka-boom on his car in the middle of the night and since, he couldn’t get ahold of him and his location. That guy turned off his numbers and disposed the trackers Nick secretly planted on some of his other gadgets (apparently he knew every single one). He ain’t quitting ain’t he? Because he can’t have that, not like this. They’ve gone too far, risked too much to stop now.

“Nick.” A knock on the slightly ajar door as the voice bearer walked into his office.

“Rogers.” He nods giving the man a side-glance. Long shadows swept the room from the window where he stood, veiling his troubled expression.

“I heard about what happened - ” The man strode to sit on the chair across the desk, “You need me on the field?”

The one-eyed man shook his head and shifted, “No I got this. I need you to stay here.” There was something fishy and he doesn’t like it, not one bit.

“Nick, about the attack.” He crossed his hands over his leather jacket. “I know how they work, I’ve been on them for years. I’m telling you, there might be a connection.”

Nick gritted his teeth. “With all do respect Captain, we’re not gonna chase this ghost story of yours. Hydra is no more, we’ve already discussed it with the board members last month, case closed.” There’s a finality in his tired tone.

“That’s what they wanted us to believe.” Steve cocked his brow, depositing those mysterious empty slugs on Nick’s desk as he stood to leave. He knew there wasn’t much he can say or do without a solid evidence to back his suspicion.

“Sir?” A female in her navy suit interrupted their conversation, “Captain.” She greeted the blonde man with a brief nod.

“Agent Hill.” He politely replied.

“You’re late.” Nick quipped.

“Pardon me sir, I was held at the Triskelion – with the twins you sent me to brief after their initiation three days ago.” She answered rather too sweetly.

Maria Hill noticed the tension in the room and the sullen expression on the usually charming Steve Rogers’ face, even when he tried to smile it off as he stepped aside to give her way and silently leave through the door. Rogers is a good man. Over the years, in fight for the country - he
sacrificed more than just flesh and blood but firmly he stands on his believe. He’s such a rare quality to find in this line of business – heck, he’s a rare quality to find period. Though he never really gets along with Nick’s usually extreme ideals (and his screw-it-all ethic or the lack of it), he chooses to stay for a greater good. His ‘The price of freedom is high. It always has been. And it’s a price I’m willing to pay.’ speech still rings vividly inside her head (she could almost hear ‘The Star-Spangled Banner’ softly playing in the background). In short, it’s good to have him around to keep their perspective balanced and their morale value, decent.

“I need you to work on something.”

“Consider it done sir.”

***

From the stern tone on Fen’s voice Loki knew something was wrong, awfully wrong - but he wasn’t expecting for this.

The sight of roaring inferno in front of him steals his breath away, it is so intense that the heat bleeds into his skin. In the distance he sees the remnants of those vehicles. His own and two other drove by the guards. Yellow police lines blockade the clearings, loud sirens violating the stillness of the night, people are barking orders around, some are reporting the scene while some other are trying to help. There are two ambulances on the ready at the curb but not many civilians are around considering the remote and private location. It was horror and pure chaos.

Heaven knows how hard he tries to push them all away from his affairs but still fate thought those actions weren’t nearly enough to bargain for the safety of his family.

Lost in his own misery - the commotion begins to blur, all the frenzy, the sound and the fire – gone. For one moment, the world dims out. What’s left are the tightness he feels constricting inside his chest while his own heartbeat resounds in his ears. His breath is thinning, his head is screaming as their last spoken words start to play.

---

“Sweetheart, I’ve been waiting for you.” Frigga greeted him on the front porch of the manor.

“Was there something the matter?” Loki asked, ascending to the doorsteps.

“Must it? Can’t I just want to meet my son?” She feigned a frown.

“Of course.” He hugged her, her intention on calling him here was not lost on him. “How’s – father?”

“You’ll see him for yourself. Come.” Her eyes motioned to the second floor.
“Were you heading out?” Her hair was made up elegantly and she was radiant in her champagne-colored formal suit.

“I should be. You see, there’s this new book we’re going to discuss, but my car is still in the garage, I don’t think I can make it in time.”

Frigga always prefers to drive alone rather than being crammed in the same car as those guards, only this time that wasn’t the only reason. She just wanted him to spend a bit more time with the old man. “You can use mine, I’ll call Jordy to pick me up later.”

“You sure?” He nodded with a smile and she locked her arm to the crook of his. “I’ve always wanted to try a convertible.”

Before they reached Odin’s bedroom door she suddenly stopped and turned with a downcast look on her face,

“Remember when I told you and Thor to bear courage in mind with every step you make?” He nodded in response.

“It wasn’t at all about the courage to fight - but also to forgive, to forget.” She continued, “this the only life we got. Cherish it, makes every second counts.”

“… I’ll keep than in mind.” Loki sighed, forcing another smile.

“You two will always be my little boys you know that?” She adjusted his tie.

“And you,” He leaned down to kissed her by the cheek, “my mother.”

“Ah … so the boy finally understands.”

“He always does.”

---

She got what she wanted. He did stay longer than he usually does though there was more awkward void stretched than actual words exchanged when Frigga left them to be alone together.

To forgive? To forget? How could he? Even his nightmares weren’t as frightening as what lays before him, because in them, he was the one who burns. His body trembles, eyes still looking straight ahead, people brushing on his side but still he can’t seem to compel his body to move from where his feet are planted.

No, no, no - there is no forgiving this, Loki vows, bile rising in his throat and the space seems to closing in on him. He cannot stay, he couldn’t possibly stand there and watch as the gurney takes her … no. Slightly his body sways backwards but managed to hold himself together despite.

They must pay, the voices inside his head seethed. With blazing anger and a new purpose he stormed inside the black Porsche Jordy sent for him. Immediately he opened the compartment to draw a small bottle he kept for emergency. He almost dropped the containment for his hand shook too much but abled to fetched two pills and toss the remaining scattered on the empty leather seat.
at his side. Rapidly he swallowed them before darkness stole his vision. Briefly, he closed his lids, trying to steady his breathing before starting the car with a flick of his finger. As the engine roar, his vengeful mind was set on one place and one place only.

***

Two hours later,

@ Malcolm Keith’s residence

“I admire your spunk kid, wasn’t expecting that.”

The voice amidst the supposedly empty dark kitchen startled Malcolm, he was still shaken from Loki’s earlier visit. Swiftly he drew his gun and flicked the switch with the tip and in the next second, bright lights flood the room, exposing another late night uninvited guest. It was none other than Alexander fucking Pierce.

Did someone prank him and put a damn sign saying ‘free access for all’ outside? What a fantastic night!

“What the fuck are you doing in here?” His whole body ached and throbbed as he hobbled himself to the kitchen island.

Pierce lifts his tall glass of milk, face calm as the open sea. “Having a drink. You want some?”

“I said, what the fuck are you doing here?!” He really didn’t have time for this bullshit, not after what he had to endure.

A single knock on the door was the starter. To his confusion, no one bothered to answer it. He shouted for his men but none replied (later on he knew that Loki had taken care of them before he came inside). Intuitively Malcolm knew that something was wrong. He armed himself before heading to the door but it swayed open with a swish before he had the chance to turn the knob. Beyond it stood Loki Odinson in his rumpled black suit, looking darker than he ever saw him, murderous intent shone on his eyes.

With a calm gait of a predator Loki entered. Malcolm was about to ask what was he doing when, in a speed of light, he furiously kicked his gut and knocked him down. His hand bumped hard against the wall and the contact propelled his semi-automatic to a direction that was way too far for his comfort.

---

“It was you wasn’t it.” Stated the raven-head who's towering above him with his imposing glare.

“Wha – “
“Did I hurt you?” He sneered after his cold knuckles made a contact to his jaw, he could taste his blood trickling thickly through the gash he just incited.

“Jesus Loki, calm the fuck down!” Malcolm wiped the side of his lips, shocked didn’t come close to explain what he felt right at that moment.

Those words only seemed to further irate the man as his punches were getting harsher afterwards.

“What the fuck is going on?” He asked again, terrified and baffled.

“The bomb.” Loki hissed the words, fists on Malcolm’s lapel now, dragging the latter closer to his crossed face, his panted breath ghosting on his skin. “Don’t play dumb with me Malcolm.”

What bomb? But before he could utters it Loki slammed him back to the floor and rammed his fist to his face again and again.

“Stop! Stop!” Malcolm cried, he could almost see the stars spiraling in his eyes.

“What does it feel like - thinking your life about to end one minute at a time? Everything’s clearer now don’t they? Your whole perspective, on what’s truly important.” To his horror, Loki drew out a five inches blade from the inner seam of his jacket, it glinted dangerously to his face.

“You’re insane!”

“I’m desperate!” He snarled.

“I don’t know, swear to god I don’t know about any bomb!” And that was the god-awful truth!

“God? Where is ‘he’ now?” Loki deliberately dragged the jagged tip along his pulse point.

“You’re on your own Malcolm and you’re gonna have to work very hard to come out of this alive. Choose your next word very carefully.”

---

Now, he didn’t care if anyone would disagree but it was a divine intervention when, after further questioning (and a heck of pain that got him swearing on his mother’s grave, that for fuck sake, whatever it was - it really wasn’t him!) Loki decided to spare his life. Seemingly breathless and out of focus, he haggardly stepped back and let Malcolm out of his death-grip. Chilling emptiness colored his eyes, as if his soul wasn’t even present and before he knew it, he was gone.

For a full thirty minutes after that Malcolm didn’t have any power left in him. Horizontally he sprawled where Loki had left him, like a rag doll, down the floor on the stark rouge of his own blood over the goddamn seventy-grand carpet.

“Careful Malcolm. You don’t want to get me on my bad side do you?” Pierce’s words bring him back to the present.

“It was you.” Late realization dawns on him, “What have you done?”

“What I must.” He took a remote from the table and turns the TV on where the live news is still
airing. “I’m tired of waiting.”

A disturbing silence flows despite the sound of the news blaring from the stereo. According to the anchor lady the woman’s condition is still unconfirmed though said to be striving in the I.C.U.

It was what Pierce always wanted, to break his center, to ruin them from within. Because even the ageless stone knew without the Odinsons around, taking over the city would be nothing but a menial task.

“Turn it off.” His split lips ached with every word he spits, ”What do you want?”

“What I always wanted. World peace.”

My ass! “This ain’t no pageant, don’t give me that bullshit!”

“I’ve cleared the way.” Pierce ignored his retort, “Your turn now.” As the oldest player in the business the Odinsons are always the hardest to break. Something that ancient doesn’t just exist. The network they own stretched from people on the down low to the higher up – and he knows exactly how to ruin all that.

“He won’t leave this be you know that.”

“No, I’d be disappointed if he would.” There was a slight glitch on the timer. Ten minutes that made all the difference. He intended the explosion to detonate right at the Odinsons’ villa where those people met. It would ease his job not to mention so much more interesting to watch, those people at each other’s neck.

“You set the date, get on with the meeting, with or without him.” Pierce instructed.

“And your men will be there?” This alliance between them guarantees his clearance to overthrow the city. No one was irrational enough to go against those families all at once, but Pierce was more than eager. A total annihilation was not necessary - he said. All they need to dispose are the leaders and the rest will bow. When his time comes he’s going to need their men to help him run the new regime, because after centuries - the Chinese still holds the finest goods and his house couldn’t possibly distribute everything alone.

“Absolutely.” He smiled reassuringly. It’s profoundly important to learn the depth of your enemies, what drives their core. In this case, it’s greed. It is always easy to toy with those who hold it in their heart for it could burn the smartest man into cinder and graying dust.

It has become his mission to stop this cycle of madness because more than anyone, Pierce knows the ugly truth behind every diplomacy, the handshaking, the rhetoric, those would solve nothing. From the olden days it was always how the game works. You cut one head and two shall emerge, on and on the malicious wheel keeps on turning.

There is only one answer to cure this kind of cancer. Salvation. And that is what the executioner shall bring, to free them from all the disorder they committed over the years, starting with one family, one city at a time.

***
Ironic how the possibility of death could bring so much clarity to her center. What happened at the Ritz that day – it no longer matter to Darcy, all she wanted now is to know that he’s alright. Problem is Loki’s nowhere to be found, and when she visited the hospital earlier this morning she noticed that his devastated family couldn’t find him too.

Darcy couldn’t remember the trip she made after she saw the news, but she remembered yelling at the cabbie to go faster, gripping on tight to the blue umbrella on her hands (the sky was crying yet again). Her brain goes haywire with each passing second and the car wasn’t running fast enough. She was so close on tasing the driver and took the cab herself, but then the news flash on the radio stopped her. From the words playing in the small cabin she found out that his name wasn’t listed as one of the victims. Loki wasn’t even in the car. In a heartbeat her pained lungs finally remembered how to breathe again. With a long sigh she threw her back to the seat and closed her eyes. *He’s okay, he’s okay,* she repeated to herself as tears of relieve run down her face.

The hospital was crammed with reporters and police officers when she got there. It was impossible to get an access in thus she went to his place in hope that perhaps he’d come home. He didn’t. Afterwards, Darcy went to every plausible place she could think of and still found nothing, because the trouble with looking for Loki is, no one would be able to find him, not if he wishes not to be found.

Maybe he needed some time alone, she reasons with herself. She knows just how close he is with his mother.

With all her might she tries to keep her logic and sense of responsibility above the misery of her heart and decided to go to work and do her job instead, that’s what he would want her to do. Under the circumstances things could get messy without someone to handle the main office and she won’t have his perfectionist ass coming back to that.

“Darcy?” A familiar soft voice calls out, breaking her reverie.

“Dr. Banner?” She turns from her desk, her eyes widen in surprise, what’s his father’s doctor doing here? “Is there something wrong with him?” She only gave the hospital her personal number and address, not her office.

Hesitation clearly painted on his face as he fidgets with his fingers, roving them aimlessly to his already messy curls. “No, not at all. I’m – I’m here for something else.”

Bruce Banner argues with himself, on whether it was a good idea to show up here. He’d been reluctant to share the information of his acquaintance with Loki, because that would only lead to questions, and questions would lead to answers (he’s terrible with lies).

Loki never told him the details about the girl that drove him insane, but with scenes that he witnessed, it was easy to connect the dots (the truckload of flowers Darcy brought to the hospital was a dead giveaway). Without saying, he knew who the woman was, the one that outwitted Loki Odinson was none other than Mr. Lewis’ only daughter.

“I’m looking for - Loki.” Desperate times - desperate measures, the doctor thinks, she’d found out sooner or later anyway.

*He knows Loki?* Darcy adjusted her glasses, “He’s not here - can I help you with anything?”

“I sure hope so.” That was why he decided to come over, because she clearly knows Loki more
than he does. “Have you got some place you haven’t checked – to look for him I mean?”

The doctor groaned in apparent worry when she shook her head.

“Why? Is there something wrong?” The doctor’s strange respond alerted her.

“Umm, well - not really, “ The man gnaws on his lower lip, “You see, he’s not just an old friend of mine, he was one of my patient too.”

His - Patient?

At once her brain does the easy math and the horrifying equation clicks on her, “The pills. What are those for?”

“Nothing you should be worry about. He’s okay now,” He waves it off nervously, “Those are just anti-depressant pills I subscribed for him, you know, something to take the anxiety away.” Though the bastard had been chugging them like tic-tacs.

“For?” She pressed.

“I can’t really tell you …” He scrunches his nose.

“For god’s sake Dr. Banner, are you trying to kill me here? Just spit it!” Her tone intensifies.

“Oh no, he’d kill me first - ” The doctor laughs timidly.

“Look, do you want my help to find him or not?” Irritated, she perches both hands on her hips.

_Dammit!_ He rubs his palm over his face before he utters the next word under his breath, “Okay …”

“Okay?”

“Okay.”

“You say ‘okay’ one more time and I swear – “

“Claustrophobic.” He said with a grimace.

“What?!”

“He got a severe case of claustrophobic – _but_ it’s been gone for a long while now. I’m just worried, under the stress … “ Bruce trails his words, didn’t want to spook her with all the scary details and possibilities because in the worst case it could lead to a cardiac attack.

It didn’t come as a surprise for him knowing why Loki had suffered from it in the first place. He couldn’t hardly imagine, being buried alive six feet under. No wonder his mind is like a bag of cats, Bruce can practically smell the crazy on him since the first time they met.

Like a cold drizzle, realization pours on her. Those glass walls and spacious rooms, oh god, “I – he
never told me,” Darcy's palms grips to the edge of the desk, her face pallid, “Oh fuck, I think I’m gonna be sick … “

“Hey, hey, - I told you, he’s okay, he’s okay.” The man kindly tries to calm her.

“Besides, you know him, he wouldn’t want you or anyone else to know.” Bruce crosses his hands, “Did you … already ask Jordy?”

She dreadfully grunts, buried her face to her palms, “He doesn’t speak shit, unless to Loki.” And he’s been giving her the evil eye ever since she tased him (which he’s completely entitled to).

“Yeah, that’s why he probably knows something, but he cuts me off.” The taps his fingers to his chin, “He must have a secret hideout or something, he can’t just disappear.”

“I’ve tried everywhere, his penthouses, the villa, hotels, everywhere!” She exclaimed almost hysterically.

“Are you sure?”

“Of course I’m – “

Wait … a secret hideout?

“I think I know a place.”

***

With bloodshot eyes, Loki put on his reading glasses as he reached for the files splayed on the table.

“Her life story if you must know.”

‘If’ is no longer an option, not after what had happened. He decided that he does need to know everything about her in order to prevent the same horror before it befalls on her.

A pang jabbed his heart when he found her real birth-date on the first page. No wonder she got so furious back then. The guilt and shame keep on pouring as he read on to another page and another. Fuck! He really was an asshole!

To say that the life she’s been though was hard would be an understatement and despite not once did she ever let it show. What he sees is this strong amazing woman with a big heart and laughter that reminds him of warm summer's day.

The second last page of the files turns his blood cold. Stated in these documents, she is indeed the daughter of Geanna Morrigan, but after her divorce the latter got remarried to Titan - which
inevitably made Darcy ... his stepdaughter.

Apparently Darcy didn’t know any of this. *Or did she?* An old demon whispered doubt to his head. Undeniably his old-self would expect nothing but the worse from her. Regardless, something inside him twinge. The better part of him, his conscience, she would say, that trusts her with every fiber of his being.

It all makes sense to him now, on why her mother had requested to send her away, because Titan didn’t seem to know about her existence just yet. Considering what evil the man was capable of doing, he couldn’t bring his heart and logic to deny the necessity of her request, to send Darcy as far as possible.

...  

His body instantly stiffens, noticing an amiss - a movement. Did he hear wrong? No. There’s someone here, his hunch insists. No one was supposed to know where he is. Loki lifts his eyes from the papers, his hand reaches under the pillow for a handgun he brings with him.

“Easy boy.” The redhead comes out of the shadow and greet him with her ominous smile.

Recognizing the woman in black, Loki puts his weapon down. “Why are you here?”

“To return your money.” She leans on the doorway.

“You could just transfer the fund back, why bother coming?” His eyes follow her every movement. There’s something unsettling about this woman and he doesn’t trust her. With the way she’s looking at him he could swear that her twisted little head is formulating dozens of ways to take him down if needed be.

“I could, but I need a word with you.” She crosses their distance with a calm sway of her hips.

“As you can see, I’m rather busy.” He dryly replies.

She exasperatedly rolls her eyes, “This isn’t only about Geanna or her daughter. The truth is – “

“The truth is only a matter of circumstances.” Loki retorts.

A lopsided smile rises on her face but her jade eyes are icy cold, “Touchè. It’s the only way to live isn’t it Mr. Odinson, for people like us.”

“Get to your point and leave.”

“But of course, I wouldn’t want to disturb you from your *brooding.*” She raises her brow, clearly mocking him.

“Are you trying to get on my nerves Miss Romanoff? I must say, so far you’re doing an excellent job.”

Natasha ignores his jab, “Things run deeper than you think. I need your cooperation in this, I can’t have you jeopardizing my mission.”

“What mission?”

“The only thing I can tell you is that we’re after the same guy and that woman is the key to bring
him down. She holds and manages his funds, the only person he trusts.” She’s been on it for five years, to the government she’s as good as dead. Maybe she might as well be, because after too many covers she plays she isn’t entirely sure on whom she really is. All she knows is that Natasha was no longer there.

“You could be lying for all I know.”

“Of all people you should know better.” She can read it in his eyes, they wield the same shield, the same weapon.

“Assuming that you could compel me to ‘cooperate’, what have you got in mind?”

“What I’m asking is not really that complicated.” She said, keeping their eyes locked.

“Back off her. I need more time to collect the evidence. Mind your own business in this corrupt city and its old crooks. Leave the big guy to me.”

For a short moment he weighs his options and came with a conclusion, “You can keep the money, I don’t need them.”

Natasha narrowed her eyes as Loki calmly continues, “But in return, I’m going to need your help.”

Keeping Darcy safe and far won’t be easy, because that woman won’t listen, she never does. He has to find another way to make her leave, something she won’t forgive him of doing, because in the end - even if it kills him, at least, it won’t kill her, and Loki could definitely make peace with that.

Maybe they're just not meant to be. Maybe their story belongs in another world, another life because while his heart is brimming with the things he wanted to tell her, words he wanted to say, right now the only line that he could give her is that he’s sorry for the thing he’s about to do.

Hate me Darcy, hate me with all your gut and leave. And for the both of us, live.

***

Nineteen years ago

What time was it?

Did it matter? You’re going to die soon anyway, his mind replied. It was pitch black where he lies, his eyes could not see a damn thing. He remembered being thrown in before they buried him alive and left him to die. All the pain and soreness throughout his battered body had gotten to a level where he could no longer feel a thing.
Those masked men got scared at the last minute, the call they made to the All-Father ended in a fashion that was out of their calculation. By then Loki thought he was getting closer and closer to the end (he was tired, so damn tired) but then a commotion broke above. Followed with murmur of voices and ruckus steps that were getting louder by the minute.

“I think I found him mam!”

Again, he heard distant voices but from the shock, couldn’t recognize to whom those belong.

“Faster ladies! Dig faster!”

Blinding lights showered him not long after. Warm hands reached out to lift him back to surface. Dirt was on his eyes, all over his face and body, he coughs and coughs ‘till his lungs and throat burnt.

“Loki –“ The voice choked at the syllables of his name.

Slowly his hazy eyes came into focus, looking at what he thought was an illusion. Was that really her? Mother? Bright and bold as a Valkyrie - a shotgun in her hand, a band of minions in black at her back.

Frigga cradled him in her arms and as if he weighted nothing, lifted him all the way to the jeep. On their journey to the hospital she wrapped him into her embrace, whispered calming words to soothe him.

“It’s okay now darling, I have you, I have you.”

She didn’t say much of anything after and the details of the rescue was a blur in his memory as his weary mind was adrift in and out of consciousness, but she came for him when no one else did and for a brokenhearted boy, it was all that he needed.

***

Chapter End Notes

This chapter is dedicated to plot and our Queen Frigga and her badassery. In my story she was some kind of former MI6 of sort, and her opposites attract trope with Odin was very sexy in my imagination.

Despite the setting I have in mind for this story (it’s basically Thor:TDW meets
CA:TWS in a modern setting, so Frigga was pretty much dead in my old drafts) I decided to differ from it, just because I can, and after further contemplation - her death is not a requirement for plot development. Another reason for our male character to brood over is one thing we don’t need, besides, it’s an AU after all. And since this is the underworld we’re talking about, Odin was referring to gang war, not the actual war. Did anyone notice that the doctor from the previous installment is Banner? It was always him.

Thank you for stopping by! And for the bookmarks! And the kudos! And the comments! Those really make this silly old girl super super happy <3

Oh, what was that? You didn't drop any? Whoops, that was awkward :p

I thank you anyway ^^ have a great night/day y'all!

* Next stop : another calm before the storm. Sorta. NSFW. Hella.
**Wild Horses (Couldn't Drag Me Away)**

Chapter Summary

“Such confidence. I’m impressed.”
“Well, I’m in love.”

Chapter Notes

I've re-read it for like, a hundred times. After stressing myself out (as per usual) I decided to just toss it out here. Let me know what you girls think ;)

Enjoy Darlings!

xxoo

* oOps I forgot to say, NSFW *

See the end of the chapter for more notes

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The rustic room was dim but this stunning woman before her is glowing. Her skin was flawless and every inch of her is beautiful. Her chest was thoroughly exposed, without a single shred of fabric on them, all plump curves and the look of sin on her gleaming jade eyes.

She greeted her with a short ‘hey’, which the vixen answered with her flirtatious ‘Hey yourself’.

Without any hesitation Darcy tangled her fingers on her red locks as she leaned down. In one swift move she enclosed their lips together.

It started slowly, timidly but the latter reciprocate in vigor, she tipped her head to the side, darkened gaze razor-sharp piercing into hers. Ever so slightly she widened her lips as an invitation for more.

The tug of their lips were no longer as gentle now and despite the small audiences they were having – she closed her eyes and gave her what she wanted, a little bit more.
A hint of rosewood and almond fills the small cabin, thick clouds hovering up the vast gray-blue skies, shading them from the last light of the day. They’ve been driving for more than forty minutes, luckily with no apparent traffic back at the highway despite the rush hour. The Beatles singing on the stereo and once in a while, with his fingers drumming on the wheel, the doctor faintly mumbles to the song.

Dr. Banner was stuttering when she starts a conversation on when exactly did he and Loki get to know each other. A few seconds of awkward pondering on his side before he finally let out a long breath and answered her with a vague ‘Well ... ummm’.

“But he was your patient?” Darcy asked again, leaning her head back to the leather seat.

“He was, but we met long before that.” Bruce replied with a cringe as he changed the gear of his old Range Rover to ride into a higher slope.

The answer to this was exactly why he never wanted to tell her before. To say that you’re a bit mental with medical history longer than those of your patient’s isn’t exactly a good conversation starter, especially when you happen to be treating the girl’s father.

“I – we met at a support group.” He said quietly.

Confused, Darcy glanced sideway, “A support group?”

“Yes.” He popped the last ‘p’ before he continued, “Anger management.” He eyed the young woman nervously, waiting to see how she’d respond to what he just said. Scared? Disgust? He lined up the usual suspect.

To his surprise, none of the above makes an appearance, instead a wide genuine smile grows on her lips as she lands a punch to his upper arm. “Whoa, I didn’t know you had it in you doc.”

“Well … yeah, so did I.” He shrugged bashfully, glad that she took it rather well than most people in his past. “I just couldn’t control myself sometimes and things went – ugly.”

“We were honorary members, Loki and I. We fought on that first day.” He timidly smiled, reminiscing the raucous scene inside his head.

"Dang, I should've been there. Who won?” She asked in humour.

“Mam, you're lookin' at him.” He smirked smugly, "I knocked his skinny ass and we’ve been on good term since.”

“You mean friends.” She corrected.

“Yeah, he doesn’t like that word so much.” He scrunched his nose with a chuckle.

She huffed, “He doesn’t like a lot of things.”

“True. But seems to me he likes you a lot.”

His unexpected answer tugged at her chords, “Did he - tell you that?”
The doctor shifted his kind eyes to her, an earnest smile on his lips, “He didn’t have to.”

The guitar gently weeps and they drive in silence after his admission, only the lull of the music fills the space – each note somehow makes her heart sinks a little lower. It’s ironic how emptiness could feel this heavy.

From their field of vision a tall gate on the side of the road appears and steals her from her blues. At once a shot of anxiety grips her by the nerves as she tells him to take a right turn.

“You sure?” Bruce ducked his head to get a clearer view of the word ‘Mockingbird’ cursively wrought above the wooden gate.

If this huge ranch was no longer belongs to his 'old friend' then most probably he bought the property without changing the name on the ownership certificate so that no one, not even the IRS could track him, she guessed.

“He once told me this was his safehouse,” The car rocked on the gravely pathway, a wide open pen on their left side with breathtaking view on its backdrop. White cedar fences were built around it and inside a fine black steed was racing with the wind, its mane majestically flew as he ran. "I can see why."

"Sleipnir."

"Hm?"

"His name." His head jerked towards the beautiful creature. "I was there when Loki picked him two years ago, he's a wild one. Thought he bought it as a random gift for someone, I didn't know he'd keep it to himself, heck - I didn't even know he had this." His hand motioned to their picture perfect surrounding.

"He - " Her words were forgotten the moment her eyes landed on a familiar figure standing on guard by the all-American front porch, with lining red, yellow and white wild flowers around it. "Dr. Banner, look!" She exclaimed gleefully.

Gradually the car approached to a halt, “Hey Jordy, you got bad receptions around here?” Bruce waved his cell at him from the window. He parked his car besides a pair of familiar ones, a black Porsche and a cobalt blue Roadster - certainly not the type of car one would keep at such a place. Coming to Darcy turned out to be a good idea after all.

The lack of answer he got didn’t stop him from asking another question. “How’s he doing?” He descended from the vehicle and with Darcy tailing behind him, rounded up to where the other man stood.

Jordy steeled his eyes and stance and as if he was a fucking Queen’s guard guarding the Buckingham Palace, refused to budge from the steps to give them further access.

“Look, dude - I’m sorry, I already told you how sorry I am for what I did, but this is important,” Darcy moved forward to intersect between those two, "I know he's in there and I need to see him.”

There was an unsettling look on his eyes as he narrowed them before he gave in to her request and took a step sideways. She can’t help but think that coming from him, it was almost too easy, though judging at the situation, she takes what she can get. But her relieve fell short because once again, her gut feeling was on point. Just when she was about to move he catches her by the elbow
and leaned down to her ear with a whisper.

Wide eyed and unsure at what he just said, Darcy turned to face him but looking at his sore expression it was clear to her that he’s unwilling to elaborate. Jerking his head, he motioned for her to proceed.

The inside of the building was as beautiful as it was on the outside. It was just like those pictures of lavish farmhouses she sees in the movies. Warm hues of colours fills the entire room, emitting a welcoming feeling. There were old photographs on the walls along the stairs, of happy faces she doesn't recognize. When she got to the second floor as Jordy had told her to, she nervously headed to the furthest door on the left - the master bedroom. The wooden door opened with a squeak when Darcy stepped inside the dim threshold. She squinted her eyes beneath her glasses, adjusting them to the slightly darker room. She called his name, steadily walking closer until she can catch the sight of him and her breath hitched.

***

Loki made no move though all he wanted to do was to gather her into his embrace. Was this another punishment? Another life’s cruel jest? It didn't suppose to bother him any longer, that his dreams always running ahead of him so fast they slip like sands through the gap of his fingers.

Tucking away his inner turmoil under his mask, he remained unmoving on the edge of the four-poster bed, his shirt off and his black drawstring pants hung low on his hips. A naked redhead on his back – the curves of her body accentuated by the quilt she covers herself up to her waist.

“I didn’t ask you to come.” He said in a stern voice, hoping that by now Darcy already followed what was going on.

To his surprise, she said nothing, her expression was unreadable. Short seconds passed and she finally paid his regards with a cool glance whilst taking off her glasses, tossed them unceremoniously to the nearest table top before stripping her feet from her black pumps. Without losing a beat, barefoot, she walked right pass him as if he wasn't even there. Next she freed her hair from her usual bun and deliberately messes them with her fingers as she rounded the bed to where Natasha lounged. With one knee she dipped to the mattress to lower herself.

“Hey.” He heard her voice saying, almost sassily.

The apparent amusement on the other woman's flirtatious answer made his head turned completely, to see the odd exchange for himself.

What happened in the next moment was rolling too fast and it's probably the first time Loki ever feels both speechless and confused, and quite possibly he might add, slightly aroused because Darcy bent down, anchored her palms on both side of Natasha’s head and slanted her lips. He looked over to Bruce, who was slack-jawed watching the whole scene from the door though unlike him, didn’t even bother to mask his shock.

Their kiss was brief but in a heartbeat Natasha knows that someone just got burn, she likes this girl already (not a bad kisser too). “I’ll see you around?” She whispered on the brunette’s full lips as she pulled away.

Darcy winked as she took a step back to give the woman a proper lift from the bed. With a poised
glide of her hips, she left the room - brushing off with Bruce (still gaping) without as much as a second glance.

Faintly they heard her words of command to Jordy, asking him to drive her back to town now that the foolish masquerade had gone south.

“So, um, I see that you’re okay.” Bruce said after he cleared his throat awkwardly.

“Why wouldn’t I be?” Loki quipped with a straight face.

Asshole! “Yeah, why wouldn’t you be.” He replied sarcastically.

Not letting her eyes drift off him Darcy said, “Dr. Banner, I’m truly sorry but can I have a moment with him? Alone?”

“Sure, yeah, sure, I have some place I needed to be.” They already found him anyway and now he could rest seeing that the bastard is indeed well. “Call me if you need anything, you know where to find me.” He said one last time, fingers digging in his pocket for his car key.

“Thank you Dr. Banner.” Darcy answered for the both of them.

Bruce blew a breath then retreated to where he came. His phone suddenly rang as he closed the door behind him.

“Yes, Betty, hi – I’ll be right there.” The sound of his voice softened and for a brief moment they could hear him stammering ‘miss you too’ in the distance before padded steps echoed on the stairs.

The sound of the vehicle's engine starts and roars before it runs, letting them know that there were no one else in the precinct. She walked closer to the man she was desperately looking for day and night. There were many things she cooks in her miserable mind on what she'd do the moment she found him. Giving him a good smack on the face was one of it. But among her options she knew what she truly wanted was to run to his chest, to bury herself deep into his embrace and drink his scent to make sure that this wasn't a mirage. Somehow she managed to refrained herself from doing all that, something in his mournful eyes told her not to.

“It’s quite a hiding place you got here.” She started.

He didn’t answer, averting his eyes away from her while her vision full with the view of him.

“Have you heard? Your mother, she’s a fighter, she’ll make it through Loki.” She tried again.

Hesitation shown on his face before he looked down and gave her a curt reply, “I know ... no thanks to me.”

"It wasn't your fault." She said. It pained her to see his eyes brimming dark and red with tears unshed.

Loki wanted to laugh at the irony of her words but he kept his mouth shut to irate her. The faster she leaves the better.

“You don't look okay to me.” She stated the obvious, eyeing an empty bottle of whiskey and scattered pills on the bedside table.

“I'm fine.” He pinched the bridge of his nose.
"Got anything to tell me?" She took another careful step closer as if advancing towards a wounded animal.

“Yes.” Loki dropped his hand and for the first time that evening, paid her with a glance yet distant and cold, “Leave.”

“Other than that?” She was standing one feet away from him.

“Nothing.” He replied restlessly.

_And they say women confused men with their answer, yeah right_- she slightly frowned.

“I got bad news for you then, because I’m not going anywhere.” She arched her brow and folded her hands over her chest.

A tense set over his jaw, his fists clenched, “It’s over Darcy. Our deal is over.”

“Look at me in the eye and say that again.” Clouds of doubt hung over her heart as her lips uttered the line in an unwavering confidence.

Leisurely Loki rose from the bed, his chin up, a blade-sharp glint on his eyes as he bluntly said, “It’s over.”

Bracing another step, she took a large gulp of air that felt more like acid to her lungs, “Liar.”

There was not a single emotion she could fetch out of his impassive expression at her accusation, but she refused to waver - not now not ever. “You used to be better at it.”

They’re standing toe-to-toe now and even with the lack of light Loki could trace the shimmering freckles of sapphire to tourmaline to black reflected from her pair of blues and piece by piece he felt the beginning of his resolution collapsing.

_Keep it together you moron! Send her away!_ He mentally scolded himself.

He swallowed thickly, gaze trailed down to her lips before climbing back into her eyes. His throat suddenly felt dry, his heart beating too fast - they pounded like drum rolls in his ears. “Do you remember my first rule Miss Lewis?”

“I do - _Loki._” Honesty.

“Good. Then I believe you know that you've been neglecting it.” He turned to get away from their too close proximity.

“I don’t think that's quite fair,” She caught his arm, halting his hasty escape. “Have _you_ been completely honest with me?”

“It is not my obligation to do so. You’re not the boss of me, this is _not_ a game.” He sneered.

“Funny. I thought you like our game.” She can feel his muscles tensing under her fingertips though he didn’t tug his hand away either.

“I read your file Darcy, I know everything about your past, things you didn’t bother to tell me.” A cease before he continued, “All those - “

“I’m not going to deny them, my past is what makes me who I am today.” She immediately responded without a pause.
"Well said," He slowly nodded, disdain in his remark. “but you know how I feel about liars and that’s exactly what you are.” He’s thankful for the position they were in, his back to her, so that he didn’t have to watch her face falls at his words.

“Loki …” Her tone deflated to a caress.

“A feat you inherited from your mother I suppose.” Darcy please, please – his heart desperately begged, guilt gnarling at the bottom of his soul.

“Stop it!” She closed their distance and pulled herself into his broad back, her hands around his midsection, “Stop trying to push me away.”

His breath hitched on his chest as he gnawed on his lip before he snapped, voice ragged with emotions. “Then leave me be!”

“No, not like this.” She hugged him tighter.

He snorted, “Why? What difference it would make? This way or another, today or tomorrow. There’s only one end and we both know it. I’m just saving you from all the trouble.”

“I told you, I don’t need saving.”

“Ah, and you still think I do?” He mocked.

“As a matter of fact,” She backed away and made a turn so now they were facing each other again. “Yes. Yes you do.”

“The only thing I need of you is to leave. I’m tired, of us, of everything. What you gave me was more than any other women ever did. I had to admit, I enjoyed every single minute of our – “rendezvous, but now I’m bored. Was that not clear enough for you? Do I need to say more?”

“No.” She cocked her head, anger climbing in her tone. “That was quite clear though if I may say so, poorly executed.” She gestured down to his trembling fists and covered them with her palms. “from someone they called the trickster I expected something – I don’t know, more.”

Silently cursing he feigned aloofness whilst his brain’s churning for a way out of this now that she caught him in another lie. “You – “

Before the second word could roll off his tongue she cuts him in a firmer tone, “I do not, however need to listen anymore of your bullshit. In fact, I want you to shut it. Your turn to listen close.”

His face hardened but her words stunned him into silence.

“Loki Odinson.” She looked at him straight in the eye as he once did, “I’m here for you and no matter what you say or do, what I feel here -” She placed a palm over her thumping heart, “won’t change.”

“So deal with it. Deal with me.” She was afraid that if she ever tells him - he’d leave … until his sudden disappearance wretched her. Now that she found him, she’d be damned if she’d let her fear decide what she ought to do or feel.

“Don’t be absurd Darcy ...” He shifted uneasily, his voice nothing but a broken whisper. A concoction of awe and pain marred his beautiful face and suddenly he looked more tired than she ever saw him.
“For real Loki, no more games, no more lies. I deserve that much.”

“Such confidence,” Regaining his composure he roughly jerked his hand away from her grip. In a harsh voice he added cynically, “I’m impressed.”

“Well,” Not letting him dismissed her just like that Darcy landed her palm on the hollow of his cheek, “I’m in love.”

He freezes.

A second passes, then another and her words slowly sink in. The lump in his throat dipped but still words refuse to form.

“I love you.” She told him again, smiling now, finding it easier the second time around.

“Completely, helplessly in love with you …” Every part of you, your strength, your flaw, - even the darkest bit you kept hidden from the rest of the world, her heart sighed as she drops kisses atop his bruised knuckles before reverting her eyes back to his, “- and I don’t think I know how to stop,”

Rouge crept on the apple of her cheeks, tensions gripping on her nerves but there was no stopping now. “... I just thought that you should know.”

That was the last blow for him. Her trusting big blue eyes gazing right at his, entranced in the moment he could not look away and whatever it was he’s holding on to, crumbles. Her words were like music to his ears, a balm over his blackened heart. In one movement he grabbed her by each side of her head, shaky fingers digging on her scalp.

"Goddammit Darcy …" He gritted the words, his breath hot and heavy against her face and in the next moment, admitting his defeat, he closed his eyes and claimed her by the lips. His mouth tugging hard into hers, desperation, exasperation dripped from his kiss.

Damn this woman! Damn her and her tenacity! There were simply no words adequate enough to express the emotions she invokes out of him. There were no more excuses, no more explanation nor reason left for what she made him feel. At one point he always thought that love was superficial, a joke, anything but real ... but hers liberates him from his hateful prison, it frees his soul from his own oppression and for that he’s forever grateful that fate had sent her his way, his very own angel, his goddess, his queen.

Foregoing his every logic he let himself go. He backed her until they were standing against the coarse wall, lips trailing to her jaw, her lobe and down he went to the juncture of her neck and tasted her there. Long flimsy fingers worked on her buttons, though he got impatience on the third one and snapped the shirt open with a rip – exposing her breasts encased in black satin and lace. For a moment of awe he paused to take a good look at her disheveled state, locked his eyes to hers while his other hand came trailing down her thighs to bunched up her skirt. Inch by inch he traced her skin until he found her panties. Two fingers slipped on the tip as they slid it all the way down that he was on his knees by the end of it. He dropped butterfly kisses along the length of her leg, rising up until his dangerous eyes met hers again.

She circled her hand around his neck to bring their face together. “Make love to me Loki …” She blew the words to his parted lips, then she accentuated her following words with a tug of her teeth, “Make love to me like you mean it.”
“Oh Darcy,” He hissed, eyes shut but his blood was blazing hotter wherever their skin touched, “... I always do.”

A growl escaped from the back of his throat when he captured her lips again and took her wrists, flattened them against the wall, trapping her body between the cold woods and his hard chest.

*I adore you, with all that I am* - his heart exclaimed but with his lips fused to hers, the words dissolved into their thrilling kiss instead.

Their breathy moans filled the room, the scent of sex and raw desire was heavy in the air. Everything around them heightened, vivid colours sang, fiery passion howled and the sound their lips were making weave into this one big mess of a beautiful euphony. She tugged her hands free from his grasp and reached down, undo his pants and slid one palm inside his straining erection. His hisses turn to growls when she started to stroke him from the head to his base, all hard ridges and moist skin.

In a swift movement he unzipped her skirt and let it pooled down the floor. “Feet up, around me” He uttered hoarsely.

Darcy does as told because there’s nothing she wanted more but to burn under the sizzle of his touches, to soaked in this precious moment and made it last. Not looking away from his hungry gaze she placed her hand on his shoulders for leverage and snaked her legs around his waist. She can feel the hardness of him pulsing in the base of her core up to her ass. She shifted and rolled her hips to gain more friction, to brushed her running damp all over him.

A feral groans grumbled from the back of his throat. He cupped her cheeks, slightly parting them so that he can touch her honeyed folds with his fingers, sliding them on the slick surface before he dipped two digits and started to move. In and out and curl, he went on and on. A whimper ran from her lips, her head spun, she felt like soaring higher and higher and before she knew it, he took her flying. Molten liquid pooled on his fingers and he knew he couldn’t wait any longer.

“Take me ...” He choked at the words.

With one hand she reached to where they touch, he hissed when she gripped him tight. Slowly she aligned their bodies and begin to engulf the tip of his head, revelling the way it stretched and filled her. When she descended deeper, their sighs and moans weaved into one, wave after wave until they pierced through the cold night air.

Coherent words had left them completely as they were no longer needed. He conveyed his every emotion with each tug and thrust of his body, blowing her mind, body and soul completely.

He kissed her again, flushing their bodies even closer. Her breasts heavy against him, her skin burnt and her inside was clenching oh-so deliciously. She was hovering near the edge already. Seeing him right in front of her after these few stressful days she had when she worried over him, not only alive but hot to her touch, flooded her with elation.

Her nails clawed deeper into his skin, legs tighter around him. She leaned her head back to the wall and screamed out, wanting to ride her second release, any moment now, one thrust, two –

“Wait–” He rasped, perspiration swelled on his temple, not slowing down but his hand found her hair and tugged her face to his. “Wait,” again he said in panted breath and without breaking the contact, he took her to the unmade bed and laid her there.

Leaning on top of her on the edge, his kisses trailed lower to the crook of her neck. A wolf-bite
landed on her nape down to her aching nipples. Inside, she can feel him twitching as their breath rose to staccato and their movement accelerated, bolder, harder, faster towards a release.

He canted her, hands steady on her hips while hers flat on his chest, fingertips pressing randomly along the skin of his invitingly toned torso. “Come Loki - come for me,” she encouraged him, the vapor of her breath puffed, her lids heavy and hazed.

“Fuck!” He gritted the word between his teeth, taut face bent between her breasts. No more finesse on his movement, he rose to gaze at her and breathed the words, “Now, with me –“

And she did. Blinding colours burst under her closed lids as chant of praises flows from his lips. She cried his name aloud as he frantically thrusts into her a few more times before he bucked, hot flushes flooded her womb and melt down her thighs.

Loki contently rested his forehead on hers, letting their breath mingled and their heartbeat decelerate before he shifted and lifted her to the center of the bed. Silently he covered the quilt over them then he bent to gently kissed her forehead, the tip of her nose and her lips. His fingers softly caressed her by the jaw and he gathered her closer.

“Should we go home now?” She muttered lazily, moulding her body to his like lead would to fire.

Gently he ran his fingers through her hair, a smile on his lips, “I’m already home.”

***

It was almost midnight when he rouses again. Star filled skies hung out their windows. Earlier, with little that she found in the kitchen, they madeshift a plate of sandwich for dinner. It was the first meal he had in days and he ate it almost immediately. Afterwards they fell right asleep, cocooned in each other's warmth. He gradually opened his eyes to found the most beautiful woman he ever saw, peacefully laying soundless next to him.

I love you.

Three words resound and swell his heart. He couldn’t stop the foolish smile from dancing on his lips. She's a summer's dream, a falling star, the lighthouse on his stormy sea. She’s a sanity he could hold on to when his demons strike in the darkest of his nights and by all the gods, he loves her so damn much his heart ached because it. Loki honestly wondered, whatever he did to deserve someone like her? Probably saved a country or two in his past lives, he nonsensically thought.

For tireless minutes he watched how the moonlight silvery limned over her pristine skin, letting the sweet dream doused, escaping his reality and what awaited him in it. Lightly, he caressed her hair, tucking a strand from her forehead and she slightly stirred, long lashes flickering on her cheeks. He pulled her even closer, astonishment mirrored from the depth of his eyes and he buried his face to the side of hers - thinking that this surreal scene and this woman in his embrace were too perfect to be real that it terrified him.

"Your plan was terrible by the way." Her voice was still drowsy from the slumber. "An amateur
like me would think that you didn't really want to rid me."

He grunted in embarrassment, hands clutching tighter around her.

"It might work better if it was your brother. I'd take pictures." She added.

"Jordy told you didn't he?" He could feel her smiling.

"You'd be surprise as how my taser could be an effective ice breaker. Seriously, *sparks* were flying everywhere. It was electric."

He laughed at her reply, "I need to fire them."

Darcy lifted her hand to lightly slap his cheek, knew he was just messing with her, "Don't you dare you fascist!"

"I’m truly sorry - for everything." He suddenly said, caught her arm from his cheek and brought her knuckles to his lips.

“... I know.” Her eyes still closed but her conscience was now fully awake.

“Though, you’re not completely wrong.” She shrugged, gently patting the other arm that snakes protectively above her abdomen. "In a way, I did lie to you.”

“Were you – scared?” He asked.

“I thought I was," She paused, retreating her palm from his tender kisses. "- afraid that my past would repeat by itself, but more than that perhaps … I doubted myself.”

“You know I won’t let that happen.” He nudged his nose on her shoulder, breathing in her sweet scent.

“I wish I was there.” He added.

“I wish I was there for you too.” She replied just as softly.

He was silent for a heartbeat before he breathed his question, “You – *knew*?"

“*Duh* no,” Rolling her eyes dramatically, she turned, her back flat on the bed.

“No one had the balls to tell me what actually went on. It’s the secret of the big bad wolf after all, I mean - who would dare? But I bet he’d tell me one of these days.” She poked him by the ribs.

His melodious chuckles caressed her ears, silken smooth yet rich. “I do not think it’s because they fear me.”

“I don’t see any other light - ” She tilted her head and feigned a pout before she playfully added, “*sir.*”

He raised a brow at her tease, “They felt sorry for me, for what happened and I hated that. To inspire other’s pity is not a thing I aspire. That was why I never speak of it.” His fingers strayed to the length of her arm and her skin tingles along the path they traced.

Tentatively she lifted herself to a sitting position, wearing the quilt over her body and hope on her face. “But – you’re willing to share it with me?”
Loki followed suit, ascending from the bed he rested his back on the headboard, right next to hers. Looking down to his fingers before raking them to his hair to reveal his forehead to her, “Remember when you asked me about this?”

His words flowed after her nod, tottering at first until her fingers clutched tightly around his. With firmer tone he spelled his story before her, his old demons and the new. Everything that happened along the way, all the pain of his past. Every scene replays itself, his every scar, his fear, his grieve – and by the end ... how he loathed himself even more after those bastard took it out on people that he treasured most.

The thought of stripping himself bare did frightens him but now that it is done he felt tons lighter, as if a herculean burden he carried so long with him suddenly lifted off his shoulders. For him this new experience of sharing what lies underneath his skin was cathartic to an unimaginable extent. It took at least an hour before he finished, he wasn't entirely sure for he lost track of time but by the end of it he caught her glassy blues staring at him, her lips trembled as she bit it down. Without a word she sprang toward him, embracing him with the curls of her hands around his head.

“I’m sorry.” She choked, and she repeated the words for a couple times more.

“Don’t be,” He welcomed her with tightening his arms around her. “I have you now.”

“Always Loki, always.” She muttered to his hair.

His chest felt tight, his eyes burning at her words, because he knew that, unlike most people, she really meant what she just promised him. “Darcy, my brave Darcy ...” He ran his fingers along the smooth of her spine, her name flowed like prayers from his lips.

“And if you ever want to get away next time - take me with you. We’ll get lost together.”

“I will.”

“Promise?” She pulled away, merely inches apart, just enough to caught a glimpse of his face and offered him her pinky.

His eyes flicked to hers, a smile across his lips as he twined it with his, “Cross my heart.”

Leaning closer he sealed her lips with his, slowly, softly. Seconds later she broke the lingering kiss and guided her lips higher to the silverying line on his forehead and before he knew it, with her kind fingertips and her soft lips, this dazzling alchemist turned his scars into stars. She mapped them one by one, as if they were as precious as the constellation shone above. Between kisses he said each one represented her sorry for those times she missed. Afterwards they tumble back down in a heap of heat and passion, breath united, skin met and at long last - two hearts melded into one.

As she had requested, before the morning comes he took her home. He drove with one hand while the other rested in hers. In their horizon the skyline was painted in bright blue, early sunrays glimmering in beautiful hues and in a moment he forgot where heaven stopped and earth began. And if it was indeed a dream, he thought, he wanted to linger forever, never to wake.

***
Meanwhile at the Borson’s City Hospital downtown, a man shifted from the post he’s been guarding for days on end. Being left in the dark was devastating to say the least and so when Loki’s name suddenly popped on his phone’s screen, he answered it in a heartbeat. Relieve floods his tired mind at the first ‘hello’ because deep down he always thought the boy as a son he didn’t have.

Promptly the silver-haired man reported on madam’s stabilizing condition and after, the inevitable situation that rose after the incident. Someone tipped the media on Loki’s act of disappearance. The company stocks took a slight blow. Speculations made, rumours spread and as a result the last thing he heard from an underground source was that the Keiths are already on the move after those words saying that the Odinsons proven weak thus will no longer able to deliver their promise.

“Yes sir, right away.” Fenrir answered to another command given to him. Slowly he lowered his phone and gingerly sighs.

A large warm hand quietly landed on his shoulder, almost making him jump and he instantly turned.

“You did good Fenrir.” Towering at least two heads above him, stood the older brother. His golden hair pulls up in a messy bun, his long maroon jacket is not in a better state either.

“Sir.” Just yesterday this man surprised him with his sudden revelation. No one would ever guessed that he could snuck around behind Loki’s back unnoticed. To further his amazement, the sinewy man's clandestine effort paid off. He found his answers, albeit roughly, about what his brother was up to. He demanded the ex-soldier to come clean, and weighing the precarious situation they were in, he did. Though he asked Fenrir to keep things hidden from Loki for the time being.

Years ago, Thor said he missed his chance and lost a brother. Now, in hope that he could bring him back, he sure as hell won’t let this chance slipped away. He will let those bastards know, the whole city if needed be, that true family stands for each other and what once bonds cannot and will not easily breaks.

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Chapter End Notes

So … the L word is finally out, I do hope it wasn't tacky, or cringe-y or both.

My inspiration for the confession scene was this photo release of Dr. Laing :
Damn ... just, damn ... and I can't help but imagine that girl was Darcy (photoshop her maybe?)

First and foremost, thank you for stopping by :* as usual, your visits, kudos and comments are very much appreciated especially when I'm laying face down on the dirt (ok that was too dramatic, mostly I did it on my bed), thinking that my writing's suck. Secondly, I did not insinuate or foreshadow anything with this chapter's title. Really, I didn't.

And lastly, I mentioned the inspiration for my Helena was Dita Von Teese, now for no reason in particular I wanted to share the mental image of my Jörmungandr a.k.a Jordy. He was Nicholas Hoult.

Next stop : more bed talks, more uhmm ... smut maybe and quite probably ... more stuff, like, shitty stuff. My deepest apology in advance.

Have a good night/day guys!

P.S. : Panda hugs for those who found each of my Marvel-themed Easter eggs (i.e : the previous owner of the ranch *winks*) !
Final Masquerade

Chapter Summary

“I think I’m addicted to you Miss Lewis.”
“Apparently you’re not the only one.”

Chapter Notes

I hope you'll like this one because as usual, I had a blast writing it ^^

Enjoy darlings!

xxoo

P.S. :
~ NSFW ... but I figured you guys already knew that by now.
~ perhaps take a listen to this song before you start :I think you're gonna love it.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

‘You know everything about me.’

A simple line - that was how their conversation starts. Out of the blue Loki exclaimed those words to her with a slight frown, as if they were on a competition and she was way ahead of him. Obviously. As his P.A. she knows everything there is to know about his quirky habits and personal preferences. He was being ridiculous - she said to him, but he ignored her and kept pushing for more. It was kind of endearing really, because she knew where that notion came from. Her files. He felt sorry for reading them without her consent and now he was trying to make up for it by asking random personal details that weren’t mentioned on those reports.

So now here they are, turning her pages backwards. From her embarrassing moments (mermaid hair dye gone oh-so-wrong), her choices of literature (fairy tales) to her favourite old songs (among many others, Starships' Nothing's Gonna Stop Us Now popped into mind). He asked her to sing it for him and she flat out refused, knew he was only aiming to taunt her again like he did before when he laughed at her lack of tune.
Evidently it would be unbecoming of him to give it up just like that. And that was exactly what happened. The next thing she knew he started to hum the intro before he quietly sang. In a much slower rhythm that made it sounded more like pure seduction caressing her ears. That opening ‘Looking in your eyes I see a paradise. This world that I've found is too good to be true’ line, with his pointer finger deliberately motioning a come-a-hither her way. She tried not to let it show, but goddammit, she swooned anyway and let her heart get the best of her when she finally joined him for the chorus. She was a bit ashamed to admit that not only she sang along, she also stupidly danced to the 80's jam (that mannequin-esque/robotic move with her hands), whilst straddling him. He didn't laugh at her this time.

“I prefer hot cocoa over coffee.” She gave him another bit of Darcy-trivia after the impromptu duet ended in kisses and fit of giggles.

From the pitter-patter of her heart she realized, that this was one of those times when you just know you will treasure forever. This rare lazy morning, where the bustling world seemed to decelerates before their eyes and fades away, where time would seem to stray from its hectic course and waited as they lay.

Skin on skin, soaking up the pale sun peaking through his floor-to-ceiling windows, gentle breeze billowing a tease to the tress outside. It was definitely a luxury she could get used to, to give in into her pretendings (and maybe his too), that they could forever stall these peaceful seconds from fading away. That if she just closes her eyes and feels him there - everything will be okay.

“You know that show on the History channel, ‘Ancient Aliens’ - the one that covered science and myths?” He shook his head and she continued, “I loved it. I really really enjoyed it.” She said, the side of her face flat against his taut chest, "Tsoukalos memes are my absolute favourite."

“You’re a nerd.”

“Right back at you Shakespeare.” He gave a huge grin at her jest and told her to carry on.

“I’ve watched The Princess Bride for like, twenty times … at least once a year.” She said, her fingers running circles on his abdomen.

“Oh that’s a good one, didn’t take you to be a romantic.”

“Had a huge crush on Johnny Depp -” She could read her own pattern here. Cheekbones. Smoulder. Yeah. "... but that’s a given, everyone has a crush on him.” She randomly added after she pinched him when he made a face.

He chuckled at the information, “Bet you had a shrine. Next.”

“I did not!” She smacked him by the shoulder. It was just that one (mega thick) binder!

Loki caught her hand and softly kissed the pulse line on the inside of her wrist, “Next.”

Hmm … I never went to a live concert but I’ve watched tons of burlesque so – those kinda made up for it, in a way, maybe?” She trailed.

“Inside a champagne glass or an oversized oyster?” He asked, shifting his right leg so it tangled to hers.

“Oh we had everything!” Those shows were glamorous with its classy jazz vibes. It was artful if one could look pass the erotic because it certainly took a lot of effort and talent to perform.
“There was this gorgeous woman, her stage name was Kitty Cupid, Helheim’s best dancer at the
time. She was the one who taught me how to kiss.” She playfully demonstrated a smooch to the
back of her palm and winked at him.

He tilted his head, his lips stretched in a wicked smile, “I need to send her a thank-you note.”

How unbelievably odd is this moment? She questioned herself. To finally able to share your
history with someone, those you kept hidden for the longest time because you thought they were
silly and you were too afraid of another rejection.

It was more than just odd, it was surreal, unreal, she really could not think of a single word to
properly explain the entirety of her thoughts, especially when she caught those deep greens gazing
at her as if she was his early Christmas present.

“Winter over summer.” She quickly added, “The season, the cold air and all that, not the
festivities.” She scrunched her nose in distaste at the last word.

“Really? Why?” Most people he knew preferred the other way around.

“Hmm … I don’t know, I just like the cold better, I mean for one I get to drink a lot of hot cocoa
and we have less chores to do during those months …” She tried to explain, “and the world, it gets
softer, quieter.” Even the trees are deep asleep, waiting for their spring, for a new beginning.

He tightens his holds on her, “Sorry I made you worked late last year.”

“And the year before that too.” She teased.

“And the year before that too.” He parroted gingerly though she could tell he was still smiling.

“If it makes you feel any better, I quite enjoyed it. Working with you was a better option than
spending my Christmas and New Year’s Eve alone - with netflix and pizzas, or Chinese deliveries
sometimes.”

“Did you just - compare me to your cheap boring suppers?” She caught a slight aghast in his tone
and she immediately chortled.

“I just did didn’t I?”

“Was I that horrible?”

“I did say pizza, pizzas aren’t horrible.”

“Cold pizzas are.” He retorted with a too serious face that got her chuckling.

“Was I that horrible?” He pressed on.

She threw him a contemplative look, “Can I be honest? Completely honest?”

"As a bell."

"Ookay - well … let’s see,” Pretending to give the question a thought, she tapped her fingers to her
chin, “I had a serious case of heartburns and migraines because I got so mad of your incessant
nagging, boy - you absolutely weren’t kidding when you said and I quote ‘limitless time slot of a
working hour’. You kept on calling and calling, Miss Lewis this, Miss Lewis that - without any
regards of the time and day. I think I aged twice a normal human being should, I lost my
weight and my decent sleep because when I wasn’t with you, I dreamt of you.” At the smug she
saw about to rise on his face she promptly added, “Not always in the best of ways, mind you.”

“Oh gods,” He squirmed, covering his face with one palm while the other still snaking around her shoulders, “yes I was – I was so much worse than cold pizzas!”

She laughed out loud, “Now you just made me hungry!” Can they get a pizza delivery at this hour?

“I was a total dick. I’m sorry, truly sorry – “ He groaned, dramatically.

“No you’re not.”

“Yes I am and I’m sorry.” He said again, which he repeated for about at least five times more.

“Okay, you were quite a dick, a major dick - now stop saying you’re sorry because it creeps me out!” Because it was never (and she really meant never) a good thing when he said the word back then, oh no, no one would want a sarcastic ‘sorry’ coming out of his smarmy lips because the wrath that followed right after would be ugly.

And they really need to stop mentioning the word ‘dick’ because now she’s imagining his instead of pizza.

“Alright, I’m sorry.” Loki blurted out another as he nuzzled to her hair. “You dreamt of me? Why haven’t we talked of this?” He asked, bewilderedly.

“But of course, out of all the things I’ve said, you just had to caught the part that inflates your ego don’t you?” She rolled her eyes.

“No, no – “ He rolled on top of her, a childlike glee on his face, “this isn’t about that at all, this is a pressing matter. This is important. My fearless Miss Lewis dreamt of me. What was it about?”

She told him of course, better yet, she showed him.

***

The soft azure shifted to a brighter yellow as the early afternoon sun soared higher. Yet the rising day didn’t delude him from what he fought to forget all of these years. Nicholas contacted him late last night, reminding him. He didn't have to really, because Loki is well aware of his course, this long overdue retaliation. Everything that he worked for leads up to this moment. This vengeful ire was one thing that keeps him going. Bitter maybe, but thriving.

Not much longer now. His dreadful waiting will soon be over. His feet are now standing on salvation’s gate. But the thought of her softened him. This woman is without a doubt - a marvel. His days were dark for the world before her embraced him in its cold cradle, all hard and bitter and sharp edges. Until she came along. With fireflies glow her presence burns his soul alight. All of his phantoms, all of the pain he felt before no longer gnarled inside his soul.
‘I don’t need your promises. Can’t we do this one step at a time?’

His blue-eyed goddess uttered her heartfelt request that night and kept her words since. She never asked more of him. Her reservations made him think, it gave him all the more reason to put an end to this old debt. He noticed the change she brought when their worlds collided. She taught him to feel again. Now, he has a heart worth fighting for and by all the gods will he fight for it. He owes this to their future, if he so wishes for one.

To outrun the ticking clock was proven futile, still before the time comes he wanted to stay in her arms, at least for a few hours more.

And so they lingered.

They were lounging inside the hot bubbling crystal rock Baldi after their simple breakfast in bed. Loki ran his fingers along the wet skin of her foot, adoringly, and she let out a gratifying hum in response. Inch by inch his eyes took her in, from her sodden hair cascading softly around her face to that rosy glow on her pale skin. She smiled.

They haven’t talked much about her and the Ritz incident as they did about him the other day yet it still boggled his mind. At one point he did ask whether she wanted to read those files because in it laid the secrets of her mother too. He wasn’t surprised when she declined, said she wanted to hear the truth straight from Geanna’s mouth.

“Are you - still mad? Over what happened back at the hotel.” He asked.

Her eyes widened but her face solemn as she looked at him before tilting her head away, pondering for an answer to this simple yet complicated question.

“No … I guess, I was so angry then,” She huffed, “but now that I think about it, honestly, I can’t bring myself to hate her.” From her face he could see that she was surprised at the new-found epiphany.

“It must be hard … “ She trailed, her fingers randomly toying with the calming water, “to be on her own, at her age and have to deal with all that.” Yet in those though times and short years she managed to leave some fond memories inside her young mind, on how kind and beautiful she was, especially her soothing voice and that one song she sang to chase her bad dreams away.

Without saying a word Loki outstretched his hands around each of her ankle inside the water, softly he massaged the tense muscles up to her calves before going back down, giving her the support he knew she needed.

A short while later, when she was swept away by the smart kneads of his fingers on her skin, he tentatively asked again, “So … you forgave her?”

She laughed nervously, “Well, you won’t be seeing us baking together or me sending her a mother’s day card for sure … but - ”

There was a brief pause before she sighed, “You see, where I grew up, we don’t easily point our fingers to someone. A whore, a wife, a mother, a father, a saint, a sinner, those are just labels. In the end we’re all just people and people make mistakes.” It was never her privilege and sometimes things weren’t as black and white as she thought, there was always something in between. A lost forgotten life tale worth listening.
“I mean, she was so young, who am I to judge? To be in her shoes, I don’t know, I don’t think I can – I mean, can you imagine?” She looked his way with a slight of troubled expression.

“I’m closer to thirty rather than twenty, much older that she was at the time but even now I’m still as clueless as I was then.”

“No you’re not.” He interjected.

“You think?” She snorted, as if she was displeased with herself, “While some people have dreams, admirable dreams - to make this world a better place to live, but me? There was no bigger purpose, all I ever wanted then was a decent living, to escape my past and that was pretty much it.”

“Yours is as good as mine. Living, day-by-day is a struggle within itself, you don’t have to think too much of it. Besides, your purpose brought you to me and that is one thing I can attest as being admirable.”

Darcy feigned a gasp. “Oh my, was this perhaps - a character growth I’m witnessing?” She asked (half) jokingly at his positivity.

“One amazing woman taught me - and you’re not the only fast learner around here.” He shrugged and she replied with blushing cheeks.

“She was right, your mother.” Loki said, suddenly reminiscing the conversation he had with Geanna that day. “… and I don’t think I could handle the situation as well as she did.”

“To live on the run was one thing, but with a baby … ” She added with a light nod.

There was a startling revelation when he heard those words and Loki found himself unable to respond as quickly, because crazy as it may sound to himself - he found that, astoundingly, he could imagine it quite vividly. To be stranded in a life with her and a baby. Their blue-eyed baby, beautiful just like her ...

“Mmmhh yesss, that’s it right there!” She moaned when he hit a tensed spot on her calves and the sound she made chased away his random train of thought.

“Right here?” He repeated the movement with added pressure and answered with another whimper that, within seconds, lit up the flickering tension ablaze.

“What about here?” Loki skimmed higher and higher, along the supple skin of her inner thighs and slowly spread them apart.

“Uh-hum, almost – almost there,” Her teeth sunk into her lower lip as she drank him in.

“What about now?” He purred at her entrance.

“Oh god, yes!”

***

"I'll come back as soon as I can."
That was the last line he said to her. Jaw-droppingly sharp in a fine suit washed in the darkest of blue he strode out of their sanctuary. It was time and none could stop him from finishing what he ought to.

Loki told her, without his assent, Malcolm went on his own way. That cunning man gathered his force and informed the rest of the families of the push-forward meeting. The timing couldn’t be more off for him. The only thing that stands on his advantage is that they’re still going to hold the meeting at Helheim. He knew as everybody else too that it is the only place they all would civilly gather.

Like a broken record she frustratingly pleaded for him to take her along, though logically she knew he would never allow that to happen.

“Hey, hey, look at me. It'll be fine, nothing’s going to happen.” He cupped her jaw, angling her eyes to level his, "Trust me?"

“Will your ‘government-agent’ friend be there as he said he would?” She ran her fingers to the length of his burgundy tie, smoothing the non-existence crease.

“Nicholas will be there.” He assured her with a smile.

“You know you don’t have to do this, just let him finish this whole thing and maybe you can - we can ...” Her words faltered.

“Darling … Darcy darling,” He leaned down and kissed her, deeply, longingly, desperately wanting to steal all her worries away. “It’ll be over before you know it.”

She angled her face, stared straight into his eyes, “Just don’t keep me waiting too long,” She murmured between their kisses, “okay?”

Quietly he hummed in agreement, nibbling her lower lip as he did so.

“Loki ...” Darcy insisted, wanting to hear a solid answer which then he shortly answered with the faintest 'Okay'.

The clock strikes its arms to 5:45PM, almost fifteen minutes after he left. She’s still standing in his empty study, leaning to the wooden desk where he took her before they parted. She could still feel the taste of him on her tongue, his scent blanketed her tingling skin and his voice reverberating in her ears ...

“Oh gods, I want you, I want you” He uttered hoarsely.

He left his suit on the entire time, the front of his pants was the only thing that was undone while she sat there, with her knickers adorning her birthday suit in front of him, her shirt forgotten down the floor. Darcy loved the contrast they were making as he stood between her wide apart legs.

“I think I’m addicted to you Miss Lewis.” He said in a low voice, taking his rock hard length to his hand, wrapped it around his fingers, stroking it within his palm. Repeatedly he teased the engorging head to her covered core. She gazed down and swallowed when she saw the purplish tip was glistening with his pre-cum.
“Apparently you’re not the only one.” She leaned back wantonly, widened her stance and tugged her knickers to the side while her other hand latched to her breast. There couldn’t be a clearer invitation.

The passion was apparent on his face when he saw her, bare and pink, wet and ready for the taking. In one hard push he entered her throbbing heat. For a short second before he started to move, he rest his head on her shoulder, both hands flat against the cold hard wood, reveling the moment, enjoying the way he stretched and filled her completely.

It didn’t take that long before they fell apart in each other’s embrace. Their hot breath, gleaming skin and contended sighs weaved into one.

The ache he branded on her body left her unsettled, because her mind was telling her that there’s something different. The kiss was different. The sex was different. It was rougher, urgent and brimming with desperation, as if he wanted to etch the moment to his soul.

Looking far-out the window Darcy tapped her fingers on the smooth surface, “So you want me to wait right here?” She mumbled to herself, weary and annoyed.

_Hell-to-the-no!_

Swiftly she sprung and ran out of the room. He did say that he was going to stop by at the hospital first, to visit his mother. That meant she still got time to clean up before she went after him. She took a quick shower and after, dressed herself in a simple yet practical green sweater and dark-washed jeans. All the while her thought was running amok with her pacing heart.

It’s been years since the last time she visited Helheim, but time couldn’t chase the imprinted memory out of her head no matter how long. This time, finding him would be easy because she knows her way around the area, every nook and cranny, all those hidden places and shortcuts.

“I knew today won’t be an easy job.”

That exasperated tone erupted right behind her, causing her to jump in fright. She cursed, “Fen! You almost gave me a heart attack!”

It immediately angered her to found him there, guarding her instead of trotting his ass to guard Loki’s, “Why are you here? Weren’t you supposed to be with him?”

“He asked me to stay with you.” The older man said promptly, hands in his jacket pockets.

“I don’t need to be looked after!” She turned from him, leaned down to put on her boots.

“Really? And to where exactly are you going now?”

“I – I “ She stammered.

“Listen Darcy, I know this must be difficult, but I gave him my word, I swore it, with my life, that I will keep you safe – right here.”
What is it with these men and their gusto to keep her safe?! Darcy groaned inwardly. She admired the gesture really, but it still pissed the hell out of her. She clearly told him many times over, that she didn’t need their aides! She took care of herself back then and she sure as heck can take good care of her grown ass now!

Bowing her head, she said quietly, “You don’t understand.”

“You don’t understand … “ She turned to face him while she repeated the line with a crack in her tone.

With her big glassy eyes she looked right at him, “People left Fen, they left me and they never return. I don’t want to sit around picturing that I’d lose him too.”

The silver-haired man was rendered speechless, because he perfectly knew that feeling, that sickening pain of being left behind by those you loved.

“I can’t, can’t lose him, he’s the only one I got.” Her brows furrowed deeper, her lips trembling, “Please … “

She let the first drop of tear fell free on both cheeks as she repeated the last word.

“I’m so sorry, Darcy … but I can’t, these people he’s dealing with – they’re different than your usual business associates.” At that she stepped closer to him and Fen took her in for a hug, a big warm one. He patted her back, like a father would, with words of encouragement.

It lasted for a short minute before the patting suddenly stopped.

Holy crap she didn't - He mumbled a curse, but his realization fell short. It was too late. Fenrir felt a cold blunt tip prodding hard against his ribs.

Yep. Yep she did. She fucking took my effing gun! He dreadfully grunted.

“Take me there.” There was not a quiver in her authoritative tone.

Shit -shit - shit! “Dammit Darcy! Give it back!” He swiftly withdrew.

“I did try to ask nicely.” Wiping the tears off her face, Darcy took a step back with a smile.

“Give it back.” He said again.

“No. Take.me.there.” She jutted her chin stubbornly.

“You’re making this difficult for me you know that?” He pinched the bridge of his nose.

“I know, but I’m not sorry. Can we - cut the crap and go already?”

“He’d kill me.” He shook his head.

She groaned before she dryly added, “Do I really have to tase you again and leave on my own? I kinda need to get to him, preferably before this year ends!”

Putting his pride aside, letting that scenario happens would be a disaster and he knew that this
smart girl had thought about that too.

“Okay fine!” He gave up, “but we’re going to do this my way, you understand?” There was no way he’s going to fare his feet into that place without a preparation, especially with her coming along.

As if I’d say no to that? Darcy’s face brightened as she nodded in eager.

“Good acting. He rubbed it in on you I see.” The man gingerly said to her.

“Well, I wasn’t entirely lying.” She shrugged noncommittally while Fen shook his head as he walked away.

Two minutes later they arrived into the spacious garage, where she thought they would soon depart with one of those sport cars Loki kept inside. She was wrong. Fen didn’t take her there for the ride.

She stood on his side, in front of a far end wall at the back where this breakfront, some sort of a platinum-colored tools cabinet was firmly placed. He swiped his thumb on top of what seemed to her was nothing but steel pad. She was wrong though, it was no regular steel pad. There was a small logo embossed on the corner, it read : Stark Tech.

But isn’t that - what the heck does he keep in there?!

Right after he did that swipe, a robotic female voice greeted them and in the next second the middle panel and the whole cabinet just swooshed aside, giving them enough space to enter. Behind it a small bright room washed in white was waiting, just like those she saw on spy movies and her jaw immediately dropped.

“Sweet Jesus!” Wide eyed she turned her head to him, “and you told me you guys weren’t mobsters?” There were probably enough weaponry to infiltrate a small country inside that hidden room.

“We’re not, you’re watching too many movies.” He stepped inside and promptly took some of the things hoisted on the wall. She followed right behind him. Grumpily he gave her a series of ‘don’t touch that!’ warning while he propped himself.

“Fen, are you out of your mind? You can’t possibly bring any of those to Helheim!” She exclaimed.

“You said you know your way around that place? Sneak us in.” He said nonchalantly.

“Well I do, but –”

“Wear this.” Cutting her protest he handed her a kevlar.

“Okay – but keep those to yourself, I don’t want a gun.” or a trouble with Hel and Heimdal for that matter. She heard stories, unpleasant stories of people who didn’t abide by their law. “Already got my taser right here.” Darcy answered, tapping the device inside her messenger bag.

Weighing her words he looked at her skeptically, “Do not argue with me on this.” And with that he handed her a slim alloyed Remington, “Just take it, as a precaution. Do you know - ”

“I know how to use it.” She answered flatly.

“Why am I not surprised?” He replied as he made his way back to the entrance.

They marched outside to where Fen's black SUV was waiting. She held her breath and climbed
into the vehicle.

This is it.

Letting the reality sunk in, Darcy counted to ten - swallowing the bile she felt rising in her gut since earlier that morning. Fenrir was right beside her, anchoring the key into ignition and off the car took them far.

The moon was high and the road was crammed with blurred lights and traffics. It was the weekend after all. To ease the edge she tried to listen to random songs on the radio but nothing could take her mind off him. It’s been bothering him too, she noticed. That sweet weekend they shared was the calm before the storm. The lighthearted air he projected was all play to keep her from worrying over him. But she wasn't that foolish as to fall into that false sense of security he gave her.

How she wanted to wind the time faster 'til it leaps to tomorrow, with him, safe and sound inside her arms.

Soon, she promised to herself. Soon things will be over and soon - they will be together again. This time 'til forever.

Wait for me Loki. Wait for me.

***

“Rumlow.”

“Yes sir?”

“Get your team on the ready.”

This is the end. The moment he's been anticipating for. A time to put order in chaos, a straight line in a herd of disarray. For safety measure he already sent Nick out of the country. It was easy. All he had to do was drop him a false tip of a certain sighting. A man lost in time. The one he and his team have been desperately looking for.

Pierce spelled the rest of his command to the other line, utter satisfaction on his face. He knew that, like a dog, Rumlow would follow any directive given to him.

A clean swipe. That was what he told the S.T.R.I.K.E's team leader to perform. It was a rather extreme method, he had to admit - but it was necessary for he witnessed too many leeways in his time. That ain't how one's supposed to run the society. He deeply believed that humanity could not be trusted with its own freedom. Tonight he will prove that to those weaklings who doubted his ways. With those scums right under his thumb, exactly where he wanted them to be. There will be no way for them to run. Not this time.
Meanwhile at the other part of the town,

The busy hospital was bustling with crowds passing by. Its sterile scent and the piercing cold air seeped between his pores, chilling him to his spine. With long strides he made his way to where his mother lies and found Thor was already there.

When his gaze fell on him he looked as if he wanted to flattened him with a hug but awkwardly resolved in a short 'you well?' instead.

After some short pleasantries (which he brushed off entirely) they stood in silence, side by side, looking into the large glass window that gave them a clear view of the room she was in. Odin was right at her bedside. The scene was a bit heartbreaking to watch. It was odd to witness the once fearsome one-eyed man looked somewhat vulnerable, so old, tired. The sight reminded him of what Darcy said earlier that day.

Admittedly he forgot sometimes. He forgot that the man they called All-Father was just another person, made of flesh and blood, capable of fear and errors just like the rest of them. Through scorn he overlooked that fact and completely missed what hidden under those layers of hubris and unspoken words.

Snapping him out of his thoughts Thor cleared his throat before he gruffly said to him, "He loves you. Father. He just have a different way of showing it."

Loki ran his fingers through his hair and sneered, "How generous of him, did he ask you to tell me that?"

“‘You know Loki, no matter what you think of him, or me ... we’re still your family. Always will be.”

Loki didn’t answer.

“About what happened that night, when they - when you ... “ The blonde man started to stammer. His rehearsed lines weren’t coming out as easy as he planned them to be.

_He knew too?_ Loki eyed him suspiciously. “That was long ago. Can we _not_ talk about it now?”

“No Loki. You need to understand.” The tone his giving was firm and the determination in his blue eyes conveyed something Loki never saw before.

“‘Oh I do, quite perfectly.” He replied derisively.

“I’m not saying this in spite of reason.” Because he knew none could tinker one's pain, but this he must tell him. Not for their father’s sake, but for Loki's. In a hard way he came to learn that pride and hatred would never get you anywhere. Regrets are the heaviest burden a person could carry.

As Frigga told them, lives passed by in a blink of an eye and the last thing you wanted was to spend yours in a constant abhorrence and let it slip away. “- but Loki, Father didn’t abandon you.”
Thor exclaimed and before Loki blurted another malicious retort he shunned him,

“No, you listen, listen to me well brother …”

And for the first time since a long while, he did. Loki listened to what his brother had to say. He kept his silence throughout the entire time. A sense of pride awashed his chest to found the man had grew taller than he ever gave him credit for. Jane Foster did a really good job in straightening him.

With a knowing smile and a warm pat of his huge hand on his shoulder, Thor nudged at him to come into the room and greet their parents, “Go, they’ve been waiting for you.”

Before his mind caught up with his next action Loki pulled his brother in for a brief hug.

That was the only thing Thor needed as he rounded his hands tight to welcome this rare affection, huge grin on his kind face, "It’s good to have you back."

"You too," Loki said to him, smiling."- brother."

***

Chapter End Notes

She loved to watched Ancient "Aliens" *nudge-nudge-wink-wink* okay that was lame, I thought it'd be kinda funny since he's a space alien prince in canon :p Moving along now!

The suit for this chapter's pornspiration is:
I cannot believe this ... we have only two more chapters to go before we say goodbye to these lovesick fools!!! Aghh I'm so nervous!!!

This chapter tied up Loki's hatred for Odin. Not just because Thor told him what really happened that night but he came to term with his own understanding. To see things from other's perspective, like Darcy's. Though I did not mean to right the wrong Odin had done, what happened there was simply a moment of clarity on Loki's side, being the bigger man and let bygones be bygones. Because sometimes you can't do anything about what happened in the past, like what Darcy's aunt said a few chapters ago, 'if you can't change it, don't let it change you'. This was one of those moments. None of them can turn back the time, they just have to let it go. And he did. I'm a proud mama.

Aaand I may or may not wrote Thor's point of view based on Tom's words of wisdom about haters and hatred in general (negative energy always costs in the end). Sue me.

Anyway, I hope you loved it and incase you did (yay!) can I encourage you to
encourage me by spending another second to press that kudos button (yup right there) or leave a comment, a gif - I'm not really that picky.

The two final chapters will come in pair, maybe a week apart from each other to round things better. But since I have a muggle duty that is waiting for me to attend I'm gonna have to fly out of town for a week or so - which means ... more waiting for you before I post them.

Btw those stuffs she likes, they're my personal fave too, including Tsoukalos and the rest of them gang - yep. So when Loki said 'You're a nerd' and she taunted him right back, they didn't mean those in a condescending way, on the contrary, they thought the other was being an adorable little shit.

Thank you for reading you beautiful people you! Have a good night/day!
A Winter's Tale

Chapter Summary

I love you, Darcy.

Chapter Notes

Sorry for the delay (I stewed over this for many nights and days), now in return, I wrote this monstrous chapter just for you (pardon my errors though). Here we go! Our final two chapters ♥ Trust me on this, k?

Enjoy darlings!
xxoo

* Trigger warnings for violence, mention of abuse, usage of drugs and more gore and violence.
* Watch out for more cameos ;) it ain't a proper marvel movie story without them (esp. this dude)!
* Here, have my sorry in advance (this is what he wears at the meeting, thank you GQ) :(
The Borson’s City Hospital’s ER was having quite a busy time tonight, not that it was ever tranquil nor quiet, not in a city that never sleeps.

There was a distant roar of thunder outside when the first Medevac screeched to a stop. The panic screaming of people followed after.

With a loud bang a gurney rushed through the medical double doors. About a dozen of doctors and nurses flanked it in with apparent distress painted on their faces.

“Clear the way! Clear the way!” They shouted.

“What’s the status?” The resident doctor asked.

“Multiple GSW. Hypovolemic shock, patient is unresponsive.” One of them answered, a young intern, briskly looking down at the horrific crimson poured all over the pearly floor, her pale freckled face made a stark contrast with the gory sight.

“Page Doctor Ross!” The burly man in his gold rimless glasses commanded to the head nurse.

“Damn it chief! Patient’s bleeding out, we need to hurry!” Another doctor reported exasperatedly, his expression was saying more than he would admit.

“Prepare the OR - now!”

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Helheim, three hours earlier

Darcy brushed her gaze from left to right. Setting her feet back at the district didn’t feel like coming home. What it felt like was as if she’s entering another world or delving into an old movie.

There was something different in the streets of Helheim that night. Not in terms of order, they stayed the same as she recalled. Flashing fluorescent lights were glimmering in its extravagant decadence with the merry sound of people's jolly laughter and the scent of heavy perfume in the crisp air. It was a kingdom of nighttime pleasure after all, where people united in the glory of their sins. But beneath those layers on its surface, she could taste it. A sense of disturbing stillness that was clouding the place, and those black cars they passed by, just made it worse. Those lining vehicles were without a doubt, patiently waiting for their masters. Neatly they parked two lanes before the infamous Orchard St. (Darcy heard stories when she was a kid, one of many said the street was paved over an 1700's all female graveyard).

The route she took was the less frightening one. This other entrance was almost unknown compared to the Orchard because it was used only by the workers, therefore, lesser guards. From there Darcy lead their way in easily, everyone was welcome there anyway (maybe they thought Fen was her handler, or something) – no magic tricks needed.

Her companion got an awful lot quieter as they got here, as if he was preparing himself to face the
worse. Ten minutes of nerve-wrecking silence later they arrived at a narrower street in front of an old abandoned building on the nether part of the district. She instructed Fen to park the SUV there. Together they walked quietly though not quickly as not to draw unwanted attention to them.

Now came the hard part. On how to get inside Helena’s main quarter, which, Darcy was certain is where the meeting would take place. The Pantheon. That was one building she never entered when she was a resident because it was reserved for those higher-ups. The biggest spenders. She heard the previous mayor used to entertain his friends from the capital up there.

Luckily, true to her words, she knew her way around the place. Though in this case it would be more proper to say that she knew someone who ran the underground and that was exactly where she’s heading, to the caretaker, Helena’s trusted ol’ pet.

Helena gave the man a place to live not far from the Pantheon, so he could go to work day in day out by foot. From the outside, the small townhouse looked only slightly different than before. It stood sturdier with the new wooden panels over its front windows and it also had been repainted into a brighter shade of dune. The spare key however, remained at the same hiding spot as it was before. Under the geranium pot.

“Pap!” She heartily called out as she entered through the front door, Fen quietly in tow.

The cigarette on his hand left untouched as a figure swiftly turned from his kitchen island. The silver-haired man’s mouth went gaping for a split second before he blurted out, “Jesus H. Christ … you’r that little brat, Darcy - Lewis?”

“Goddamn I am!” Darcy sprang to properly greet the old man in a tight hug.

A lot of things changed as the time passed. People come and go and so was the memory of them, but no matter how long nor far - those precious ones you hold dear always lingered. For her, he was one of them. Pap looked as if he didn't age a single day since she last saw him and he still gave the biggest embrace, the one that made you feel like you belonged (and he also still smelled a lot like tobacco).

“How’r ya pap?” She never thought how much she missed him until they meet again.

“I’m not dead yet if that’s whatcha askin’.” He chuckled, patting her back, “God, you’ve grown well!”

“Yeah, I know right?” She shrugged, grinning wide.

His misty gaze stayed on her face before he said, “I miss her, Kat – she’s a good one, your aunt.” There was an apologetic tone trapped in his voice, she noticed why. That night when her aunt passed, he wasn’t there. She didn’t blame him, it wasn’t as if the goddess Death made a warning before she came.

Darcy hummed in agreement before she solemnly replied, “Me too.”

“So what ’r you doing here? Bet not because you’ve been missing dear old me.” He asked in good humor, pulling apart from the hug to take a good look at her once more. It still felt unreal for him to be seeing her again in this place.

“Don’t be silly, of course I miss you … it’s been too long.” She earnestly said.
Tucking one hand inside his jacket pocket he gave her a knowing look, “I can read you better than that princess.”

She smiled impishly at the endearment, “Oh by the way, almost forgot. I’m here with a friend.” Darcy motioned with her thumb, pointing to Fen.

Taking it as a cue for him to step in, Fenrir moved forward to shake the other man’s hand with a firm grip and a rather stoic face.

“Stan.” The old man said, scrutinizing his gaze, sizing him through his tinted spectacles, “Do I know you from somewhere?”

“Fenrir,” Fen replied politely, "No, I do not believe so sir."

“Pap - listen, I need a favor from you.” She closed her fingers to his arm.

“Oh, here we go.” Rolling his eyes he feigned a tired sigh as he ran his fingers through the last greys atop his head, “What is it? What d'ya want?”

"Well if you insist..." Darcy explained in short length of what happened and how she ended up needing his help.

Not everything of course, because at one point Stan asked her to stop and spare him from all the details, said he didn’t want to get into more trouble that he already is. There was another thing that Darcy didn’t mention. The armory they hid under their clothes. Precautions – Fen said. That was it. They weren’t going to use those anyway, she optimistically thought.

“We won’t cause any disturbance, I promise. I just - I want to see him,” She licked her lips nervously, “to see if he’s alright.”

“I s'ppose this is love then Miss Lewis?” He grinned, teasing her. Throughout knowing this strong-headed girl never once he saw her sharing a special relationship with a boy (or a girl) and he knew exactly why. There was nothing for a young girl like her to look up to in a place where everything came with a price-tag. That was why her request made him extremely curious as to see whom made her go to such a length.

She shrugged it off lightly, trying not to blush, “Something like that.”

It took a lot of pleading to convince Stan but Darcy knew that in the end, he wouldn’t stand a chance against her puppy-eyes and pouting lips. He always had a soft spot for her. Stan said to her one lonely New Year’s Eve many years ago, that she reminded him of his grandson (yep).

“No pictures, no taping, no barging in, no nothing – you two got that?” He spelled his terms repeatedly, muttering 'can’t believe I’m doin’ this!' under his breath.

“I knew I can count on you.” She winked before landing her pecks on Stan's cheeks.

A heavy sighed of defeat left his lips as he turned and head towards his closet. He fetched something out of it and handed them over to Darcy. She unfolded them and found that those were a pair of the most drab-looking uniform she ever saw. On its chest embroidered: _electrician_.

They took them without a question and went to change in turns at his bathroom. In all seriousness, Fen kinda looked convincing in his though Darcy’s new camel washed attire was one size too big for her frame. He shot her a death glare when she proposed a _welfie_ as a memento (just to tease him really).
Stan snatched a bunch of keys gathered in a circular loop from his drawer before he herded them through the underground pass. As they walked in line, he entertained her with stories of some of the ‘workers’ who left and got on with their new life and she was beyond glad to hear that those women made it out. Kitty Cupid included.

Marched steps echoed as their feet stomping down the grimy floor. The nausea she felt earlier roiled anew, it was too damp and stuffy down there.

Thankfully the passage got brighter as they got closer to their destination. They were right under the grand hallways, not much longer - Stan told them.

“You okay?” Fen asked, studying her wan complexion.

“I’m fine.” She waved her hand and kept on going. The faster they get out of there, the better.

Less than ten minutes later a solid black door was waiting at the end of the long tunnel. The old man fetched those keys from inside his vest. Frolicking clinks resounded from those bumping steels as he sorted them one by one before his callused fingers stopped on a vintage key, burnt in gold with slim long stem and a bow on the top.

“Welcome to the Pantheon.” Stan said as he opened the door wide.

Fen and Darcy couldn’t see quite clearly at first because as they stepped inside the threshold, immediate brightness flooded their vision. They had to blink several times to adjust their eyes to their new surrounding.

Quietly, they tread behind Stan’s steady gait. She got no time to admire how beautiful the modern Gothic architecture was because cold sweat was already dampening her palms and her heart was beating painfully against her rib-cage (though she tried not to let her restlessness show).

This odd perturbing feeling that’s been bothering her was relentless, she couldn’t shake it off. It felt like he was slipping further and further away and the only thing she could think of doing was to hold on, tighter, closer. That was what made her mind to come chasing after him in the first place. She just wished they weren’t too late. Or get caught. She couldn’t decide which would be worse.

Naturally this posh place was heavily guarded and for one, wearing the canvas overall proved to be a lot of help though just to be safe, they still opted to proceed carefully behind the shadows and stay as far as possible from the guards and the cameras along their way to the surveillance room (including hiding inside the janitor’s closet). They were lucky, Stan told them, because unlike the usual – most of Helena’s private guards were now concentrated at the main entrance and the designated floor.

“This is it.” He half whispered though there was no one else but the three of them in the hallway. He pointed to a door at the corner. Obviously, there will be some men guarding inside too and that’s where Fen comes in (her decision to take an ex-soldier did have its perks).

In fear of getting his face recognized by the men, Stan decided to wait outside until Fen cleared the
precinct. Without a word, Fen took charge. The other stepped back to give him space. Slowly he turned the knob and threw them a once over, which Stan answered with a jerk of his head. Fen went inside and she followed three seconds behind him, taser in her hand.

To her surprise, not five minutes and three blackout guards later - he got the three of them in without a fuss and relocked the door behind them. The scene happened in a flash (she didn’t even have the time to lift her taser). It was the first time Darcy saw Fenrir in action and it was safe to say that she was blown away. His movement was fast and efficient, attacking those men’s pressure points without wasting his own energy.

Afterwards, they tied the limped men’s hands and feet with some cable ties she found inside a drawer. They gagged their mouths too and blindfolded their eyes before depositing them into a large cabinet across the surveillance panel.

Stan already moved towards the operating desk. He then pointed out to one of the screens, “Bottom left.”

At that, Darcy immediately stood to his left, with Fen right next to her.

“The basement parlor?” Darcy asked confusedly, “But I thought they were gathering at the top.”

“Nah, too dangerous.” Stan shook his head, the higher the spot the easier for them to be targeted from afar.

Darcy honestly doubted that those people knew what the true meaning of the word ‘dangerous’ was, but she nodded in agreement anyway and kept her focus on the look out, from one face to the next.

There! Her widened eyes immediately spotted him.

It was never a task to identify him from mass of people let alone a group of men and women in a closed room. She just had to follow where the attention was aimed at and there he was. Always so calm and collected, with danger on his eyes and that smug not-really-a-smile on his face.

“One hour and not a minute more.” Stan reminded them as he took a seat nearby.

Taking a deep breath, Darcy promptly nodded again. She narrowed her eyes to get a better view of the scene inside the small screen.

From the look of things it seemed like he just got there because he was still standing in front of these majestic designed doors carved with a huge intricate carving of a tree with some old runes on its trunk (the gnarling roots reminded her a lot on that spooky tree in Sleepy Hollow – that she watched at least thrice, for obvious reasons), while the other was already ensconced in their mauve leather chairs, gathering around the monstrous rectangle oak table.

Those little wings in her heart fluttered and soared at seeing him. He looked ridiculously dapper, razor-blade sharp in his double-breasted Armani pinstripe suit. With elegance and grace he alone could muster, he walked. The cashmere blend overcoat he draped over his shoulders swayed in tandem to his steps. Jordy, with his usual placid face and two other equally stoic men, were right behind him. At the empty far end chair he stopped. He took off the overcoat before casually deposited himself to the leather seat.

“Well – well … I see everyone’s here.” She heard him say and a man in a grey suit at Loki’s
opposite direction abruptly stood up. Seemingly surprised to see him there.

“Loki.” The man said, his eyes darken and the short greeting gritted through his teeth like it was the hardest thing for him to utter.

“Ain’t this awkward Malcolm?” Loki unceremoniously waved his hand to the room, “I must say, I really felt quite distressed at not receiving an invitation.” He ‘innocently’ added.

One by one she heard the rest of the people there, all strangers to her eyes, addressed him with a formal greet and he nodded back at them.

“I – we thought you were otherwise engaged, we didn’t want to impose – “ The grey suited man answered with a forced smile and a chilling glare in his eyes. He eased back to his seat, seemingly more collected than his earlier reaction. His hatched-face and cement-like eyes were sly as a snake.

“Ah did you?” Loki mocked him.

It was obvious to her and anyone who’s watching, that the two hated each other. The electrifying tension in the air between them was very hard to miss.

“Malcolm.” Fen told her, “Not a friend.”

“Figured.” She replied, not taking her eyes off the scene. Suddenly she noticed that someone was missing, "Helena, she's not in there."

Stan shook his head, "This isn't her fight kid, she wins either way."

"Can't argue that." She said as she crossed her hands and rested them over the desk.

Inside the screen she heard Malcolm cleared his throat - as if someone just poisoned his tea.

“You’re right on time. We were - just getting started.” He said.

“Carry on then, we don’t have all night.” Loki retorted.

“But of course.” Another tight smile appeared on Malcolm’s face, “I’m glad to have you here, this way we can straighten things out between us.”

Like he owned the place, Loki leant back. He rested both hands on the armchair, a smirk on his face, “I’m sure we will Malcolm.”

“Loki did that to him didn’t he?” Darcy suddenly realized. It wasn’t that hard to decipher since the evidences were already there. The fading bruise she saw brandishing Loki’s knuckles when she found him back at the ranch, matched those blackened eye and raw-looking line of stitches over Malcolm’s temple and right jaw.

Being a loyal minion that he is, Fen only answered her with a vague shrug and told her to keep her eyes on the screen rather than trying to pry her nose in foreign waters.

Someone’s still in a sour mood, Darcy glanced sideways at him. She definitely have to make this
up to him later. Maybe a cup of good coffee (with three dumps and extra milk, because unlike his face, Fen loves his coffee sweet) could help him rub the memory of being hi-jacked by a girl he was supposed to look after off his head. Maybe.

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The amber liquid was spreading the scent of bergamot subtly on his tongue, just the way he liked it. Slowly, soaking in the warmth, he took another sip. His mind was thinking back to what Thor told him prior to this meeting, about the reason and what really happened to those men responsible for his kidnapping.

Things were really not what they seemed. Through the suspiciously lacked of leads and evidence he tried to gather for years, he concluded that the stretched-thin truth could only lie in one person, he just didn't expect for it to come from Thor.

As usual his suspicions didn't drift too far-off the mark because he was right about two things. Firstly, on whom was the culprit behind the action (it was indeed those giants from the North region. They did it out of revenge, to blackmail the All-Father). Secondly, on whom was responsible for their disappearance afterwards. It was none other than Odin himself. He was trying to bury the fault in his shame. The fact that once he had resolved as low as he did when he made a deal with the devil and it had caused him more than he bargained for. The lost of a brother and of a son.

Now those men Loki was looking for - were no longer existed. Titan delivered his job, splendidly. Without mercy, he annihilated every single one of those scums present on the ground that night right after Frigga and her men took Loki away. The remaining of their gang - dispersed and since were too scared to reveal the tragic end. Years after the incident their leader came into the manor to seek retaliation. He carried rage in his steps, a silver glock in his jacket, unbeknown to himself that he was merely marching towards his own death. To date, the grim was still crimson in Loki’s head, it was something he didn't think he would soon forget.

Nevertheless, the answers Thor brought had put a long overdue end to another chapter to his book. Darcy was right when she insinuated that he didn’t have to fight for Nicholas no more. He could just disappear for a while, let this matter slide off his hands.

If only.

How easier things would be, he sighed, setting down the china to its saucer. If he was as despicable as people thought of him, that he was incapable of feeling, that he didn’t give a single fuck to his promises or to anyone but his own purpose.

Unfortunately the truth was far from it, because he put honor to his words. And what was worse, or maybe even idiotic in this case, he also - cared. In fact Odin once said that he cared too much for his own good. It was his biggest flaw, he told him that windy afternoon.

Putting his glasses down, Odin suddenly turned his attention towards him. Loki was silently reading inside Odin’s huge study (he loved the spot by the spacious bay window). He couldn’t
“People are evil. They’re the real monsters that feed from one’s kind heart. Do not let yours show. Keep it to yourself, you understand Loki?”

To be honest, as a seven years old he was too young to comprehend what those words actually meant. Though somehow that subtle warning left an impression to his soul and through many disappointments in the coming years, in the end he came to learn that Odin was right all along.

Therefore he hid it, as best as he could. It was hard at first, but he was nothing if not a fast learner. In no time he came to terms with it, mastered it even. Smoothly hiding behind fake smiles, clever words and even cleverer masks. Never letting people read more than he allowed them to, because weaknesses as he saw it, no matter how small, were not acceptable (another life lesson he learned from the old man).

Loki couldn’t have that. He was always ambitious, he wanted to be more than great, to be invincible so that he could protect those people around him, to keep them safe and far from those evils Odin told him about.

He knew there was one sure way to achieve it, through knowledge. With it he gained the wisdom and power his adolescent self was lacking, the wisdom to control the power, to manipulate and mold them into his will. Because though Odin had managed to secure the streets for more than a decade, with the passing years, came a new wave of people. Younger, smarter packs with bigger appetites and they of course, were more evil and corrupt than their predecessors.

That was why Loki chose to stay, because it’s imperative for him to put an end to this ticking time bomb. A time bomb that lately, wasn’t just aimed at the city but to those he loved as well.

Abandoning his wandering thought, Loki let his eyes swept the room, taking in the rare sight. It was a full house, all sixteen of them (only two allowed to represent each house) were seating next to each other, randomly checking a designated tablet that was lying in front of them (personal gadgets were confiscated on arrival). Those people were all distinctive in their colourings, features and accents but their thirst for greed and gold had brought them together, like a pack of wolves dressed in sheep's wools and finery flocking on a prairie.

The dark, almost sultry pieces from Rachmaninoff were fleeting faintly in the background and some tea and fine wine had been served. Everyone was civil and Malcolm was the only one who looked like he was sitting on a spiked chair. It was almost too amusing to watch but the night was getting late and from the face of the standing clock, they already sat there for more than twenty minutes since the meeting started. If all Nicholas wanted was evidence, they got about enough because there was a hidden bug, not bigger than his buttons, seamed inside his jacket to record their every conversation. He ought to end this, adjourned the meeting and come home. The sooner the better. She must be waiting, he didn't want to keep her waiting in distress.

“The first shipping will ashore in two nights time.” Loki jerked his head, signaling to one of his men.
A second later a beautiful slim brunette wearing a sleek black suit and a pair of tight straight pants that accentuate her long legs made an entrance, a silver tray on her hands. On it lays the smallest clear plastic sachets, lining neatly, with white powders in them.

“As promised, the best quality in the market,” He exclaimed, “and this one’s on me.”

The woman rounded the table to circulate the goods. Her flat heels were the only sound aside from his voice, “A big city we got here, I’m not petty nor am I ungrateful, because this long peace we have - is a mutual effort and I humbly respect that.”

The brunette put on a straight face. She didn’t even make an eye contact towards him or anyone else as she finished her task and went out of the room as silent as she walked in. He remembered her name, Maria Hill. She was one of Nicholas’ agents. He never met her before but Nicholas sent her details to his email just the other night.

“Do tell Mr. Odinson,” A sable-haired woman asked, a cigarette on her hand, her pointy manicures glinting under the lights.

“To what extent are you going to show this respect of yours to us?” Her hazel eyes focused on his movement. She blew out once, fog of smoke clouding her forbidding expression.

“My offer - Miss Oyama,” Loki leant his elbows on the table, shifting his gaze away from the sickening scene where those people snorted the powder straight from the table's smooth surface.

“25% margin with a piece of block for everyone in equal share. As I’ve allotted in the blueprint.” He snapped his finger to Jordy, who swiftly clicked on his laptop, sending emails to each of the meeting attendees.

Collective alerts immediately resounding from their tablets and Loki gave them time to take a good look at the attachments before he said, “Another 5% for those who are willing and qualified enough to take care of the distribution.” His eyes scoured the others.

“Twenty-five? That’s all we got?” Asked a middle aged blonde-haired man they all knew as the Bankir (these people have the weirdest nicknames, he wondered if they picked them up themselves). Just like his well-tailored suit, his accent was impeccably English though it was clear he wasn’t.

“This is fuckin’ bullshit!” Another attendee exclaimed his dissatisfaction at Loki’s numbers.

They were murmuring towards each other, some whispering to their kin, the words ‘nonsense’ and ‘raw deal’ came to his ears. Still, they calculated his offer, comparing it to the goods they had tasted. It was a difficult bargain.

“Take it or leave it. That’s my final offer.” Loki shrugged nonchalantly.

Loki glanced to his side, towards the elderly woman, looking excellent in her gold and black qi-pao, her hand was holding on to a dragon carved walking cane. Mrs. Wang. He considered himself to be lucky to score a deal with her family two months back. She was a key element to tip the balance off the table, because the goods Maria Hill distributed, those were all hers, and as he told those people, those shits got the highest quality in the market. For that trade all she asked for was the future of her grandchildren. “A new beginning, a clean slate” – she said. It was a fair request that resonated with his own.

“I wonder,” A burly bald man interrupted, “- what makes you think we’re just going to comply to your kind offer?”
“Excellent question Mr. Fisks.” He reached inside his jacket pocket, fetching a slim cigarette and one of his henchmen quickly lit the outstretched tip. Loki knew that, just like the rest of the people there, adding the Odinsons into his list of concerns was the last thing on Fisk’s mind because from the rumors he heard, the man obviously couldn’t manage to secure his own turf.

“I’m sure none of us really want a full-scale chaos roaming the streets – just like back in the days.” He took a deep breath before he puffed the smoke from the corner of his lips.

“It would be too bothersome - don’t you think? To repeat a history, those red ledgers we all desperately wanted to bury.” There was not a sound after he left the warning hung in the air. Those people knew he wasn’t only referring to the horror and the gore. It was the whole records Odin kept, filled with traces of bad blood they left behind.

“Listen boy, if that’s what you called a threat I - “

Loki tsk-tsk-ed at him, cutting his words, “Old man, I assure you, that was definitely not a threat -”

He exhaled, slowly, making an eye contact to everyone in turns.

“Because you see, unlike my father, I –“ He paused, a manic chuckled flew from his curved lip, “my rationality and mercy are rather lacking.”

His jaw twitched. His lips were pulled in a straight line. The intimidating expression painted on his face turned darker, grimmer. He jammed the lit cigarette down the wooden surface and twisted it between his fingers as he said, “Shall we decide to go on our different ways, in short, another war. I’m afraid the result wouldn’t be as – sightly.”

There was a finality in his tone but none of them got the chance to act towards his open threat, even Malcolm whose mouth was angrily gaping like a goldfish, because the electricity abruptly went off, stealing all source of lights from the room.

This certainly wasn’t part of the plan, his body went rigidly still. It was almost too peaceful outside, why didn’t he notice that before? There was obviously a breach and the sudden bang from the door confirmed his fear all the more.

Did someone blew his cover? Loki didn’t get the time to think it through though. What he heard next was the loud crash on the doors to force them open, followed with heavy footsteps marching inside. They brought that thick scent of gun residue along with them.

A sudden sonic boom exploded and a heated shockwave traveled passed him. Loki saw the spark from the tip of the barrel. It zinged right to his left and made his ears rang from the deafening sound it made when it flew by.

Something wet and warm splattered to the side of his face in the next second. The prickling thick liquid alerted his brain and Loki intuitively ducked sideways before Jordy had the chance to push him out of harms way.

On all four he was on the floor. His heart was pounding, there was a gash (the china) on his palm but he forced his hand to reach for his gun that he strapped safely around his ankle. That was most probably a clean head-shot, he thought, because the victim, that greedy old man Njord, wasn’t even reacting nor making a sound as his lifeless body flopped down to the ground.

A wave of hysteria erupted and those people quickly scattered from their seats. Following his instinct, Loki overturned the huge desk with a strong push of his hands and once it was doubled over, he ducked behind it with everybody else. Wired in waiting for the next assault, randomly he
rubbed the silencers under his fingertips and realized that this thing wouldn’t stand a chance against those men’s semi-automatic rifles, still he held on it tight.

There were more than ten men, but Loki couldn’t be sure as he couldn’t see them amidst the darkness. There was one thing he was sure of though, that those men weren’t a bunch of amateurs. Their assault was purposeful, focused, tactical. Above all, they managed to breach into the depth of Helheim.

“Freeze!” A female voice hollered with a cock of her gun.

Loki recognized Maria Hill’s commanding voice came from the doors. Again, roughly counting from the sound of steps, she wasn’t there alone.

Of course, the words fell short on those intruders’ ears. They didn’t lower their weapons - instead, they angled their shots towards the coming agents. At this, Loki got to his feet, speedily pushing them as he ran towards a nearby wall, because unlike woods, it would take more effort to turn concrete into splinters. He ran as fast as he could, all the while trying not to let the screaming fest distract his focus off the real problem.

What if those men were sent down here to kill everyone inside the room?

No. That cannot happen, he could not let that happen. There’s a trial waiting to weight their sins and he refused to give those people an easy way out. And death was one of it.

“Jordy get the women out. Get as many as those people out.” Loki whispered to Jordy, their weapons on the ready. The other two men were lining side to side.

“No, I can take care of myself.” He snapped when he saw Jordy was about to begin his protest with a ‘but’, “Get them all out. And if I don’t come out in ten, you can comeback. You guys too.” He said with the tip of his gun pointing towards the other men.

The young man finally nodded and with his new mission, he scoured the darkened room for an alternative exit, he didn’t need to see one to be able to reach it because he had memorized this building’s blueprint inside his head.

Meanwhile, Loki kept his attention to the sound of those armed men, releasing shots when he saw an opening. Adrenaline was rushing through him and his chest was drumming like mad. He licked his lips, trying to analyse, to think. Who are those people? What the fuck is going on?

“How very kind of you. If I didn’t hear it for myself I would’ve think that you were the one that sent them here. To humiliate me further.” The cracked cynical voice startled Loki, but then he noticed whom it belonged. Malcolm. Just like him, the man was in hiding, crouched behind the gap between the meeting room and the back room that lead to the restroom.

“You think that’s why I’m here? To mock you?” Loki asked derisively, under the situation, he was no longer amused. Maybe he should’ve chosen the damn wine over tea.

“Why not? I know it gives you the utmost satisfaction to see me fall.” He replied unevenly, the sound of fear and lost in his tone told Loki that he was just as shock as everybody else at the
unexpected incoming.

Loki scoffed, but he digressed from telling the man that satisfaction was not in his nature, not in his downfall anyway.

“You’re all have been surrounded!” He heard Hill shouted again, harder this time.

Another series of gun cracks was her answer. To avoid any wayward bullets, Loki drove farther back until he bumped his right shoulder to a wooden cabinet.

“Looks like it’s the other way around *missy!*” One of them replied condescendingly before their carbines raining shots towards the Shield’s agents. Evidently Pierce was wrong when he told him that these agents wouldn’t show tonight. What a bull that was, because now his team have to race against the time to wrap the operation before more incomings ruin the entire plan.

“Fuck!” Hill cursed under her breath. Her back was flat against the wall. From her night-vision she could spot that there were still six of them standing while there are only three of her men.

Those people didn’t give her time to rest or even think before they started to fire the riffles. The dark room was trembling. Glasses were breaking and the walls were shattering in an alarming cacophony, their flying debris and dusts rose like colliding smoke. Hill almost thought the storm of bullets would go on forever.

How could she missed the signs? *Dammit!* Though they were short in numbers due to Helena's unwavered decision in not letting more of them in, their team of six that she hand-picked was the best.

Now this ambush had caught them off balance and they got no back up, not when those men had also disarmed Helena’s guards outside that was supposed to be fighting on her side.

Hill found the attack to be highly suspicious. Their movements, their weapons. Those men were far too skilled to be mercenaries and far too organized to be the mobster’s minions.

“Shit! We need to get the lights back on, before they kill those people!” She hissed to Sharon Carter through their earphones.

“Fitz on it mam.” The agent replied, both of them were taking cover behind an opposite wall, “Give him five.”

“We *can’t* afford five more minutes! Do you hear me Fitz?!” She spat. They literally *can’t*. In less than ten minutes those shady men they saw waiting just outside of Helheim would definitely barge through those doors to rescue their bosses and make matter in hand ten times worse.

The sudden blinding lights suggested that Fitz did hear her before she had the chance to utter another curse. Hill and Carter promptly took off their goggles.

Under the lights, the massacre was palpable. Bodies were literally scattered on the bloody floor. Her jaws tighten when she saw those men standing in the middle of the room. The entirety of them were wearing masks and armed to the teeth. Aside from the casualties, those attackers had caught her two other agents. They pointed the tip of their riffles to those agent’s head. She clenched her jaw and tightened her hold around her gun to tamper the trembling outrage.

“Like what you see agent? There’s no point in fighting. Just stay where you are and perhaps we’ll
spare your pretty little head.” The same muffled voice said.

Hill had enough of this misogynist bastard and his terrible Batman's voice. She was about to charge in furiously with all that she had but then a couple of shots exploded and stopped her on her track.

She precisely recalled never asking for backup, not because they didn't need them (because they obviously did) but because one of those assholes hacked and jammed into their communication that made making contact outside this building an impossibility.

Those shots came from behind her back, the entrance, followed with four men marching behind a towering blonde man that she recognized as the oldest Odinson (Hill didn't think it would be possible but that statuesque man was even more toned and muscly than Rogers), his sharp blue eyes were set on the scene before them.

“Drop the guns! NOW!” His deep and rough voice shouted.

The men re-group, backing against each other and when their leader nodded they finally complied to Thor's command and set down the now empty rifles to the ground.

“Thor?” Loki asked in a flabbergasted tone. Slowly, he peeked from where he took cover.

“Aye brother!” The other replied rather too jubilee.

*What the fuck is he doing here?* He couldn't believe his eyes, “Are you mad?!”

“Possibly.” He grinned.

Loki frustratingly banged the back of his head towards the wall and grunted. *Dr. Foster is going to kill this idiot!* He cursed aloud before he begrudgingly came out of his hiding to join Thor and his men.

Thor wide toothy smile welcomed him. Loki decided not to reply him with the same gesture. The man *did* help, there was nothing more to load on his magazine back there and his men were still busy securing some of the people out, nevertheless, Loki hated the fact that his brother had to come to the rescue and endangering his own life in the process.

“It’s over, we know who sent you. Release them!” Hill arched an eyebrow indignantly.

Well, she didn’t actually know per se, but Fury was being fishy when he dropped out of tonight’s plan and instead, took the Quinjet to fly himself and the Captain straight to D.C at the last minute.

“*Carry on without me. I've a personal matter to attend to.*” Fury said.

The thing was - Fury never does personal and he was wearing that annoyed-pissed-off expression of his, which could only mean trouble. Huge one. With what was happening at the moment, she definitely didn’t need a Holmes to deduct the case. Fury knew who was behind all this and he’s going to get them himself.

"I said, release them." Hill repeated with a glower.
Now they stood in even numbers with their attackers. In circles they cornered them, weapons aimed at their direction. Their faces were still hiding under the mask, but their eyes shone with murderous intent and determination. At once she knew that they weren't going to make this easy. These people were steadfast with their mission and they aren't at all affected by the upturn of event.

"As you wish." Replied one man, moving rapidly as he said so. They shoved those agents they held as human shields, the biggest one of them charged in with a swift kick, knocking the gun that was aimed at him before he shifted on his heels and faced with Thor. In the moment of distraction, the others started to fight as well. The close range forced them into a fist-to-fist combat that made it impossible for Hill and Carter to make a clean shot over the brawl - in fear that it would only land in the wrong end.

Hill stood firm, hands steady on her gun. In it there was only one bullet left, guess she'd have to get down and dirty as well. Unquestionably, she set her mark on one particular man.

“Don’t even think about it.” Hill coolly warned him.

“You’re going to shoot me agent?” The man mocked her, knowing full well that she could but wouldn’t.

She held the trigger tight and aimed higher, in between his eyes, “Not. Another. Step.”

The man halted and for a moment there Hill (skeptically) thought he was going to comply and was about to take his mask off because his hand was tugging down his face. Turned out he only took off the goggle and kept the mask in place. In a flash he threw it at her, distracting her vision. Then he sprinted with force, he launched his fist and it landed to her jaw. There were no stars in her eyes but she felt momentarily disoriented. Next he grabbed her by the throat and lifted her off the ground. She tried to fight her way out, her feet were kicking at him, and she hit the back of his head repeatedly with the hand that was still holding on to her only weapon. Ultimately, the tight grip choked the breath out of her and soon she lost her hold on her gun. With both hands she clawed and clawed at him while her vision was getting blurry.

He didn’t stop there, he slammed her down to the floor, repeatedly. She heard a definite crack that sent an electrifying sting along her spine but couldn't care much as the man kept on strangling her until her body can no longer move. He let her go then, thinking that she had lost consciousness. Straightening his posture, he walked over her, wanting to reach for the gun she dropped earlier.

Knowing this, Hill pushed her beaten body into action. Unhindered with the throbbing pain, she swept the man in a low kick towards his ankles, stopping him from his track. He fell on his ass, with a loud thud his back smashed those shards and gray dust over the floor beside her.

Before he recovered, Hill charged her feet and swung them powerfully, repeatedly against his ribcage. He growled, stretching out one hand and caught her by the ankle, taking her down with him.

It was not a smart thing to do, because free style was one of her spades as does street wrestling. She outmaneuvered the sharp jab aimed at her face, instead wrenching his hand before twisting herself on top of him, dead-locking his head between her thighs and flattened it to the ground.

“Let's have a look shall we.” She heard a windswept Carter said. Apparently her fight ended in time with Hill's. Underestimating women as worthy opponents was clearly their fatal mistake.
With the back of her hand Carter wiped traces of blood that wept from a slash in her cheek before reaching down to yank the mask off the man lying motionless under her. Hill did the same, somehow knowing that these people were no stranger.

She was right.

Both agents' faces went taut when they found the ugly truth. Those men, Brock Rumlow and Jack Rollins were the leader and the member of the Strike team which was ironically, an operating elite counter-terrorism unit of Shield.

“You’ve gone too far this time Rumlow.” She could feel the flex and taut from his muscles when she pinned at him harder. His senses were jumping out of tension for getting caught but this time his smart mouth didn’t say a thing even as she and Carter safely cuffed him and Brock together.

The sound of chaos lightened, but around them she could still hear the ramming of fists, the whistle of the wind and impact when skins met. Crackling of bones, hitching of breaths and men gritting through their teeth. All six of them, including her men were still busy with their attackers. Thor growled and charged with his thunderous punches that must’ve felt like sledge-hammer's blows to his opponent’s windpipe - and Loki, quite shockingly, was more than just poise and charisma because he was excellently swift and ruthless with his jabs and comebacks.

In the end their joined effort got those men cornered once again. In total there were a dozen of them, some of them were down along with those bodies, three others were still unconscious and the last four - bruised face Rumlow, disoriented Rollins, Ramirez and (the gigantic) Kurt were now kneeling down the floor, hands cuffed.

“Clean up faster girls!” Carter said, shoving Rumlow’s back with the sole of her boot. Then she murmured with a smug, “My grandmother could do better.”

Dodging over bodies as not to step on them, Hill approached to where the brothers were standing. Thor had his hand around Loki’s shoulders while the latter was still firm with his scowl. Shield definitely owed them big time - especially the latter, because with the assistance of his men, most of tonight's meeting attendees were able to found their safe exit through the vents above the restroom. The lawsuits that will follow later however, was a given.

“Boys, pleasure.” Hill shook hands with them before turning quickly on her heels to exit the room (time was still ticking and a heli-carrier was already waiting). Over her shoulder she said to Loki as she walked out, “Nick will call you.”

That was it.

Was it? Loki felt as though he was in a trance when he watched the agents herd those men one by one. That was the end of his long years of journey to feed his rage. Things that drove his will by day and aguish that coloured his nightmares each night.

The thunder was barking outside, marking the beginning of a downpour, the first that will mark his freedom as a man. Free from his demon and his ghosts. His wings unfettered now, not a shackle bound his feet. He had no more vengeance to hold, no oath to carry. He was free.

In front of him Thor was smiling, teasing him like the old days, like they were just a pair of kids and he felt warm.

"What? And let you have all the fun? Not a chance!” He said.
Thor was smiling.

Loki saw it then, he heard it. “Oh SHIT!” one of the agents said. Then came the movement, right before his eyes, straight behind Thor’s.

Using the weight of his body, the man, the beast that Thor fought with earlier, lunged his shoulder towards his captor and forcefully took the gun that was kept at the holster. With one motion he shot the poor man’s temple and in an instant, red splattered around them like dripping paints and the deafening sound rendered the room in silence.

The gun was still in his hand and Loki noticed that - just like his callous eyes, it was now pointed straight at him. No. At Thor’s back.

Without hesitation, his feet were moving faster than his brain. In a split second his eyes caught the question in Thor’s as he pushed him aside.

Voices grew distant then. The moment flew in fragment of seconds. He pushed him and the other man pulled the trigger. He pushed him and the other man’s slug ruptured through his chest, tearing at his skin like burning iron.

There was a vast absence of air and sound when it exploded though he couldn't feel anything other than the heat around his chest.

Between the rush and the turbulent, a familiar voice caught his attention. Her screaming was floating above the others’ before another shot was fired. Once. Twice, eventually he missed the count as he felt his body pushed and swung backwards like a cut-off kite.

There were more voices shouting, Thor’s, those agents’ and that familiar voice too.

That familiar voice …

“That’s enough mam, that’s enough. We got him, we got him.” Said the female agent as she took the empty gun off the woman’s trembling hand.

“Loki! Loki look at me!” Thor said, there were fright and sorrow to his voice as he held him closer, to keep him straight.

Loki lifted one hand and corded it to his brother’s arm to support himself, wanting to tell him that it was nothing and that he was alright but he couldn’t. With the fading adrenaline those raw wounds started to throb and clawed on his body. He felt as if his lungs were refusing to co-operate and each breath he tried to take only resolved in more agonizing pain.

“Loki!!!”

He heard that voice again. Louder this time as she was getting nearer. It gave him strength to hold on his feet despite.

Then he saw her. He knew it was her voice. He just knew. Her beautiful face flushed pink and her hair was bouncing so lovely behind her back. She called out to him once more, her glistening eyes were bluer than the deep blue sea and in that moment he was home.
He was home. She was his home and he smiled.

***

Loki always heard that at the end, one started to think of where it all started, the things one made, the things one missed. He had come such a long way, he mused inside - when his heartbeat started to decelerate and along with it, so did everything else around him. It felt like he was floating in the ocean of time … endless, ceaseless - with an unseen benevolent force pulling at the bottom of his soul.

Fractions of past times flashed, of little precious moments in random order, of secrets untold, of words unsaid words that used to matter then but no longer now as he stood in the edgeless cliff.

There were familiar faces fading in and out, but the last thing he remembered was her beautiful face and her midnight-blue eyes pouring down on him.

Darcy Lewis. His Darcy, his goddess, his queen …

‘Why are you crying?’ He wanted to ask her but everything started to dim and the words wouldn’t come out.

*Why the fuck the words wouldn’t come out?!* He thought irately - because there were so many things he wanted to say to her.

They were inside a moving vehicle now, he could tell. Faintly, amidst the annoying siren whirring outside, he heard her crying out his name, the words seemed so far away to his ears, as if a solid distance were separating them though he could feel her hands tight on his arm and on his cheek (they were warm, so warm).

*Tell her! Tell her you stupid fool!*

And he tried. He tried and he tried until he finally managed, with the last spark of his fire, to sputtered a line he should’ve say to her a thousand times before,

“I - love you … Dar-cy.”

At the next second, he gave in to the pull and let go … ‘til the abyss-like darkness embraced him in.
Meanwhile at the Borson’s ICU, a woman was gaining her consciousness. Slowly her surroundings intensified. Starting from the cold sterile scent, the steady drops of the IV, the regular beeping from the heart monitor and ... a soft sound of snore at her side. She blinked at that but the room refused to form a solid focus. Then she tried to lift a finger before moving them to reach to her right, to the slumped figure that was resting at her side. In the end she couldn't, so she tried to open up her mouth instead.

“O-din?” Her throat felt sandpaper dry and her voice didn’t sound like her own.

The man suddenly jerked, rousing from his slumber, “Frigga? Frigga! Y-you’re awake?” His voice cracked with elation. He constantly sprang to his feet, his hand lovingly caressed her face.

She parted her lips, trying to speak again but he stopped her, dropping kisses to her temple and her cheeks, “Save your strength sweetheart, I’ll call the doctors.”

Weakly, she shook her head, “I – I want to meet my sons.”

“Later, we’ll call them later.” He withdrew, wanting to reach the intercom but she gripped on tighter to his hand, keeping him in place.

Odin finally ceded to her strong will, he didn’t want to argue with her on her state. He retreated from pressing the red button and took a glass of water by the bedside table instead, “Five minutes then I’ll call them in.”

Frigga nodded, “Are they well?”

He sat back down on the side of the bed, setting the straw to the side of her lips and she took it, “They’re fine. Extremely worried, but fine. They were all here, Thor, Jane, - Loki.”

“How - is he?” She asked for her youngest son after a sip of the soothing water.

“I told you, he’s fine. Nothing to worry about.” He set the glass away. His palm was now patting gently to hers in consolation.

“Then what is it?”

...

“What is what?”

“Odin … you know, the thing about you and Thor –" She sighed, getting sleepy and tired again, "you’re both as subtle as a gun.”

The man shook his head and chuckled, thinking of how much he missed this, missed her. He leant closer to her and twined their fingers together.

“Loki – he found him.” He told her.

During his longer than usual visit, the boy didn’t actually say much. He asked of her, before he asked of him too. Did he sleep enough? Eat well? Odin said yes to both and Loki was too smart to question him further thus he just sat there, at the chair nearby the window, as he used to when he
was a kid, looking at his father, looking at his mother.

There were subtle changes that Odin couldn’t help but caught on. Those hard edges and hidden scorns in the way he used to looked at him, the way he smiled and the way he called him ‘father’ was no longer there. He thought perhaps, he was just imagining it for the lack of sleep he had.

“He found Will.” Odin repeated when he noticed the absence of Frigga’s response because he forgot to mention the name the first time.

Loki’s exact words were short, tentatively he said,

‘Father, I found him’. He paused, fidgeting with his own fingers before he repeated, ‘Your brother, I found him.’

***
Before the city awoke, Darcy roused from her unmade bed where she tossed and turned the whole night away. For more than fifteen minutes she stood under the running hot shower, letting those droplets of water seeped into her pores and her aching bones and muscles.

Afterwards she sat in front of the vanity mirror, for a long moment she stared blankly at it before she snapped herself from the daze. She suddenly felt tired again.

Going back to bed was definitely not an option, not today. So she took the time to leisurely primp herself instead. She did her hair and her make-up impeccably. With the last dab of red on her lips she took a step back and study the result gazing back at her from the reflection. Perfect Dressed in a beautiful knee-length black sheath, she was ready to go.

She knew how much Loki loved the color on her lips and a fine dress that hugged all her curves. Her eyes shifted above the mirror, over the face of the ticking clock and decided that it was time or else she’d be late. She didn’t want to keep him waiting, she thought as she grabbed for the keys and her purse.

***

Things certainly never ended up in the form one’s mind molded them to be. Last night, when she sat alone over the cold hardwood floor, she thought about life. On how it threw her, time and
again, out of her safety net. Her aunt would say that it’s a way to live, to the fullest. It used to be a
good thing that she can cope with. Until it brought a whole new meaning to her, that to live such a
life – she must be willing to die all over again.

The pain inside her heart still throbbed every now and then. Darcy tried to ignore the way it clawed
its horrible venom into her veins. It wasn’t a thing she can’t handle, she determinedly told herself
because this time, as she always did before, she will keep her head high and her feet moving.

Eventually, she had to stop fooling herself, like she did yesterday and the days before that. Those
things that happened were not a nightmare and it’s time for her to face them, straight on.

The drifting scent of roses, carnations and lilies accompanied by the solemn piano tune pulled her
mind off its wandering course. Her ears recognized one song, ‘Over The Rainbow’, though the rest
were lost on her (she bet Loki would know who were the composers).

For a second there, her memories betrayed her by bringing back the sight of him dancing his long
fingers over the ivories back at a place her heart resided, her home. Even only for a short while
maybe, but still - it was home. Their home.

Without a warning the scene soon replaced itself with what happened that night.

“*I - love you … Dar-cy.*”

Razorblades ran through her chest at the recollection of those four short words. She balled her fists,
shut her eyes, the vast space around her started to closing in.

Everything passed by too fast for Darcy to comprehend. The meeting, the small skirmish inside
that cursed room, those screams and …

___

“*Shit! Now what?!*” Darcy immediately asked when the lights suddenly went off.

They were no longer seating in front of the screens because Fen brought the three of them to hide
at the back room when he thought he heard something outside. He was right. Not five minutes
after that a group of men broke into the room, but they went back outside when they saw nothing
and no one.

Seconds were ticking but her question remained unanswered. Fen’s eerie silence was hitting
straight to her jumping nerves.

“*Stay here, I’ll go check.*” Fen said promptly.

“*Like hell I would!*” She insisted, and by then Fen was no longer surprised.

In the end they marched together though they left Stan to wait inside the surveillance room.

There were bodies, dead bodies scattered on the ground on their way down like breadcrumbs
leading them towards their destination. She couldn’t actually see the horror but still felt sick to the bottom of her gut when she walked passed the sticky floor.

The lights abruptly went on again when they arrived at the basement stairs and she sighed with relief. Her heart was still racing but at least now she got her vision back.

When they finally reached the doors she saw him from afar, as usual, towering above everybody else (except for Thor who stood right beside him). She didn't know why or how Thor got there too because as far as she knew, Loki kept this issue to himself.

There were some agents, at least she thought they were because of those uniforms they wore, among the wreckage and the chaos. Before their feet, those perpetrators kneeled in defeat and Fen finally tucked back his gun, he approached to one of the agents, who seemed to know him in return. Darcy's eyes were still fixed on Loki, who didn't seem to notice about her presence just yet.

She was about to call him when the movement happened. The humongous guy, he pushed the agent that was handling him and took his gun.

Her mouth gaped but she made no sound whatsoever as she was in too much shock, witnessing a cold blood murder struck right in front of her eyes.

What happened after was even more horrendous. Her feet were still planted firmly on the ground when the man made his second shot.

_No!

__Loki!

Darcy did not see that coming, nobody did. They didn’t expect that he would aim his gun at Loki. She couldn’t think, she couldn’t breathe but in a split second she went reaching for the Remington Fen gave her.

Her fingers pulled the trigger as she called out his name.

The explosion swallowed her voice and the voices of those people around her. She kept on shooting and shooting out of pure rage and desperation, she might keep on going until the last load left its cold barrel if those agents weren’t there to stop her. She brushed their hold and dropped the weapon without a care. Every atom inside her body thrummed as she ran towards him. For a too short moment there he finally caught a glimpse of her and he smiled. She never felt anything worse in her life. Her heart was breaking and she felt like dying.

Throughout their agonizing journey she stayed with him, up from Helheim to the hospital. Grasping tight on his fingers, trembling. Fear claimed her heart, pricking it with its thorny edge. The pain was unexplainable.

Her cries filled the small cabin when she saw his usually bright, sharp eyes starting to lose their focus. At that moment she noticed that he wasn’t fully aware of the words she uttered to him desperately.
“Loki! Dammit, look at me! Don’t you dare leave me!” She said when she felt it, the exact moment when his hold on her lessened.

Of course, he said nothing in return. There was this familiar endearing tug on the corner of his lips as he weakly smiled at her. His face went ashen white in contrast to the crimson on the side of his lips as he finally said those exact words her heart was yearning to hear.

___

With her leather-gloved fingers Darcy took off the black shade and blankly, looked above. Watching how the enchanting hues shifted under the sun, how the wind chased those cotton-candy clouds hovering high above the peaceful city. Today, she no longer searching for an answer or bellowing a curse, she was just pondering … whether he was looking down at her.

Would he? Could he?

She decided to keep her chances, she knew how much he despised crying women (he said that on their first meeting) that was why she held on, putting up a front that was stronger, braver than how she actually felt.

For once, it wasn’t that hard to hold her tears. It wasn’t that she doesn’t want to, she just found herself no longer able to shed them. For her, unlike this bright and blue memorial morning, her heart and soul were practically empty, dead and gone.

Many times she dreamt of a future, especially since he came into her life, painting it anew. Darcy never told him (maybe she should’ve), but he was included in each and every one of those dreams, in more ways than one but surely sitting on this white wooden chair in the middle of a burial ceremony was not one of it.

Would they do things differently, she wondered, if they knew how imminent his end was?

…

Whatever the answer was no longer matter now. Not when he was already gone and the numbness she felt ever since the moment the doctor pronounced his death was the only thing that lingered.

“Call it.” Dr. Betty Ross said as she lay off her hands from Loki’s limped body over the operating table. She took off her surgical mask, revealing her delicate gorgeous face underneath.

The next sentence spelled by the other doctor was still fresh inside her memory because it felt like someone tore her chest and left it wide open.

“Time of death, 2:13AM.”
Death.

*His* death.

The word even sounded like a foreign language on her tongue. She almost chuckled bitterly though she bit the inside of her cheek to keep it in, it would be most improper or worse, people would think that she had lost her mind.

*Maybe you did,* her inner-self taunted her.

Definitely … maybe.

It was all too unreal for her to process. Time felt like it moved twice its usual pace when she blinked her bleary eyes open again. Dr. Banner and Dr. Foster were there when she awoke, worried painted over their tired faces. They said that she fainted not long after the doctors covered Loki’s body. Honestly, she couldn’t remember. Everything around her was a blur. It was as if she’s been slept walking to this second, starring in a nightmare that refused to fade.

By his family’s request the funeral was kept private and simple, just as he would like it. Including herself there were only twenty other people (she counted). The priest and two young nuns. Three grim looking government agents, Dr. Banner and Dr. Ross, Fen and Jordy all dressed in their black mourning attire, hiding away their sadness behind those dark shades they wore.

Among the attendees she was the only representation allowed to come from the office and the rest was his family and close relative including the company’s legal team (plus one strikingly beautiful brunette that Darcy never saw before).

No media was permitted inside the ceremony but there was a sea of (obligatory) flower arrangements in massive sizes and different spectrum sent by his associates from in and out of the country.

At the front row she could spot his mother, Frigga - looking devastated on her white and silver wheelchair, though just like her, she too didn’t sob. Her husband was standing on her side with pained expression and both his shoulders hunched down. While Thor … *well,* not that she could blame his reaction, but still Darcy was kind of shocked to witness that the man howled and cried harder than any of the women there, especially during his final speech. Dr. Foster told her, on how her husband kept on blaming himself, told everyone that it was all his fault. She was running out of words to soothe him and none would suffice anyway. In the end, Jane could only embrace him, shedding her own tears for the lost of their little brother, all the while trying to take a bit of Thor’s pain away.

It was sweet and heartbreaking, though Darcy was sure Loki would find the scene slightly embarrassing. Slightly.

The round-faced priest’s kind voice brought her attention back to the on-going sermon. He delivered calming words, gentle words but none could make her (and his family) feel better. The verses he uttered felt empty to her ears. He picked a beautiful one from the 1 Thessalonians, she vaguely recalled it from Aunt Kat’s funeral that seemed like a lifetime ago.

Then came the moment where they lowered the wooden casket with his name on it to the ground. She didn’t think it was possible, but her heart sank further and she finally understood why Odin had insisted for a closed casket. To see him laying there in his tux, looking at his pale beautiful face,
sleeping soundless, would end her.

The biggest blow of the day though, came a little later. She didn't think her life could get more absurd but it did. Right after the ceremony ended and people were coming forward to bid their last farewell with placing a single stem of white rose over his final resting place.

Dr. Banner came to her and asked for a private chat. Dr. Ross smiled sympathetically and nodded at her before she left them to talk.

The unusually clean looking doctor (he shaved and quite probably used an actual comb instead of his fingers this time) ushered her to a nearby oak tree. Under its shade he told her that he tried to reach her phone many times, but she never picked them up.

“Could you - stop by my office tomorrow?” He asked rather hopefully.

Sensing the tension Darcy balled her fists and swallowed, steadying herself for whatever (terrible) news he brought. **Was it about father?** She thought.

“If there’s something you need to tell me, you can tell me now.” She told him firmly.

At that he stammered and stumbled with his next words, saying how highly improper the timing was, that maybe they should catch up over coffee or tea instead, he even turned the offer, that he'd stop by at her office, basically he was just trying to reason himself out of having to utter the news right then and there.

“For god’s sake Dr. Banner!” The sounding alarm in her gut kept on telling her that something was awfully wrong. *Dammit!* His nervousness was infectious. Her heart beat unnecessarily faster when she thought she should’ve feel placid, because what could possibly be worse that what's already happened?

“Please – just say it. Please ...” Darcy added a pinch of patience to her tone as she narrowed her eyes at him.

“The thing is … Darcy I can’t - “ He immediately paused when he heard the sharp intake of her breath.

“Okay, okay – alright.” After that he apologized for a couple of times (she rolled her eyes) and fidgeted with his rimmed glasses some more before he finally told her.

Darcy immediately wished he hadn’t.

She really did, because the news he brought startled her to the core and for the first time since days after Loki went away, she cried.

***

“Will.”
His hands that were hovering above his suitcase on the bed halted and he immediately turned at the
mention of his name. William was in the middle of packing his belongings (it wasn’t all that
much). The hospital discharge him that day and he wasn’t expecting anyone would see him off but
the good Doctor Banner (which he already did).

For a few seconds he couldn’t utter a single word because his eyes caught the sight of whom was
standing at the door.

“B-brother?” He hoarsely said the word, his throat felt as tight as his chest.

In hasty steps Odin closed their distance and pulled him in for a hug, patting him on his back
repeatedly. Odin’s body was shaking and so was his.

“You lost a lot of weight.” Odin said to him, his voice sounded shaken still. The shock of this
reunion was mutual so it seemed.

"You lost an eye." He sputtered without thinking (it was the first thing he noticed).

Odin laughed, "Long story."

“And you gained a lot of weight.” He tried to jest, despite.

“Frigga feeds me well.” They share a good laughter and withdrew from the hug. Odin patted him
by the cheek as his smile widened.

Each took another step back to look at the other more intently. Odin was … so old and grey. How
long has it been? Twenty years? Twenty five?

Their family was never a warm one. Not surprisingly with the kind of a man Borson was. A father
so strict and cold, he was barely around for them on daily basis. Maybe that was one of the things
that brought the brothers closer together because despite having different mothers (hence the last
names, Will's mother chose to keep hers), they were inseparable the moment their father took little
William home.

That was until Will met Geanna. She was like a dream from another world – surreal, magical, too
beautiful to be true. Will’ dull life instantly bursting with fireworks, she captivated his every atom
and, gladly, he gave her his all. Sadly, just like the rest of his family, Odin didn’t approve of her
because of her background (or the lack of it). He weighed his options but as many tragic love
stories started, he defied all logic and chose her.

It broke him when he had to leave his brother without saying a goodbye and honestly, Will didn’t
think that they would ever meet again - at least not in this lifetime. It wasn’t that he doesn’t know
how to reach Odin but he was too embarrassed to do so.

Disappointing Geanna took a great deal from his pride and there was never a day passed by
without regretting the cowardly things he did to her, things that eventually broke their family. With
what was left of him, he didn’t want to see the same look of disappointment on Odin’s face or to
share the dread of his current state. A younger brother he used to be so proud of – was now a loser,
defeated by life, the very life which path he chose.
“All these years I tried to look for you, all along not knowing that you were closer than I imagined.” Odin's voice cracked.

“I’m sorry.” Will shifted uneasy eyes towards the window, “I’m sorry for everything.”

Odin shook his head, “It was my fault.”

As brothers, he above everyone else should’ve been there for him and supported Will’s every decision no matter what. Throughout the years Odin thought about it, many times over and came to a conclusion that the blame was mostly his, especially with the bargain he made that cursed night.

“I’ll go save your kid but in return, never, and I mean never look for your brother. Let me handle him.” Titan said.

Odin wasn’t startled at the request. It was his intention to bring those lovers apart. Of course he knew. Odin ran a background check on that woman and knew what her relationship was with Titan.

Titan was a smart man. He didn’t want Will’s stupidly rich family and their money get in the way of claiming back Geanna. He wanted to let Will have the bitter taste of what poverty and having no support felt like, surely a man like him would break (and he was right). Titan promised not to hurt Will, that was all that matter to Odin. Titan would get his woman and a broken hearted Will would come back home, that way Odin could secure both his brother and son in one go.

Little did he know that he had screwed both.

But now, bitter ashes of regrets were futile, he no longer wanted to dwell on their past mistakes and spend more time wasted over what already happened. No. This time he wanted a clean start, including a confession about his sins now that fate had brought them together again. Odin was ready for whatever reaction he would get, he knew that he deserved the worse anyway and if he wanted to make things right, honesty was the only key.

“You’re here now, that’s all that matter.” Odin said in earnest.

“I’m sorry for your loss.” Will told him. He read about Loki’s death from the news, though according to them the cause was a mere ‘fire accident’.

“He was a good kid.” He added.

At the mention of Loki, Odin averted his eye away. The pain of his son’s passing still burnt him in its silent tinder.

“You - knew him?” Asked Odin after a brief pause. Loki didn’t mention anything about actually meeting Will.

“I’ve met him, once.” Will leaned back to sit on the bed behind him and let out a heavy breath before he continued, “He came to me that night, before he visited Frigga.”

“Did he - say something?” Odin inquired, stepping closer to the bedside table.

Will glanced to his brother, contemplating for the right answer, “Among things … he told me to
straight up my fucked up head. Be a better man, a better father for my daughter.”

Odin stared blankly for a split second before he chuckled and said, “That’s him alright. The boy reminded me of you, always had a smart mouth.”

He smiled in agreement, ”Like I said, a good kid.”

“Better than you.” Odin taunted.

“Aye, better than me.” Will replied with a nod. He wasn’t jesting with what he said, because he was well aware that, as a man, even though a lot younger - Loki was truly better, in many ways, than him.

“Listen Will, we have a lot to catch up and I would love to settle you back home, your old room – that is if you don’t have any other places to be?” Odin was thinking to offer Will his old job at the company but this hospital room wasn’t the proper place and time. Maybe later on, over tea.

“I - Frigga … wouldn’t she - “ Will stuttered at the request, “- wouldn’t she mind?”

“You kidding? She’d be delighted to have you back.” Odin patted him by the shoulder.

Words left him for a few seconds but in the end Will finally managed to squeak a short ‘thank you’.

Odin shook his head, “You’d do the same for me. We’re family, what’s mine is yours.”

A family.

To be completely honest, Will forgot. He forgot what it felt like to have a family, to be welcomed, to be apart of something bigger than his broken dreams and warmer than his harsh lonely nights.

Was it possible? That life – perhaps was giving a good for nothing man like him a second chance?

Over the years he never thought, never dare to wish of getting one. It was clear that in the past he’d done a lot of mistakes that he couldn’t erase. It was his punishment and he had learned to accept and live with it - but then suddenly the memory of her bright smiling face greeted him.

“The future”, Geanna said, her rosy cheek rested on his chest and her dainty hands wound around his waist, “- even for a despicable human like us, - the future is always a blank white page.”

They kissed afterwards (oh how they kissed).

At that very moment Will really wanted to break down and cry, something which he hadn’t done in the longest time, but he held it in. Instead to himself he promised that this time he’d paint the page differently. He wouldn’t repeat his errors. To be a better man, like Loki had asked of him.
"Mr. Lewis, if I may say so - you have one amazing daughter. You know she deserves better."

That kid was right. His little princess always had the biggest heart, just like her mother. Unwavering and kind. He knew she didn’t have to take care of him but she did anyway. She might not know it but he noticed those midnight visits when she thought he was asleep. He was a despicable coward. He didn’t have the courage to speak to her, in fear that he’d might say something stupid like a simple sorry – which would anger her because obviously it would sound blatantly shameful and empty coming from someone like him.

Again, Loki was right. She deserved better - and better he will become. Then maybe, just maybe - there will come a time for him to finally face her (and Geanna too) and offer them a proper apology.

One day Darcy, one day.

***

During Loki’s absence, Darcy went back into her old routine. She was starting to get a hang of it but then, these last few days her brain petrified her with its new thought. This wicked little thing kept on saying the nastiest things. That those fond memories of their time together would eventually disappear, that in time, the colors would fade like an old photograph and she would forget him, his eyes, his smile, his lips and they way they kiss.

To date, her longing for his presence torture her still (in fact it gotten worse). He was the first, the last and the only thing on her mind before she fell asleep or when she woke up the next day. She thought of those short moments they spent, filled with the peaceful silence they shared or those words he said, those that made her laugh, those that made her mad. The way he laughed, the way he looked and the way those deep set of green gazed into hers as if she was his dream come true.

Lately she realized that the hardest part of losing him was not just because she’s not ready (she doubted she would ever be). It was because she truly, deeply loves him. Not just the idea of him that fit her molds but his whole being. Not just his beautiful body, but his beautiful soul and the way it captured her own and made it whole. She loves him with all her passion, with compassion and without reasons. Without him now, her body felt more like an empty vessel with a bleeding heart that wouldn’t stop loving.

Pain didn’t begin to cover what she feels. Maybe it would be a lot easier if her life too ended at 2:13AM on that eventful Sunday morning because it sure damn felt like it.

Her days relapsed and a peaceful sleep still refused to visit her nights (more than often she woke up with him visiting her dreams) while the real world outside hers didn’t seem to be affected. Not a bit, not at all. It’s funny how everything turns just fine without him.

On and on this earth kept on turning and took her along with its course and before she knew it a month had passed.

The news never covered a single truth from the actual scene. They reported the incident as an
exploding gas pipe accident that lead to fire. Since then, almost everyone had moved on, as they should be. This bustling city carries on with its busy traffic and blinking lights. Gradually, people no longer speak of him, even people she met at the office. It was as if he was a mere projection of her imagination.

The workloads that didn’t stop pouring were the only good thing that held her sanity together. The traffic at the tower had gotten worse though the office didn’t feel as grim as it was when handled by its previous daunting boss. The workers looked slightly more relaxed, they laughed more too though they didn’t dare do it in front of Thor (he was still gravely mourning).

Despite his grieve though, Thor took charge of almost everything and he did it wonderfully. He even scored a deal with the (in)famous Stark Tech. Next week, he and Dr. Foster will be visiting the C.E.O, Pepper Potts and the brilliant mind behind it all, Anthony Stark at their main office in New York. Darcy met them once, over a brief meeting. It was quite entertaining to watch them together (envious too). The couple complimented each other so well, like a well-rounded yin and yang. The poised and calm Pepper was the exact opposite of her man, who was actually a lot kinder that he would let the world caught on. In that aspect, he kind of reminded her of Loki.

Darcy had a hunch that if only he was still here to meet Mr. Stark, Loki would love (or hate, or both) this boisterous small man with an ego bigger than the Manhattan Island.

A vibration inside her bag momentarily grabbed her attention but she didn’t bother to answer it. She knew whom it was from. Loki’s legal team. They kept on calling her for the past week.

As a young thirty-four, the man left one hell of a fortune. As written on his will, 70% of it will go to several orphanages and also to various of children and youth development programs across the city. She had already arranged all files needed for those transfers to be made. Supposedly her assistance was no longer needed now, but she knew why they kept looking for her.

The reason behind those calls was that the other chunk of 30% is listed under her name (without her knowing). She didn’t want to deal with the fact just yet, so instead, at 5PM sharp she cleaned her station and headed home to her empty old flat.

It’s been more than three weeks since she got back. Staying in his huge-ass place alone got too unbearable. His familiar scent was still there the first night she went home. It was as if the ghost of him was still around. It felt like he was simply everywhere. On his leather chair, inside his office, and mostly on their bed, all over the pillows and on the sheet. It drove her positively insane, because Darcy knew she was better than this. He wouldn’t want her to break, but it was oh-so much easier said than done.

Pissed to be the tragic heroine in a cheap novel, she peeled those damn sheets off, changed them all with a clean set of new ones, but when she was standing by the washing machine – she stopped. Her hands hovered, losing their purpose, refusing to move. She couldn’t bring herself to put them in because she simply didn’t want to wash him away.

When the early sun came up and shone its diamond lights on her through the windows, she digressed. She locked the empty huge house and left.

Darcy never returned since.

The tower’s entrance double doors automatically opened as she passed through them and the chill air immediately pinched the tip of her nose and cheeks. She tightened her trench coat and brought her feet to tread lightly by the pavement to leave the building.
Needing to clear her head, she opted to take a walk back home. She rarely did so because the weather was mostly unfriendly and before, when Loki was still her boss, she usually went home passed curfew.

Randomly, she took a look around, breathing in the surrounding. There was a lot to take in these few weeks. Such as the fact that her father turned out to be Odin’s lost brother. How extremely strange was that?

They met once, one afternoon at the office, on the monthly Monday meeting with the rest of the board members. Luckily Odin had called her (for the first time ever) beforehand so she didn’t spurt on her drink.

“The factory is ten miles away, you won’t get to see him often. But I do hope you won’t find his presence troubling.” He told her over the phone.

Odin also told her that Will refused to stay at the luxury of the Odinson’s manor and instead had insisted to stay at the facility, like many of other employees did.

“I know that I may not be the best person to tell you this but I beg of you,” Odin paused, she heard a brush of breath he sharply exhaled, “- let him try.”

“We don’t get a lot of second chances in life … and time, people - they passed in a blink of an eye.” Frigga was right (as always), regrets are the heaviest burden one could carry. Obviously, Odin couldn't turn back the time, to take back what he did but at least now he realized that it would be much easier to stop creating those mistakes in the first place.

Darcy’s hand gripped on tighter to the phone as they went silent for a long moment. Each knew exactly what and whom Odin was referring to. His voice was slightly breaking when he ended the call with a polite ‘thank you’ and (an awkward) ‘welcome to the family’.

On that meeting, William Lewis, unlike what she recalled of him, was sharp and clean. He looked focused and was ready to work (exactly as what Odin had told her, they stationed him at the R&D department up at the factory).

As usual, when he was sober, he didn’t say much of anything to her. Though there was something in his eyes when she caught them glancing at her. Something she would interpret along the line of ashamed and apologetic altogether.

“Thank you -” The man nervously said when they crossed ways after the meeting was adjourned, “for taking care of me all these years.”

She shrugged.

“I – I hope you don’t mind, Odin offered me the – this job.” He stammered like a fool.

“I don’t mind.” She answered briefly.

The man nodded, randomly ruffling the back of his hair in a nervous gesture. He was still unsure of what to say or do so he thought for now, he better retreat as to not irate her further. He was about to do so, turning on his heels after he said an awkward ‘See you around’, when she called out to him.

“Oh, and - father,”
His steps immediately halted at the word, because never once she called him that even since they met at the hospital four years back.

“Yes?” He turned, his face brightened in different shades of red.

Darcy scrunched her nose and pointed to him, “You might want to lose the tie. Erik, the old technician, he hates posh looking men.”

Was she being too soft? Darcy asked herself, pursing her lips at the thought and she decided that she wouldn’t do it again the next time they meet. She may have agreed to let him try but that didn’t mean she wouldn’t be giving him a difficult time.

A tinge of sudden hunger fluttered in the bottom of her stomach (she got easily and awfully hungry these days). With one hand she palmed her flat abdomen, feeling the nerves bumbling inside. She definitely had to buy something on her way back and her brain knew just the thing she needed.

Forty minutes and a delectable stop by an Italian food truck later, she finally reached home. Her hand was already on the knob when the toe of her nude pumps bumped on a foreign object down the door.

There was a nameless small but slim and tall white linen box lied there. She bent to get a closer look.

Nothing was written on it though there was an envelope attached to it (but it was blank too). She lifted it to take a further inspection.

There was not a single writing in each of its sides and it was light as a feather.

Was this belongs to one of the neighbors?

"Ah Miss Lewis!” A friendly voice called out. It was Ian, the building manager’s son. He was passing across the hallway when he spotted her.

“I hope you don’t mind, I signed the package for you. Mark (their usual delivery guy) said it was urgent.” He added again.

“No, of course, thanks Ian, sorry for the trouble.”

“Nah don’t sweat it.” He and his father actually owed this woman a great deal though Ian promised Mr. Odinson not to tell Miss Lewis about it, because the thing about her boyfriend took care of this building after the robbery at her place was supposed to be a secret. He sent his men to fix the elevator, change the pipes, the wallpapers, he even set them up with new security cameras and secured doors. In short his men re-did everything and now the building stood as good as new (better actually).

The minute Ian left, Darcy walked inside her threshold. Without a reason, the heart she thought was dead began to gallop in full force.

Don’t be stupid Lewis! Her inner-self warned her.
It didn’t help much though. With trembling fingers she closed the door behind her. She tossed her bag and shoes randomly and flopped herself on the floor before the sofa. Swiftly, like she was a kid opening a birthday present, she tugged the silk ribbon and flipped off the lid.

There were two things resting inside and she, without a doubt, recognized the flower. It was the flower. A gorgeous stem of blood rose and another plain envelope with different height was resting right under it.

*Could this be - ? No it can’t be!* Again, she reasoned with herself.

There was only one way to find out.

She unfolded the first envelope and immediately gasped when her eyes rested over the neat handwriting. The palm of her hand found its way to her lips. Her body shivered involuntarily but warmth steadily crept into her cold and winter heart once more.

Slowly, her hand uncovered her lips and with her fingers she gently, carefully touched the inked surface, to those familiar italic curves that she read a million times before adorning the center of the page. With new lit spark in her burning eyes she read it.

*For my one and only,*

*She, who travelled through the shadows with me.*

*My evergreen, ever sun, ever moon.*

*L.*

The icy surface on her heart cracked. They shattered. She cried. She choked on her breath. She laughed.

Darcy kissed the card and took it into her embrace like it was the most precious thing in this world. She knew she probably looked like a loon with a big mess of salts and snots all over her face and she didn’t care, she didn’t fucking care.

After she placed the card on her lap, her hands were racing with her heart to open the other envelope. Hot tears were streaming down her cheeks and parading thoughts dancing inside her mind.

*It was a plane ticket.*
Darcy pulled it out and held it closer, reading it repeatedly to make sure her eyes weren’t trying to trick her.

They weren’t.

It was real.

It was a one-way first class ticket to a foreign place with her name on it and what she thought was his empty promise that night, came tingling like a sweet refrain to her ears,

'Maybe someday I’ll take you to them, to their birthplace, to Bulgaria.'

***

Chapter End Notes

See. I fixed it.

I finished it about four weeks ago but as usual, it gotta go through my re-read/edit/re-read/re-write cycle before I dare to post it (am still scared though).

But did you remember? He mentioned it in the 3rd chapter at their (not) dinner date, when they danced. Yep. Surprised myself with the fact that I actually do have a drawing board for this story lol

And btw, incase you were wondering, Darcy did stop Kurt from shooting at Loki but she did not kill him, the man survived.

Anyways, I’ve been saying this a lot but, terribly sorry for the late update, I got really really busy (but lets skip the boring part that is my life which I’m sure everyone is trying to know) I did say a week, and it turned into three, so from now on I’m not gonna make another promise as it only going to bite me in the ass ;p

Been thinking to keep this one as the last, stand alone instead of two finale chapter but realized it was kind of low of me to keep you hanging much longer with the cliffie from the previous chapter.

So, what do you think? I hope you liked it because now we seriously got one more chapter to go, I feel so conflicted about it bec I love writing it so much.
For each and every one of you beautiful readers that have been following this story since the very start, I deeply thank you. Have a great night/day!

P.S:
The note he wrote was inspired from Pablo Neruda's sonnet LXXXI and of course, from Tom reciting poetries in the LoveBook app:
my go-to audio porn
NEXT STOP : SMUTFEST
Chapter Summary

"I love you Darcy Lewis, I love you, I love you."

Chapter Notes

Hey you, yes you - how about we play the 'how many smut scene can noona squish into one chapter' game?

Enjoys darlings,
xxoo

P.S. :
Their meeting scene took place in Bulgaria. I haven't been to Bulgaria. If so happens that one of you is a native then you can just move the set to, idk, Narnia?

The villa :
At first, there were voices that came from different directions, surrounding him. Loki recognized some of them, but his brain couldn’t seem to identify which belong to whom. He caught one of them spoke, a woman.

‘Not to worry sir, a friend of mine got us an identical body. A fresh one.’

What - body? His half dazed mind inquired.

“Mr. Odinson? Mr. Odinson?” That same voice came closer to where he was put to rest. Perhaps she noticed a movement or a flutter from his closed lids.

She called a few more times before she paused when he wasn’t responding. She then decided to take a different approach, “Loki, Loki are you with me?”

“Is he - ?” The man she referred as ‘sir’ asked.
“Stay focus, eyes on me, eyes on me.” The woman told him when Loki finally tried to open his eyes. The rubber gloves on her hand felt cold to his skin as she angled his face to meet her examining gaze. She patted his cheek for several times as if to roused someone from a sleep.

*Who are these people? What happened to him?*

Peeking just barely (it was too damn bright) the hazy view then started to come into a better focus as Loki did as told. The doctor looked straight into his pupils, her flashlight flared to his eyes, making him dizzy so he promptly shut them again.

*Bloody hell, what the fuck is going on?!!*

Somehow, he couldn’t voice his clamoring thoughts. All that he could manage was a useless animalistic grunt grumbling from the back of his throat.

His brain kept on forcing one question after another. Why was he there? Why he couldn’t move or lift a damn finger? *Heck*, he couldn’t even feel the rest of his body.

The steady rhythm of his pumping heartbeat was the only thing that soothed him. Still, he felt weightless, powerless and numb.

“It’s working sir, Dr. Banner’s Tetradoxine B worked. We got him back. He’s going to be okay.” Her voice sounded elated.

“Son of a gun.” The man said with a hint of smirk in his voice.

“Good job Dr. Cho.” There were muffled steps, most probably coming from a pair of combat boots, before Loki heard him saying, “Hill, we’re ready when you are.”

“Copy that sir. Fasten your seatbelts kids, we’re going home.” The agent swiftly replied. A buzzing, sort of a soft wheezing sound was made after that.

They were definitely flying. Loki could feel it in the movement and in the change of air pressure inside the vast cabin. Too bad he couldn’t recall a thing afterwards because the darkness came back to claim him (the female doctor drugged him, he was sure of it) and his consciousness starting to leave him once more.

***

*Present day*

Sparkling ivories drenches over Loki’s pale back. Eventually, the tingling sunlight arouses him from his sleep. He stretches his long limbs and for the first time since the bloody incident, he wakes up with butterflies fluttering inside his gut and a wide smile stretches over his face.

Thirty-four days. It has been thirty-four *fucking* days since the last time he saw her. He could only endure this long.

Everything that happened after that night seemed to run in slow motion, especially his agonizing and dreadfully boring recovery process. Loki sighs a little as he lifts himself off the bed. The stiff
and soreness of his healing muscles and bones still haunt him each morning, especially when the
chill strikes.

Fuck. Maybe he should’ve listen to those doctors’ order when they told him not to push his
physical limit too hard, too fast back at the rehabilitation center.

Problem was, how could he not? When his days and nights were spoiled by the very thought of her,
taunting him to the brink of madness. The incessant craving grew urgent, tormenting him on its
wake. It was the kind of pain that none of the medicine could cure.

Nicholas did say that, aside from the serum, it was Loki’s sheer determination to live that had
saved him.

In retrospect, he never thought too much of it before. Not when he wasted his younger days
inebriated with reckless poisons and debauchery, not even when he signed the deal with Nicholas
many years ago. To be fair, he didn’t care much of it at all. Death was not a thing he feared … until
it came upon him.

This peculiar life is indeed full of choices. To live is a choice, to give it up is also a choice. And
that night his choice was absolute. That was the first time he truly fought for his existence, the
tipping point when he realized how much he wanted to be alive. That dying was definitely not an
option. He wasn’t going to leave her, not this way nor another.

Like a car crash, the awakening came without warning, it entered without a knock and suddenly
the man who always took his life for granted found a new purpose, one that was more glorious
than anything he could imagine.

That very purpose was the only thing that keeps him moving.

As far as his recuperation went, the first week was the hardest though he tried not to complain too
much because he knew just how lucky he was to be standing on his two feet. Inside though, a deep
hole inside his chest was festering, harsher, deeper than any bullet or blade could ever penetrate.

What had become of him? What was she turning himself into? Before Darcy he never knew that
the misery of longing for someone could taste worse than the basest addiction.

Thus he punished himself, desperately trying to numb the sea of emotions raging within him. And
because of that, much to Dr. Cho’s disapproval, they had to repeatedly re-stitch his wounds, like he
was some kind of a broken rag doll.

Physical pain wasn’t the only thing that torments him. His conscience was shaken with guilt and it
only got worse as time passed by. How could he leave her heart to suffer alone when he knew
exactly how hard it is to live on where someone had left you?

Loki clenches his jaw and takes a calming breath as he curses himself for the hundredth times.

The decision to keep everything classified wasn’t his own. It was a condition Nicholas had asked of
him, at least for a few months ahead, until everything calmed down. The man was avoiding more
headache for him to deal with and at the same time, avoiding any possible threats coming towards
the Odinsons or any other people close to Loki now that his involvement was evident. For that
reason alone, Loki had agreed to play along.

Last week though, he couldn’t fight his heart’s desires back any longer. With the faux new
documents (he was baffled at the choice of name they provided during his stay, Thomas, really,
how generic), Loki secretly fled from the facility and took off straight to Bulgaria.
The escape was the best decision he ever made, partially because he once promised to take her there. Since then, Loki had put it in his best interest to make it happen. He already bought a villa near the mountain a few months back. Its location is a bit secluded and though it's slightly smaller than the one he had in the city, the scenery it holds is extremely exquisite. They could simply open the windows and listen to the tender murmurs of the wind as it dwells by.

Moreover, nobody recognizes him here. It is a rare trait he could really get use to. Here, he could relish what it feels like to live a common life, a normal life, as someone without a certain expectation or history attached to his last name.

To date he hasn’t heard a word from Nicholas nor his agents. Not that they’re lacking the ability to track him down, he certainly doubts that. Those agents could list his laundry or name which wine he took the other night without breaking a sweat. They just choose to keep their safe distance, probably to prevent him from running away again. That much Loki can tolerate, as long as they don’t put a limitation towards his person and keep their presence unknown.

Gradually, Loki takes his feet to stand and heads for the adjacent bathroom. He’s going to take a quick shower as opposed to his usual morning run now that he doesn’t have to be treated by Dr. Cho anymore.

The world-renowned geneticist is the head of the medical team Nicholas provides him. Though Loki had never heard of her work before, she is said to be the best in the field. Obviously, she lives up to her reputation, bearing in mind that she did save his life back there.

In the verge of desperation they went for plan B. If there was one, Loki sure hadn’t received the memo, but of course, as Nicholas had said ‘I’m Nicholas fuckin’ Fury kid, my backup plan has a backup plan!’. Thus Loki didn’t actually have a say in that matter. Not that they could ask for his agreement due to his state.

The plan B Nicholas came up with rooted from the most unexpected person. Loki’s brows hit his hairline as he uttered the most dumbfounded and dramatic ‘Who?’ at the name they brought to surface. It was none other than Bruce ‘inner-peace-tree-hugger’ Banner himself.

Turned out Nicholas was already well acquainted with Banner long before Loki did. The man’s brain was, unquestionably, brilliant. Such a shame, said the director, that the society back then wasn’t appreciative to his talent. That potion Cho injected seconds before it was all too late is a wonder if not a miracle. It has the ability to reduce the pulse to one heartbeat per minute, that’s how they were able to save Loki from bleeding to death and faking it instead. Years ago the eccentric doctor made it for his stress-related issues. However, when he and Ross went under the radar, he left those green liquids behind, lining forgotten inside his old lab back in Ohio.

On how those two lovebirds chose to live their life was obviously none of Nicholas’ business. Those vials however, were. Naturally, in no time Nicholas and his team of advanced scientists and abled doctors found other uses for it.

Right inside the medevac, where Loki was clutching tight to dear old life - watching helplessly as Darcy cried and cried, Dr. Cho calmly went into work. With a surgical mask over her face, the undercover doctor injected him with the special serum.

Death did claim him, in every way that counted, Loki thought as he turned on the faucet. His soul left his body for five full minutes on the cold surgery table. Afterwards though, they conveniently switched him with a similar looking corpse before they revived him inside the jet that flew them to Nicholas’ secret facility in New York. Even if the second coming or an apocalypse should follow afterwards, Loki wouldn't notice as his consciousness was drifting on and off like a peaceful, gentle
tide.

Three days later though, when Loki had regained his consciousness, he demanded all the information on all the things he missed out on. Under the death-glare threw by the doctors, Nicholas had no choice but to finally explained what had happened (albeit briefly).

It didn’t actually surprise him that things blew up bigger than what anyone had expected, but at least Nicholas finally got what he always wanted by the end of it. A well deserved punishment for those corrupt men and women as a form of revenge for his late partner. It worked out well for the city too because the chain reaction from the event had freed and cleansed the streets from new incoming threats.

Nicholas also discovered who was the mastermind behind Malcolm’s malicious acts, but more importantly for Loki’s sake of mind, the one who had hurt Frigga. That was why Nicholas didn’t come to Helheim. He and his team flew straight to D.C. to confront the culprit.

Too bad they didn’t catch him. They couldn’t. Because the cornered man took a gun to his own mouth and blew his head apart.

‘You can’t stop me. Cut off one head, two more shall take its place. This isn’t the end’ - was the bastard’s last words.

A knock on the front door stops Loki from replaying the chilling threat inside his head. He turns the water off and goes reaching for a towel. He cinches the material around his waist as he steps down. On who’s waiting outside is not a surprise for him. He just doesn’t expect her to come this early.

Downstairs, Loki opens the wooden door wide and greets her. It’s the usual kind old lady that takes care of the place, Sofia. Her English isn’t all that good, but they do away with hand gestures and through facial expressions. Those aren’t needed this time though because aside from a tray of an inviting sight of a luxurious breakfast in her hands, the energetic lady also brings what he had asked for just the other day.

A car key. Loki didn’t feel the need to use one before because he went about the small town on a motorcycle. Another thing he hadn’t done since his London good ol’ days. It was definitely a pleasant change from his routine because riding one gave him a certain sense of liberation, something akin to flying.

This day is going to be different though, he glances at the key. Because today, his liberation, his salvation, the very wings that will take him high; it will come in a different form.

With an unhinged smile he takes both the offerings from her hands. He bids his thank you in her native language and lands a peck on each of her cheek. Swiftly, he turns and places the loaded tray at the table with the key right beside it.

His heart is soaring high, higher than the bluest sky. Excitement runs through his venous like frolicking rivers of moonshine and his face is ridiculously beaming alight like a birthday child.

Carrying a song in his steps, Loki leaps to the stairs and goes back inside the shower to finish what he left off.
Wearing the same smile he wears ever since he wakes up, he rushes to scrub clean, washing his skin off those rust and dust that time imprinted when she was far.

His fingers halt, noticing something that wasn’t there before. He looks down his chest, running the digits along the line of new stitches brandishing his body. Those wounds are almost completely healed (another debt he owes to the doctor) though still noticeable. The hues around them are now nothing but faint reddish bruise.

The late realization vexes him, not because he fears Darcy would find him unsightly, not at all. She wouldn’t mind, he’s certain of it, his body is never a blank canvas before and she is already familiar with every single one of his old scars. The only concern is that she would be upset once she sees them. Loki would rather maim himself than to trouble her, not with what he already puts her through.

_Dammit!_ He couldn't bear to imagine how deep the damage had cut through her heart. He just wished he wasn’t too late, that he could still mend the pain he had caused.

All these years, they’ve been wasting too much time dancing with each other and for what? Loki curses himself for being a stubborn ass that he is. Though come to think of it, he wasn’t the only one to blame in this matter. Warmth fills his heart at the thought, at the tenacious woman that beats him in his own game. With Darcy, he never really stood a chance anyway. What was left for him to do now is to rectify this situation for the both of them. To find a way where he can make her his and his alone, so he can make everything perfect for her just the way she makes everything perfect for him.

A recurring thought hits him. It was a marvelous thought that made his pulse race. His eyes unconsciously land by the vanity as Loki contemplates whether he should bring along the little black box resting inside its right shelf. At the last minute though, he decides against it. It could wait. Preferably _after_ Darcy forgives him.

Clads in a worn black leather jacket over a thin grey shirt and dark jeans, he’s ready to go. Without a second thought he takes the car key and a black aviator before he puts on his brown leather boots.

Outside, the warm wind whiffs pass him and he smiles in return, pacing slower, taking time to appreciate the gentle greeting of the Earth. It was one of the things he never bothers to do before. Driven with hatred, there were always something for him to gain and a lot of things he tried to chase, things he tried to forget, to change. Now, to his surprise, those things he thought his heart desired most weren’t matter anymore. The him from a year ago would assume that he had gone insane. In a way, he did.

Love, the most fragile, intangible sentimentality, the utopic idea that once baffled him, happened to him. It tore him apart, shred his pride and scorns to splinters. The joke was on him and he was lost, yield by its feet. He was wrong about her. Darcy Lewis wasn't the storm. She was both the gentle drizzle and the sunshine afterwards and she had ceased, put and end to that endless blizzard blowing somewhere inside his mind.

Peace indeed tastes a lot sweeter after he had defeated his chaos, embraced his flaws and conquered all the demons within. Now, he's ready to jump on this new adventure waiting ahead of him, and the first step begins today.

_Wait for me Darcy, wait for me._
The plane arrives on time (praise the gods) though the thirty minutes they took to get all the passengers on that flight to go through custom and baggage claim was too slow for his liking. Once they do, his eyes impatiently sought for a glimpse of a certain petite brunette among the incoming tourists.

Amidst those people whose faces are nothing but a blur to his eyes, he immediately sees her. At the sight, Loki’s eyes narrowed intensely.

The moment is as surreal as a mirage, though the arduous ache he feels building inside his chest is blatantly real. Loki takes off his shade and absentmindedly, tugs it on the V of his shirt. His throat tightens, his heart trembles.

The bright sun captures her frame and in that instant her presence chased away the dark clouds above his heart. Giving him a taste of summer after a lifetime of winter.

In his eyes, perchance, Darcy Lewis is even more stunning than he remembers.

Her auburn flows, her cheeks rouge rose, and her eyes, her bright blue eyes are pulling him into their orbit.

Their gaze meet from afar and he throws her a winning smile. Darcy isn’t smiling back though. She looks as cool as steel. The steps she takes aren’t rush, but are determined meanwhile her piercing eyes are still razor sharp on him as she worries with her lush red lips.

*That’s it. No more waiting, no more hesitating.* Loki urges himself as he storms past the barrier, not letting anyone stops him and meets her halfway.

*Damn tourists!* He hears one of them complains in annoyance as they begrudgingly let him pass. Loki doesn’t give a damn. Pure joy is reigning over him that he almost couldn’t feel his legs. The frenzy thumping of his heart is bordering painful. He couldn’t fathom how he could survive all these weeks without her.

The busy world seemed to stop on its axis, their surrounding eases out when she’s standing not two feet away from him. Just like a scene in a movie, everything starts to narrowing to the two of them until the merry sound around them turns to whisper and hush, swallowed by the clamoring cheers inside his head and within his rib-cage.

*Say something you idiot,* he tells himself. *Anything!*

“Welcome to Bulgaria.” Loki blurts.

*Good job you imbecile!* His mind squirms, but he grins like a fool anyway, suddenly feeling like he’s a shy fourteen standing in front of his ultimate crush.

For a short moment Darcy just stands there, as if the greeting didn’t quite meet her ears. She stares at him with a look he couldn’t decipher whilst her right hand holding on tight to the handle bar of her purple leathered suitcase. She holds it so tight in fact that people might suspect there’s a crown jewel resting inside.
Impatient, Loki takes another step, he outstretches his hands to reach for her. He's in the verge of calling out her name when she suddenly strides towards him in full speed and -

_Slap!_

He blinks, once, twice.

_“Welcome to Bulgaria?! What the hell were you thinking?”_ She barks almost hysterically.

Loki stammers, _“I was –“_

_Slap!_

_“That was for Helheim!”_ She fiercely spats, not giving him a chance to reason himself out if it.

Loki clears his throat and straightens his posture as he touches his reddened cheek, smiling from ear to ear, _“I deserve that.”_

_Slap!_

_“And that’s for the fucking funeral!”_ She shrills after the second hit lands to his other cheek.

The sting was nothing, nothing compare to what thrill she brought back to his life (besides, he totally deserves that one too).

_“Did you - cry for me?”_  

He shouldn't have said that, he really should't, but the question blurted out before he could help it. Darcy is beyond furious (as she should) and he's well aware that his words only made it worse. He also aware that he shouldn’t be enjoying this as much as he does, but by all the gods … she looks even more beautiful when she’s angry.

_“Oh don’t you dare! You – you asshole! You little shit!”_ Darcy steps closer towards him after that megawatt-godhelper-smug-shit-eating-grin she sees flashing across his face.

By now Loki could already guess what is coming, but he wants to give her the satisfaction, to let her shed her pent up emotions. Thus he just stands there, unmoving, ready to take whatever blow she throws at him.

Being Darcy of course, she smacks him harder, thrice.
And he thought Foster had a mean jab.

On the last swing though, Loki catches her by the wrist as it withdraws and grasps it in his. Darcy doesn’t shy away from it but her bewildered eyes that once hold fire are now brimming with hot tears, threatening to flow.

From her fingertips he can feel that her body is slightly quaking. It isn’t out of anger though, not anymore.

With a reassuring smile he looks back at her, carefully searching the girl beneath her pair of blues. Softly, he lifts her hand and brings her wrist to his lips. He kisses the center of her palm down to her pulse point before he anchors it over the left side of his chests. Loki didn’t say anything, but he knew she heard the words his thumping heart was telling her.

It’s me, I’m real Darcy, I’m right here. I’m right here.

Her eyes widen and all the tears she tries to hold - break free. Darcy drops her fear and tosses her suitcase along with it. Then finally, finally she throws herself into his embrace.

“God, oh my God, I thought I lost you…” She breathes to his nape, her voice cracks into a soft sob when she feels warmth radiating from his body, “I - I really thought –”

He hugs her tight, softly chanting I’m so sorry‘ repeatedly to her ears whilst dabbing the tears off her face.

“I will never leave you Darcy, never.” He clutches her closer, until there is no more distance to travel between them.

“Just so we’re clear, I’m still angry at you so don’t you go about making promises you cannot keep!” She warns him.

“You know I wouldn’t dare, not to my special girl.” Loki says whilst stroking her head.

She flinches. “I am not your girl.”

“- You’re not?” He raises a brow, amusement rising in his tone.

“Nope.” She drawls nonchalantly, “I don’t date liars.”

Feigning a look of hurt Loki eases back, just a little, but enough to study her bewitching face, “Now hold on a second, did you just call me a liar?”

“Dude, don’t make me smack you again!” Annoyance flickers on her eyes.

“I watched you die! I was there when they – when you ” She couldn’t finish the words because even an inkling of recollection would only make her sad and pissed all over again. At that, she throws series of jabs to his chest and much to her logic dismay, she cries some more.

Even with those punches Loki refuses to let her go. Instead he gathers her flat against his chest and locks her there, coiling his hands around the span of her back, “But I did. I was told that I actually
died for a few minutes.”

Darcy gasps in horror, “Then how did – how can – “ She stutters momentarily before her brain does the math for her, “It was those agents’ doing wasn’t it?”

“Long story my love, long story.” He drops a kiss on her forehead and sinks his nose atop her head, breathing her in.

“You know you guys are a bunch of mean assholes! How could you?!”

“I know,” He groans apologetically, “I know and for that I am truly sorry darling, we didn’t mean to take it that far – “

“Didn’t mean to take it that far?!” She pulls back, giving him a pout that he finds beyond adorable, “Fuck, Loki, it wasn’t like you lied about … about not liking porn, or bailing out from a date! For god’s sake, you faked your death!”

Okay, she had a valid point there, he sighs. “Darcy, everything went south that night, trust me, my death wasn’t even in the initial plan, swear to gods.”

“Oh so now you believed in them?” She mocks with a cynical smile.

“I do now.” He says in full certainty.

Darcy scoffs, “Wow, don’t tell me - the near death experience had restored your faith?”

“No.” This time he answers with a pout too. It makes Darcy wanted to smack him and herself square in the face, because the gesture brings his cheekbones further to light and she finds it to be unbelievably attractive and drool worthy.

“Good, because I’d call – “

“Because they send you,” He cuts her midsentence. ” and I’m forever grateful for that.” He’s no longer pouting then and Darcy’s face goes aflame when the meaning of those words dawns on her. The blush she feels burning on her cheeks rushes to her brain, catapulting any possible comebacks off her head.

“And if you would just let me, I am more than willing to do anything, anything to amend the mistakes that I made …” He adds as he touches the side of her face while his thumb runs back and forth the length of her jaw, “- but I don’t think my apologies alone would ever satisfy you.”

With the last ounce of pride she could muster she juts her chin, she isn’t going to let him win her forgiveness that easily, “Damn right! I’m never satisfied, much less to your lame reasons or sweet words.”

“Darcy, I’ll explain everything, there will be no more secrets – we have a deal, remember? You deserve nothing but the truth, you said so yourself.”

Theatrically flipping her hair, she sneers at him, “Your promises are getting old Mr. Odinson.”

He chuckles, “You still don’t trust me darling?”

“Am I that gullible to you?” She glares again.

“Of course not!”
She observes his expression from under her lashes, was he playing at her? “Alright then, be honest, did you – did you mean those words you said to me that night?” She bits at her lower lip again.

“What words?” He asks beguilingly.

*What words? THE BALLS!! “Those words!”*

Darcy isn’t sure whether he's trying to pull at her legs or is being sincerely clueless. With Loki, she suspects it has to be the former.

He arches his brow in question and the sudden need to either kick or kiss him like there’s no tomorrow comes washing over her again.

“When you said you loved me!” Shooting daggers with her eyes she blurts out impatiently, she's getting too tired for this shit.

The backlit of the sun was dancing over his shoulders and in a split second the hands that are caressing her paused. There's no longer a hint of humor shines from his mesmerizing eyes as he casts his tease aside. Ever so slowly he takes her chin and tips it so that her face is levelled to meet his.

“I do.” He whispers hotly, his smoldering gaze pierces right through her and she couldn't look away even if she wants to.

“I do love you Miss Lewis, I always have.” He says again, more ardently the second time.

“I love that little frown you make when you try not to cry, I love the way we argues and the way you wouldn’t let me win, and I love the way you got mad afterwards.” Loki cups her jaw, his eyes are telling her so much more than the words he utters.

*Heavens. Is this moment even real?* Her heart is racing, her eyes are burning and Darcy couldn't come up with anything smart to say.

“I love the way you bit your lip when you’re nervous,” He adds with an endearing chuckle when he sees her doing the exact thing he mentioned.

A half laugh half cry breaks from her lips as she shoves at his chest.

“Darcy, can't you see? I love you since the first moment I lay my eyes upon you.” His thumbs caress her flushed cheeks.

“You – do?” She manages to ask back despite the way he's turning her person into a puddle of goo.

Keeping their eyes locked, Loki nods before he leans down, his soft lips hovering on hers now and the vapor of their breaths mingle as one. He captures the sides of her face with his palms, wanting her to see the truth reflected from his eyes.

“That part is not a lie. Never was. I’m an utter fool for not saying it sooner.”

At once, Darcy forgets about her anger nor her pride, she doesn't care about those people around them, she doesn't care about her aching back from sitting too long on the plane. She doesn't care about anything but the man standing right in front of her.

“Then tell me again.” She says, tugging the collar of his jacket with both hands to bring him closer.
Loki replies with the kind of smile that makes her heart go boom. “I love you Darcy Lewis. Completely, helplessly, madly in love with you.”

Darcy’s breath stutters. At first, she was about to tell him that he stole her line, but then her traitorous tears fell and Loki closes their gap and claims her mouth to give her a kiss that is sweet and deep and full of longing and the warmth it brings travels far beyond her skin.

Wanting to make it last, Darcy weaves her fingers to his soft locks as she reciprocates in the same manner. She opens her lips and together they melt into the same mold.

Finally, she sighs blissfully. Finally.

Walls are crumbling as two hearts colliding. No more running, no more hiding.

She likes him like this. Uncovered, beautiful and pure. Stripped off his lies, his masks. There are truth and confession written in the way he kisses and the tune his heart sings doesn't escape her ears.

_I love you Darcy Lewis, I love you, I love you._

Her response was a lazy hum as she playfully nibbles on his lower lip and like a kitten, rallying her sweet tongue on it, “Show me, show me how much you love me.”

His already tensed body shivers, the insatiable itch he buries comes crawling back in full force.

“Mmh,” Loki eases back, with his nose he nuzzles the tip of hers, already formulating various of wicked ways in which he will rapture her later, “I will, but before those guys call in the airport security, let me escort the lady to her villa. The roses are blooming beautifully this time of the year.”

“Ah, a smooth talker once told me about it.” She quips, glancing over his back where some men and women in uniforms are eyeing them with sour faces.

That dazzling smile of his rouses and she immediately wishes he wields some sort of otherworldly magic that could teleport them both to a private place. “Is that so? Well, I can assure you that he _wasn’t_ lying.”

Shaking her head, she scoffs, “We’ll see.”

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Darcy didn’t remember the rest of her journey to the villa, she didn’t remember the exquisite scenery they passed along the way, on how mesmerizing the scent and the color of the sky was. Her attention was fully focused on his presence. She kept on glancing his way, as if their linked hands weren’t enough. Loki squeezed her palm from time to time, and brought it to his lips. Perhaps he was trying to grasp the fact that she’s right there next to him. Being this close to each other in such a serene situation felt too much like a dream.
After another intersection at the second turnaround, they head towards a smaller road where a small entrance was waiting at the end, with thick bushes around them and a pair of arching gates coiled with greens and wild flowers she could not name. Once inside, Loki didn’t bother driving the car all the way into the garage at the back, he just parked it right in front of the small fountain at the face of the villa. The engine died softly and he practically jumped out of the small convertible to turn to her side, opening her door. Darcy sat back, enjoying that sexy strut she ogled so many times before. That predatory look he gave her was making her desperately hungry.

Like a gentleman, he offered her a hand only to pull her flushed against his body. When their faces were inches apart, he grabbed her by the head, sunk his fingers to her hair and ever so fervently, kissed her until she felt like she was floating in cloud nine because good lord, he smelled divine, he tasted divine.

He pushed her backward, hands perched on the door as he closed it behind her while his mouth was still tuned to hers, deepening the kiss, exploring every millimeter of her lips.

A while and a fluttering heartbeat later, they slide around her waist, holding her tight. Chest to chest, their breath came out short and heavy. She rounded her arms around his neck, up to roused him by the hair, feeling those smooth raven locks under her fingertips.

“Gods I missed you – “ He closed his eyes and breathed the words to her lips.

“I missed you too,” she replied, tipping her head to receive his further admission, “so damn much”

He rocked his hips to her stomach, the bold evident of his arousal was hard and thick between them. A guttural grunt left his lips when she pushed her body forward and rubbed her aching chest to his hard plane, adding more pressure to the burning tension.

“Darcy, I want you,” He whispered hotly, “I need you” He said again, highlighting his words with a thrust of his hips.

The pressure she felt tingling between her legs was making her heady and drunk. Everything was too much, but at the same time not enough. His kisses, his touch, his familiar scent were intoxicating. Her core was throbbing and her whole body was feverish, eager for more. Darcy then lowered her right hand and reached for his and guided him to her breast. He moaned with appreciation as he cupped the heavy globe, kneading it slowly, carefully, as if it was the first time he touched it.

Loki rolled the hardened tip between his fingers, with different pressure and maddening patterns, over and over again until she could no longer stand straight on her own. She clutched the front of his jacket, leaning her body to his. Her soft whimpers sent a jolt of arousal to his pulsing cock. He could take her right here and then, he thought as he mirrored the explicit motion with his lips, his hands, leaving the both of them breathless from the heat of passion.

Perspiration bloomed from her supple skin that it dampened through the back of her duffle coat. Damn, why is she still wearing a coat?

In a flash he rid it off her. The sheer material of her knee-length summer dress hides nothing from his eyes. He tugged the hem down, tracing his index and middle finger on the ripe curve of her breast. Naturally, Darcy jerked her body forward and Loki gladly took the invitation.

The invisible string he pulled was getting tauter with each wide stroke of his tongue as he suckled her breast and while rubbing him through his jeans felt alright Darcy wanted more. So much more.
“Take me to bed Loki, make love to me” She hoarsely said. Though the coupe looked nice and quite spacious, she wasn’t familiar with the place so she wasn’t going to risk giving anyone a show by fumbling outside in broad daylight.

“As you wish.” His smile was sly.

“Oh god, I knew telling you was a mistake!” She protested (un-convincingly) at the quote he said.

His raspy laughter broke and the smile on his lips greeted hers as he planted another kiss, a chaste one before he hurriedly took her by the hand and lead her inside, up to the second floor, at the second double doors to their right. Their shed clothing were all over the place. She even ripped his thin excuse of a shirt at one point. *Man*, where did he got it anyway? It was highly inappropriate!

Upstairs, the doors were left unlocked. Thank heavens! They went inside in no time. Her hands were all over him as his firm around her ass bringing her closer to the promise confined inside his unbuttoned jeans.

Loki closed the door behind them, all the while running wet sloppy kisses along her nape. She tugged at his cheek and kissed his jaw, his lips, lightly. He didn't let the tease end, he chased her lips. He nibbled on the plump flesh before he plunged for a searing kiss that made the ichorous sound their lips were making reverberated inside the room.

When the need for air kicked in he pulled away, just slightly, his nose, his mouth were minuscule away from hers, raw hunger shone from his eyes.

“I’ve dreamt of this, of us, oh Darcy, I missed you too much, it hurts.” He said, afflicting agony on his face and Darcy witnessed as his eyes sparked.

Her heart skipped another beat, but she so wasn’t going to cry again, she already wasted too many tears. Leaning towards him, she brushed his lips with hers, “It hurts me too.”

The room spun when his lips made contact to her ear, “Can I - taste you? I want to taste you,” He asked, his fingers were drawing circular pattern on the sides of her breasts.

As if she could say no to that? She moaned low and just like any sane women would, Darcy nodded.

“Would you sit please?” He motioned to the huge bed behind them.

“Since you asked so nicely.” She kept her eyes on him as she walked two steps backwards and sat on the edge of the bed.

With feral eyes he knelt between her. His hands were heavy on her knees as he spread her legs apart. Without further notice he dropped a chaste kiss to her lips before he started to trace more indecent ones along her nape down to her chest, whispering wicked things on her skin.

His face was now leveled to her naked breasts. Slowly, he darted his tongue out, lapping it over her mound to her nipple. Tentatively at first, as if tasting a fine dessert. She gasped in pleasure as she curved her back, surrendering her body to his mercy.

Loki’s mouth repeatedly teased her, one nipple to the other while the rest of his body was kept detached from further contact with hers. Sinewy hands were planted on the bed, at either side of her, trapping her. It was just his tongue and his lips and his teeth scrapping on her breasts. Laving, licking, suckling them until she was marked. Keeping her ass attached to the surface of the mattress was getting harder and harder to manage. Her body was crying for more, but at the same time, was
enjoying the way he tortured her senseless.

“Do you like this darling?” He hummed the question while her nipple was still inside his mouth.

“I need more, down there.” She confessed, “Please Loki, I want – “

“Hush” he dragged his hand on the inside of her thigh. His mouth went lower and lower.

When he reached his destination, he opened his mouth and kissed her there. His tongue was flat and wide against her slits and languorously, he ran it all the way down until he was at her opening, flourishing her.

“You’re so sweet, so wet, oh fuck – and so tight.” The next kiss was wet and long and dirty. She grew even more restless when he delved his tongue deeper.

“Oh god yes!” She fist ed her hands, she didn't care if she was clutching at his hair a bit too tight. "Don't close your eyes darling, watch me, watch me as I kiss you, pleasure you.”

She was pulsing, clenching inside and out, “Are you trying to make up for the lost times darling?”

“You have no idea.” His swirls were electrifying and the vibration he sent with his words lit her nerves alight, “Louder Darcy, let me hear you louder.”

Fuck! "Keep doing that and I will, oh god, don’t stop, don’t stop, oh god! Loki!”

“I want to feel you cum Miss Lewis,” He pressed his erection with his other hand, easing it down. The last thing he wanted was to waste himself over his pants.

Darcy undulated her hips wildly, driving her pelvis towards his lust induced face, controlling the pace as his mouth welcomed her. Their eyes were hot onto each other. It was the most intimate thing.

The next moment his name spilled off her lips as she came hard. She could feel the hot stream rushed and imploded where his, perhaps, magical tongue was still at.

By the time it ended, Loki's breathing was harsher than hers. The rise and fall of his chest came fast and short, his hair was a mess and his face was so thoroughly fucked up, glistening with her juice. And by the devil, Darcy feels the urge to pounce on him again when he wipes it off with a lazy lave of his tongue.

"Wow, that was - wow!” She said, trying to catch her breath.

His smirk was deliciously devious as he tugged the jeans off him. His thick and long shaft was already slick with his pre-cum as he wound his fingers around it, stroking it, firm but slow.

Holy fuck!

Darcy watched. Darcy swallowed.

Clinging her hands over his neck she scooted back, dragging him with her to the center of the bed. She couldn't wait to get the party starting.

“I touched myself, many times, thinking of you.” Still above her, he hovered lower, aligning his engorged cock to her pulsing center.
“Was it good?” She asked shakily.

Another sinful moan escaped his throat, but he didn't push further, he just rubbed the tip of him to her opening, "Not nearly as good as the real thing.”

“But did you like it?”

“When I cum, in my head I was inside you, so deep inside you” He closed his eyes as he swayed his hips in a tantalizing manner, each movement brought his shaft closer to where she wanted him most.

Without abating the movement of his pelvis he leaned down and kissed her.

_Dear god._ He tasted exactly like her.

She snapped, running out of patience. In a split second Darcy pushed his body down to switch their position until she was straddling on top of him.

Hypnotized, he looked up to her, his fiery gaze worshipping the goddess sat astride his lap, “Beautiful, you’re exquisite darling, I love your body before, but I think I love it even more now. You should keep this weight.” She was glowing oh so beautifully, her features were somehow softer, her curves were thicker, fuller, heavier.

“Loki, actually I-”

“Hmm?” He massaged her clitoris with his thumb and her train of thought crashed.

“No fair, you just short-circuited my brain!”

“Has it been too long darling? Didn’t you touch yourself, imagining it was me that touching you?”

A wicked grin flashed from his face.

“How can I? You bastard!” She grabbed the hair at the back of his head.

“Tsk-tsk, such temper.” He tugged her hips and brought her closer. Leading the pace, he ground their bodies together, rutting his length to her soaked center.

“Dammit Loki, no more tease, I want you!” She tried to take him in but he held her there.

“My lovely girl, I’m afraid I’m not going to last, once I’m inside you.” He drawled.

“Then what are you waiting for?”

“This.”

Long cries fell from her lips when two fingers sunk inside. Meanwhile his thumb was steady with its lulling rhythm on her nub.

Coherent words went astray and all at once her blood rushing to where his fingers set to play their manic tune.

“Cum Darcy, scream for me, say my name” He spurred her on.

"No, oh god Loki, I want to come on your cock, _oh fuck!”_ Her eyes fluttered, she tried to fight the burning sensation but she was already too far gone.
"That comes later."

Series of curses and whimpers were made afterwards as he sets her ablaze.

"Yes, that's it, that's my girl" He said as he climbed on top of her and flattened her back to the bed.

Not wasting another minute, Loki entered her in the thrill of her orgasm.

“Fuck yes, take me” Darcy cried, clutching her feet around his narrow hips, burying him to the hilt.

“OH god Darcy!” He cried out.

His eyes cast lower, to where their bodies were joined and he felt a surge of pride and pleasure taking over him.

“Tell me I’m yours, say it” He hoarsely whispered as he pistoned his cock in and out of her, setting out a new tempo that made the bed beneath them trembled and creaked.

“You’re mine” She trailed butterfly kisses to his jaw and rubbed her aching breasts to his chest, “Mine, mine, mine …”

He hissed when she nipped the leaf of his ear and he growled like a beast when she asked, “Forever?”

“Yes, hell yes”

Their unfettered sighs filled the air. Gone was his plan to take her slow, slow and lazy like a Sunday morning. With vigour he thrust deeper, faster, as if seeking for a reassurance, a way home.

“Oh gods, oh Darcy – unnnfh, you feel so amazing darling … ” He smirked, “You’re not going to make me last” She was tighter than he remembers, all her muscles and soft ridges are clenching him from head to root, milking him from the inside out.

“Me too, oh Loki you're so hard, fuck – I – I’m close, so close babe -” Her words were like song to his ears. Her ragged breathing was getting more intense at the third encore, she clawed on his back, her nails bit into his skin.

“Yes, cum Darcy, I want to feel you squeeze my cock” He watched her as she burns.

The words pushed her off the ledge. Their movement went wilder as she met his every thrust, each one harder than the last. She arched her back, bringing her breasts to stumble against his face.

“Fuck, like that, just like that – yes, yes” He growled, burying kisses to her chest.

“Loki, Loki ” She whimpered. Her brows were knitted as she shut her eyes and rose high.

He held her as she fell apart, his own was teetering over the edge. His movement was deliriously all over the place, his balls were heavy as he feels the wave of an incoming ecstasy rolling in tidal waves.

Not a minute later, a guttural growl left his lips as he burst. Ribbons of thick fluid shot through her womb, making her body twitched. He came so hard and the liquid from their joined bodies melt down their thighs.

Wasted yet blown away, he tumbled down, limbs were still tangled with one another.
“Fuck, let’s do that again.” Darcy flopped her forehead to his, her whole body was still buzzing from the orgasm.

He swept a wayward tendril off her face and laughed as he brought their bodies to lie side by side on the unmade bed.

“You okay?” He suddenly asked when he noticed how tired she looked. Did he push it too far?

“Are you fucking kidding me?”

Loki chuckled at her quip, “Sleep, it’s been a long day, you’re tired, we’ll talk later.”

Content and spent, she snuggled deeper to him, leaning the back of her head on his warm and beating chest. “… Loki –“

“Yes darling?” He tugged the duvet over their bodies.

“Say it again.” She said drowsily, her eyes were starting to get heavy.

“I love you.”

“Again.”

“I love you, I adore you, I am yours as you are mine - forever.”

“Attaboy.”

***

“I’m terribly sorry that I had to leave you out in the dark, but we can’t, I can’t bear to risk anyone’s life, especially yours.” Loki said, his brows were deeply furrowed as a soft, barely there whimper left his lips.

“We were getting real close Darcy, to fix everything.”

“Did you? Fix everything?” She asked, swirling her tongue.

He hissed before he answered, "Pretty much."

“Go on, you said you’re going to tell me everything.” She coerced.

“Yes, but – oh, uggh you're killing me!” His eyes rolled to the back of his head. His brain lost its ability to properly function when Darcy’s mouth was on his cock.

“What? You don’t like it? I can stop.” She backed away with a slurp.

“No, no, no, don’t stop” He whined.

"I knew you'd say that."

"Darling, please-"

"Please what? What do you want?"
"Do that again."

"You mean this?" She took him in, slowly, inch by inch, mixing a swirl, a nip and a suction over and over until the head of him bumped to the back of her throat.

That was it. His brain collapsed. He couldn't form a word to give an answer to that question. For a short torturous moment he couldn't control the rise and fall of his hips and the groans that escaped his lips. Though Darcy, the minx, asked him to keep on talking through his ordeal.

Holding on to the headboard and to the last thread of sanity he possessed he told her. About how the city remained clean. That those old mobsters were finally put behind secured bars (including Mrs. Wang but not her grandchildren, as promised). They were now on scheduled for fair trials within the coming week. Loki read that a fierce and honest new prosecutor from D.C that the newspaper identified as Lady Sif was specifically hired for that purpose.

“Are we good now? Or does Mr. Wayne still has more villains lurking in Gotham City?” She mumbled, the vibration from her words left him breathless.

“We’re - good. Gods - we're - great, Darcy please” He shut his eyes, his head fell backward, exposing the straining vein bulging along the side of his neck.

This time Darcy took his plead to heart. He was being a good boy after all. She worked him up and down until he forgot his name while he chanted hers with fervour as he exploded.

“Positively or probably?” Victoriously, she rose on top of him, wiping her mouth off his liquid.

Loki gathered her by the head and with a kiss he mouthed a soft 'thank you'.

"You haven't answer the question." She shoved at his ribs, a few inches above one of his new scars. She was still very carefully avoiding the areas in fear of hurting him.

No longer tortured, he squinted his right eye and tilted his head to the side as the corner of his lips quirked, “A bit of both, there’s one more thing and I owe this one for you.”

Could it possibly - “ … My mother?"

Loki reached for her hand, “We’re going to get her out Darcy. Nicholas told me to keep all of this from you a bit longer, but I can’t help it. I think I could actually die from missing you.”

“Don’t you dare say the word ‘die’ one more time!” She glared furiously, “And don’t tell me you miss me! You left me for a month Loki, Jesus – for a whole fuckin’ month!”

“It’s the truth. I miss you Darcy Elizabeth Lewis, more than you could imagine," He bent down and planted a kiss on her forehead and another on the tip of his nose before he added, "more than I’d thought possible.”

"For real?" She asked, she sighed.

"I swear it." He rolled her body, trapping her right under him.

“And I miss you too Loki-poo, more than I could bear." Her hands rose to cup him by the hollow of his cheeks, “ … about my mother though,”

“Yes?”

“Crazy as it may sound, I’m not opposed to your plan this time.” She smirked, “We need to help
her and I want in.”

Loki dove down, drowning his face to the crook of her neck, “Mmh, I know you’re going to say that. Lucky for you, I know just where to start.”

“Do you now?” Darcy locked her feet around his, tangling their body together.

“Uh-hum. Remember the redhead?” He ran his teeth along her shoulder.

“The sexy redhead?”

“The one you kissed, yes, that would be her.” He paused momentarily, “You know, I was a tad jealous.”

Darcy giggled, reminiscing the scene. That woman was unbelievably hot! “When I kissed her?”

A grunt came as his answer, “But at the same time, seeing it made me wanted to claim you,” He emphasized the words with a gentle bite, "punish you.”

Oh fuck!

Wait a minute! Her brain screamed its protest to her lower bits and the more logical part of her halted. They cannot go on another round before she told him!

*Come on Lewis, just tell him! You already practiced the line over and over!*

With staggering effort, she gathered all her guts and count to three.

“Okay, hold on cowboy, before you blow my mind again, I actually have something very very important to tell you. It's some kinds of a surprise.”

“Oh, so you have one stored for me as well?” He smiled, a wolfish one at that.

"Well, you can say that - " What did he just say? "Wait, you have a surprise for me too?"

"You can go first, mine can wait." He shrugged and winked at her.

*Okay! Alright, this is it!*

She cleared her throat and slowly, she takes his hand in hers. Darcy trailed her fingers from his inner palm to the tip of his longer digits, “Do you remember what I offered you on the first day we met?”

"You mean when you sent those blasted doors to say 'fuck off' to my face?” He narrowed his eyes in humour but nevertheless he noticed the budding nerves in her tone.

"They were saying 'kiss my perfect ass' but close."

"That is exactly what I'm about to do!"

She tried to laugh it off but it came out a pitch higher than her natural laughter. "Not yet, I'm not finished!"

“Alright, do I have to keep on guessing? I'm good at guessing.”

"No, no, I got this, besides I don't think you can crack this one."
“No?” Curious, he squinted as he rose higher to level their eyes once more.

"Yup."

Loki frowned, “Darcy, unlike what people thought of me, I do not require virgin’s blood if that was what you’re offering.”

“No, you silly!” This time she truly laughed and once it ceased, she smiled, so gently, so softly before she kissed his knuckles and placing his palm on the soft curve of her abdomen.

“My first born.”

***

Seven months ago

“Mr. Lewis, if I may say so - you have one amazing daughter. You know she deserves better.”

On what had prompted him to say those words was lost on him. It wasn’t Loki’s plan to drop by at the small hospital room, not even when he already knew who William Lewis was. But alas, here he was, having a conversation whilst sitting face to face with the man himself.

Not one to beat around the bush, William asked what was the reason behind this sudden visit - in which Loki conveniently replied with an easy lie. That he came for Odin.

But of course, in no time their topic steered away from the course. There wasn't much for Loki to say about Odin anyway.

“Do you love her?” Will asked after a long pause and a stern scrutinizing gaze towards Loki, to the boy who had lectured him about how not to treat her daughter. William wasn't offended, on the contrary, he was glad. Though he was sure his little princess was strong enough to handle things on her own, it brought great joy to him to see someone was willing to stand up for her.

“With all my heart.” Loki saw no point in denying and he was kind of relieved that he chose not to lie about it.

“Does she - share the same sentiment?” Will cautiously asked.

“I’d like to think that she does.” Loki tipped his head as he shared a timid smile.

Will felt his throat tightens when he swallowed, “Don’t hurt her.” Like I did.

“I won’t – I … “ Loki immediately said.

“She’s a good girl, always have been.” Will bypassed Loki's words.

Fidgeting on his chair, Loki nodded politely. He saw the weight of grieve and regrets were thick on
William's eyes, the same blue eyes Loki found on Darcy he noticed.

“She’s the most amazing thing that ever happens to me,” Loki admitted, "I- "

His word hung midair and in place, a heavy silence fell. It was as if there was something Loki wanted to say but couldn't. Or perhaps ... there was something his heart wanted to say whilst his logic was still running two steps behind.

Stretching his leg, Will finally stood to stand, hands digging in his pockets, “Let me ask you again, son. Why are you here?”

Why am I here?

That was supposed to be a simple question.

Loki unclasped his knitted fingers as he glanced up and looked at Will.

Why am I here?

At that moment, the reason became as clear as the bright sky and the answer fled from his lips even before his brain could process it,

“I’m here for your daughter, sir.”

The older man smiled knowingly at him and with bold determination, Loki continued,

“I just want to let you know that I won’t ever take her for granted. I will love her, treasure her, for the rest of my life.”

***

Epilogue:

Cool wind chides the pearly curtains off the window and morning light drenches inside their room. Darcy feels warm and heavy around her expanding waistline, she smiles. Her eyes are still closed, but she knows where the warmth comes from.

At the next second, the source of the heat moves his fingers in a gentle caress. Up and down, round and around, lovingly tracing her no longer small baby bump.

Sliding even closer, he greets her with his sleepy voice, “Good morning beautiful”

“Is it time?” She asks drowsily.

“It is for me.” He answers with a lazy thrust of his pelvis to her bottom.
“I wasn’t referring to *this*” She curves her back flat to his chest and slips her leg between his thighs, gently nudging at his erection with her ass.

Loki grits his teeth when she brushes its head the second time, “Oh you mean, the ceremony?”

Turning her head around, Darcy playfully flicks his forehead, “What else Einstein?”

“Not for three more hours.” He anchors his hand around her, wrapping her, “We still have time.”

The suggestive idea sounds *very* tempting, she's not gonna lie, especially when it comes from a shirtless mean and lean as fuck god on the sheets, but Darcy isn't going to yield to his will. Not this time.

Their bedroom activity has been temporarily put on hold (by her) ever-since she said yes to his proposal not two months ago. Actually, Loki popped the question to her long before that but considering that his parents still thought of him, *y'know* – dead, she refused for a couple of times. She only said yes after he agreed on coming clean about the whole ‘j/k I’m not dead lol’ situation to his family. Darcy was there when he told them because he had insisted for her to stay when she was about to leave the room to give the Odinsons some privacy.

"*Stay, we're all family here. You're mine and they are yours.*" He laced their fingers.

There were happy tears and litters of hugs all around. Even Odin was smiling. Darcy was kinda touched to be able to witness everything - for a while. Because of course, Loki had to spoil the moment. When a bawling Thor came thundering inside and literally forced his huge frame to give his brother a grizzly bear hug, Loki turned and mouthed at her, *"Record this."*

How old did he think he is? Thirteen? What an asshole.

*An asshole whom you're going to spend the rest of your life with,* her mind teases.

To her defense, it wasn't like he gives her *other* options. He was unfair with the way he looked in that white thin button-up shirt he wore like a second skin. And he kept on pushing her limit when he bared his vulnerable side and went down on his knee, asking for her hand. Darcy was overwhelmed. Her heart was seized. Her future was signed, sealed, delivered, and without a doubt, she was his.

That scene definitely earns its place in her top-five greatest memories in life. But the one that made it to the top-three has got to be the moment after she told him about their baby. For a second there, Darcy honestly thought she broke him because Loki looked like he was thisclose to tears. He showered her with the most tender kisses and series of 'thank you' and 'I love you' that in the end, she was the one who cried. Again. *Damn hormones!*

“Na-ah, you promised.” Saving the moment for their wedding night might sound silly since the bride is already heavily pregnant with the groom’s child, but Darcy is firm with her decision and she means business when she said her wedding has got to be special.

"I can’t wait to see what sort of surprise you said you were planning for me.” She says, sweetening him up, *"Besides people are waiting."*

The guests aren’t that much actually, only his family, her father, the usual Fen and Jordy, and of course - Dr. Banner and his plus one. Though there is one more person who's going to be present, but Darcy hadn’t had a clue just yet. That is the surprise.

According to the last information given to Darcy, her mother was still held by the agency’s office
up in D.C., to testify against Titan until the end of the month. It was a long and though case. Thankfully, the whole thing wrapped up faster than planned. With Nicholas' help they finally locked down the mad man and with all his might, Loki made sure that he's going to stay there for a long long time.

For once life seems to make sense again and everything feels right as rain. It is truly the right time to celebrate, not only because of their union but also to cheers for Geanna and her new found freedom.

That was why a week ago, on a Thursday night when Darcy was curled and fast asleep Loki had secretly contacted Natasha. Over the same line, he also spoke to Darcy’s mother. Loki noticed the crack in the woman’s voice, even when she tried to lace it with her usual composure when she agreed upon his offer to come over.

"Can we just bail on them?" He jests. Under the circumstances, that wasn’t entirely a terrible suggestion. She’s all he needs anyway.

“Do you want them to really hate you? 'Coz you’re doing a hell of a good job at that. They barely forgive you for the last stunt you pull!” She rolls her eyes.

"They won’t.” He teases.

“You smug bastard!”

“Your smug bastard.” He corrects her while his busy fingers are still doing wicked things to her lower body.

She almost relents. Almost.

"Don't tell me you're having second thoughts! Who told you to ask me to marry you in the first place anyway?" Darcy flashes her round-shaped emerald engagement ring. The deep green of the gem is exquisite, much like his eyes, dazzling perfectly with those sparkling little diamonds lining around it.

“I did, I told myself to do it and I’d do it again.” Loki replies in all seriousness.

"And I wasn't having second thoughts, definitely not" He then frowns like a petulant child, "if anything I was simply asking you to rebut our stupid deal."

Darcy doesn't doubt his words. This perfectionist who's going to be her husband in less than three hours even fussed about the wedding details more than she did. The priest, the place, the flowers, the caterers (one of them cried, Darcy made Loki said sorry afterwards, all is good now), the color theme, e-ve-ry-thing!

It was fun to watch really, even better than watching Gordon Ramsay raged about an overcooked prawn or some other shit because the way Loki handled those fluffy frilly stuffs was ruthless and efficient, exactly in the same manner as when he conducted his cutthroat business deal.

"Darcy darling, I really don’t think I can wait.” His voice sounds as desperate as his expression.

Poor baby. She grins unapologetically, “Patience is a virtue. Imagine something icky, come on – I know you can do it.”

Though she thoroughly enjoying this, Darcy wasn't a sadist, besides she’s still not immune to the charm of his begging puppy-eyes. Oftenly, she let him pleased himself, by watching her touched
herself (good times). The rule was simple. Nothing goes beyond the second base. But the activity turned out to be more erotic than she thought. His sharp eyes swallowed her whole, his long legs, spread wide as his hand worked on his member. Loki would give her orders on where or what to touch, how hard and how fast and so on. The look and those raw voices coming out of his mouth when she did everything word by word was pure obscene.

“How can I?” His other hand comes to cups her breasts, his other favorite part from her pregnancy.

A mischievous idea suddenly occurs to her. Carrying it inside her mind, Darcy reaches between them. She takes his hand in hers and together they knead at his erection.

"Do you know what I want right now darling?” He hisses, approving her advance.

"Hmm, tell me.” She rubs harder.

"I want to make love to the mother of my child when she's like this, exactly like this, so full of life and round and glowing"

*Oh boy* - Darcy sinks her teeth to her lower lip.

"To think that *this* is mine,” To outline his statement he moves his palm flat to her stomach, “my child you're carrying inside of you, growing inside of you"

"- Makes you hard?” She closes her eyes, enjoying the way he touches her with so much pride.

"Oh god yes" Loki groans, right now he’s so hard it’s painful.

“Are you wet for me Darcy?” He whispers the question to her ear, making her shivers.

“You know I'm always wet for you.” Darcy sighs as she guides his hand to her seeping center. With her fingers she slips her damp knickers to the side, to give him a clear picture of how wet she really is.

“I can’t wait to have you in me … making love to me,” She whimpers when he plunges one of his long fingers inside, “your hard cock pumps in and out of me, aanz - until you explode and fill me with your cum, dear god, Loki, I swear, if I’m not already pregnant right now, I’d let you knock me up.”

“Darcy – " Fire sparks in his eyes as he drawls the warning.

*Okay, that’s it.* Darcy knows a limit when she hears one. If she pulls this stunt any further none of them would get out of this room and no wedding would ever take place, until maybe, their child’s second birthday.

“But a deal is a deal.” She suddenly retreats, plastering an innocent smile on her face as she dashes away from him.

Raking his already unruly hair, Loki grunts in frustration, “I’m so going to punish you for this.”

Easing up to sit, Darcy looks over her shoulder and winks at him, “Looking forward to it Mr. Odinson. Now, first thing first - ”

Gazing at her with unabashed admiration, Loki’s sexy pout turns into a smile that turns into an infectious full-blown grin,

“‘The wedding?’"
“Yep. The wedding.” Darcy replies as she offers him a hand,

“Shall we?”

LokiWelcome it in a heartbeat, ready to follow his queen to whichever, wherever destination she takes him to.

“Absolutely.”

***

THE END

Chapter End Notes

And that's a wrap everybody!

I never thought I'd I finished my first (longest) series ever *tears* I really had GREAT time writing this one and I do hope you guys had fun reading it. For those of you who stays from the very start with your kind comments and kudos (you know who you are), despite my errors and my long updates and many other things I failed as a writer, you guys are just too sweet, too precious and I humbly THANK YOU!

Oh and btw, did you notice which wardrobe I chose to dress him with at their meeting? *winks*

P.S. :
I know I've said this many times before, that English isn't my native tongue but still, I feel sorry for those who were bothered, a bit light headed perhaps, with my grammar and stuffs, a BIG thank you for letting me know. Maybe you guys can read this instead.
Extra

Chapter Summary

~ Just Married ~

Chapter Notes

It's the scene after the last chapter ;) yes ladies and gentlemen, they finally made it out of the bedroom to tie the knot.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.
Hi you guys, it's me again, your friendly smutty neighborhood's writerlady! So I've promised (at tumblr) to post something new when this story hits 10,000 view. And it just did, so, YAY!!!
As for something new, does this count? Yeah? No?
If the answer is no then I'm gonna have to pop one serious question before I post the real thing. Do you guys enjoy the tone I set for The Devil's?
I really need to know because ... *stares at lonely comment section* *stares at kudos*
*stares at hits* *calculates the numbers* *grasshoppers creaking noises commence*
You get the picture.

Personally, tbh, I kinda love it. And the new story I've been working on, it's written in the same tone. So hit me up with your thoughts, let me know if you're interested. I will post it (or not) once I get my answer ;*
Oh and one last thing, it's gonna be another modern AU because you see, I've long given up trying to write canon space prince Loki. There are already LOTS of great stories out there, both old and new, completed or on going, though I don't read a lot of them but, just to name a few : "There's A God Under My Bed" by Q_it and "This Is Gospel" by Smac89 *hats off* *throws confetti* *bows down*

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!