The Ladybugs and The Bees

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The Ladybugs and The Bees

by BullySquadess

Summary

AKA the early-fandom Ladynoir puberty fic that spiraled waaaaaay out of proportion. The main story line (Chapters 1-40) is COMPLETED. Chapter 41 and onward will be post-reveal, established relationship shenanigans.
Chapter 1

Chapter Summary

Wherein Chat Is Oblivious And Marinette is #suffering.

It was a universal fact of life. Ladybug had no problem keeping up with Chat Noir.

Oh he talked big and all, dancing circles around her in battle then inevitably getting knocked aside through his own hubris. But at the end of the day, they were partners, equal in both speed and strength (even if their power often presented itself in different ways.)

That’s why, on yet another chilly Parisian night, when Marinette found it hard to keep up with her black-clad companion, she began to seriously worry. Another rippling shot of pain hit her and the idea of leaping across yet another rooftop made Marinette seriously want to curl up and cry. The again, lately most everything elicited the same response.

She called out to the dark shadow leagues ahead of her, suggesting they take a quick break from patrol as she hunched down and braced her back against a nearby wall.

“What’s wrong?” Chat Noir taunted as he sauntered back to her position. “Can’t keep up with the lightning fast moves of Paris’ most beloved superhero?” The shit-eating grin he wore slid right off his face though once he saw her gritted teeth and drooping shoulders. He padded over to her and lifted her chin, hunkering down next her.

“Are you hurt? Did you pull something on that last leap?” The worry was evident on his feature despite his quirked eyebrow, “Maybe I should carry you back, hmmm?”

Ladybug shot him a withering look, shaking her head free of his grasp and rocking back onto her heels. Leave it to Chat to find a way to be simultaneously concerned and flirtatious.

“No I’m… great,” another white hot pain hit her as she stood up, causing her to hiss out and pause halfway to her feet. “Well maybe not great, but I’m not injured.” The cool night air felt good on her flushed skin, assuaging some of her discomfort. After a moment the pain was gone and she was able to stand fully.

She glanced over at Chat, registering the doubt written across his face

“Uh-huh, you look just dandy. Seriously, you can go home early if you’re sick, it’s been pretty quiet so far tonight and I don’t mind finishing up alone,” he said, glancing her up and down as if she were about to explode.

Something about his gaze irritated Ladybug, despite the sincerity of his words. She hated feeling fragile, both emotionally and physically; And if what her Mother had mentioned about her own experiences held true for her daughter as well, this was only the beginning.

Marinette remember turning bright red that day, burying her head into the pile of fluffy pillows stacked on the bed her Mother sat on the edge of, kindly prattling on to her daughter all about the “Joys of Womanhood”. Marinette had stuttered out that this discussion wasn’t really necessary, that someone had come to her class a few months before and explained the whole thing, but Mrs.
Dupain-Cheng had insisted, stating she didn’t trust anyone but herself to inform her daughter about the facts of life.

Marinette did have to admit she held some appreciation for her mother’s gentle, yet straight-forward guidance. Towards the end, she felt much more at ease, even comfortable enough to ask the questions she would have never dared utter in class, for fear of melting into a puddle on the ground. Though if she ever had to hear her mother say the words “menstruation” or “condom” again, Marinette might just flee the country.

Since that day, life seemed almost like a ticking countdown. As more and more girls in her class started “getting theirs”, the lingering fear Marinette felt for this particular part of life gave way to curiosity, and eventually expectation. By the time Alya started her period, Marinette has crossed the line into envy. Even as she watched her friend curl up on the chaise complaining about the cramps, bloating, mood swings, and “oh gosh this stuff just gets everywhere if you aren’t careful and stand stock still!”, Marinette couldn’t help but feel like she was being left out of a special club.

Don’t most girls start before they turned 14? She speculated, fearfully anticipating her 15th birthday coming up in just a month. Call her a worrier, but at the time if seemed a perfectly acceptable catastrophe.

Of course now here she was, hunkered over in a dirty alley with a wad of cotton where the sun don’t shine and an equally annoying sidekick to deal with. After the initial triumph of waking up with bloodstained sheets, Marinette couldn’t recall exactly why she was so ready to open this particular chapter of her life.

“You know I take things too far sometimes but I swear I never meant to hurt your feelings and I just….” He was rambling at this point, but honestly it was so hard to think with her shoulder shaking like that. “You know I take things too far sometimes but I swear I never meant to hurt your feelings and I just…”

Ladybug listened to his frantic apologies, the ridiculous nature of this whole situation dawning on her as she watched the boy flail around like a wet cat. She couldn’t help let a small chuckle slip her lips, seeing him this flustered. Chat turned at the sound, anxiety turning to confusion as he let his hands fall at his sides. Then, just as quickly as the tears had started…they stopped, leaving Ladybug feeling very foolish that she had even cried in the first place. She took a deep breath, dragging her hands down her wet cheeks and flashing am apologetic look at her strung-out companion.

“I’m not mad at you Kitty Cat,” she said, ruffling his hair slightly, “I’m just dealing with something
right now.” She flashed him an appreciative smile and he seemed to relax a bit.

“Well, My Lady, you know I’m always here if you’d like to talk about said problems.” He was steadily regaining his bravado now, leaning forward to whisper in her ear. “You just let me know which boy won’t stop pursuing your affection and I’ll have him shipped abroad within a day, cat’s honor!” Ok, he was clearly recovered enough from her outburst to resume flirting, Ladybug noticed, rolling her eyes and stepping away.

“But who would help me save Paris if you were out of the country?” Ladybug asked coyly, watching his ears droop into a pout. “Besides,” she continued, the barest hints of a blush cropping up on her cheeks, “this is more of a…uh… lady problem if you catch my meaning.” Chat just stared back quizzically, eventually shrugging his shoulders.

“Nope, can’t say that I do.” He phrased it casually, but she picked up on his questioning tone. Boy, was this a conversation she never thought she’d have to have with her partner. This time she stared him dead in the face, putting emphasis on each word.

“A Lady Problem, Chat.” Still no recognition. Well if she wasn’t embarrassed before, she sure was now. How was he not catching her meaning! “Have you never taken a health class? In your life??” she exclaimed. Another shrug.

“I haven’t actually.” He responded truthfully. Health was never a subject covered in his home-school curriculum, nor was it brought up in his first year of public education. Besides, it not like he didn’t know the basics. Brush your teeth, wear deodorant, change your underwear and you’re good. But judging from the flushed and frustrated face of his beloved Ladybug, there was clearly a memo he had missed out on. This time, his miraculous was the one to beep.

“You know, never mind Chat,” Ladybug sighed, secretly thankful for her escape route from this conversation. “All you need to know is that I’ll be ok in few day, so there’s really no need to worry.” She shot him one last confused look as a goodbye and shot up the side of the wall.

“Wait!” he called from below, prompting her to peek over the edge of the roof on which she now stood. “Should I be getting something here?” he questioned, throwing his arms wide. Ladybug gave a quick shake of her head before deciding to take pity on his innocent soul.

“Go ask a friend if you aren’t sure,” she shouted down at him, “You have those, don’t you?” She chuckled at the teeth gnashing look he shot her before turning and vaulting to the next building, thinking of the life changing soak she would take once she reached home.
Chapter 2

Chapter Summary

In Which Nino Tries To Be Teacher, But Ends Up Getting Schooled.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Ladybug noticed a marked shift in Chat’s demeanor towards her in the days following her tiny outburst. He seemed to jog just a bit slower, turning back from time to time in order to make sure she was still there. He needn’t have worried of course. She rolled her eyes at him, sprinting past him and calling out for him to keep up. Seemingly glad to have his old partner back, yet still curious as to what had been afflicting her, he followed. By the time their latest Akuma fight took place though, he was back to his usual, flirtatiously annoying self, her mysterious sickness all but forgotten in his mind.

In fact, it wasn’t until months later that Adrien even recalled the events of that night. It was on a dreary Wednesday, during the peak of midterm seasons. When teachers and students alike dragged their withering selves through the halls in caffeine-induced trances. Adrien, of course, had his own exceptional reasons to be tired, between the influx of holiday shoots as well a marked rise in frequency of akuma attacks (turns out not everyone is so jolly during the most wonderful time of the year), it was a miracle the boy was still upright. So, feeling groggier than he could ever remember being, he shuffled into class, sliding in next to Nino and immediately laying his head down. Just a little rest and then…

“Hey, you awake there bro?” Adrien groaned, rolling his head sideways to glance at his friend’s overly cheery expression. What gave him the right to be so goddamn chipper this early in the morning? As much as he cared for Nino, Adrien didn’t have the energy to wipe the scowl from his face, instead electing to grind the heels of his palms into his eye sockets and growl out an intelligible answer. His friend just shook a finger at him, tsk-ing like a stern headmaster.

“Aw c’mon, not you too! Nearly everyone in class has been so snippy today, well that or asleep.” He jerked a thumb over his shoulder and rolled his eyes dramatically. “I swear I heard Alya snoring earlier.” This earned him a sharp rap on the head for the accused snorer herself.

“Not everyone can be graced with your superhuman ability to stay up for days at a time, Nino.” Adrien nearly fell out his chair as Alya leaned over her desk to grab his friend by the face. Her normally wavy hair had passed the border in to frizz land, and the tangled mass of red locks were now currently splayed over Adrien’s shoulder. For his part, he managed to escape with just a few swipes, sputtering as he pulled a stray hair stuck to his lips.

“You tell me where you’re getting your stash of Mexican energy drinks and I’ll make it worth your while” she was saying, hand folded in a pleading gesture before a very smug Nino.

“Hmmm, no can do missy. That stuff isn’t made to be consumed by mere mortals, and I’m afraid if it were to pass your lips you would explode into a supernova of pure energy.” He ended his sentence with a flourish, before peeking back at a very disappointed Alya.
“Ah you’re useless,” she responded, slumping back into her spot before leaning back in conspiratorially, putting all the persuasion she possessed into her next statement. “You know, you could make the girls of this classroom very happy if you would just co-operate.” She threw in a wink for good measure.

“As if Adrien’s sheer presence didn’t already cover that.” Nino remarked, elbowing the blonde in his tired ribs. Before Adrien had the chance to rebuke that statement, his classmate Mariette walked past, stuttering out her usual (if a bit more tired-sounding) greeting, and rushing to sit down in her usual spot behind him. Nino was the only one with the energy to acknowledge her entrance, shooting her a finger gun before turning back to the previous conversation. “Case in point! No amount of illegal caffeinisation could rival the pure star power of my best bud!”

This time it was Alya who interrupted Adrien’s rebuttal. “Alright, I’m gunna be frank with you here, Nino,” she said in her no-nonsense reporter voice, crossing her arms as she made her final offer, “Every girl in class synced-up a few months ago, so I’m sure you can understand the need we have here.” She flexed her hands out imploringly.

Nino’s eyebrows crept up towards the brim of his hat, “Synced-up how, exactly?” Alya sighed loudly, dragging him by the collar toward her to whisper in his ear. Adrien watched his friend’s face morph from curiosity to sheer disbelief in under 30 seconds.

“You’re messing with me. No way that’s even possible!” Alya gave a humorless laugh.

“Yeah? And how would you know?? Trust me, it is a very real phenomenon, you look around you…” She gestured around the room. Nino followed her hand, noting that out of all his fellow classmates, the ladies did seemed to be suffering marginally more than their male counter-parts. Chloe had already experienced no less than three emotional tantrums before the bell had rung, and even sweet Marinette wore a twisted expression as she stared straight forwards at the board. His eyes widened, turning back to a weary Alya.

“Shoot, you’re not kidding are you?”, Her eyes narrowed she shook her head. Nino laid his hand on his heart, leaning forwards solemnly. “In that case, I promise to have a full crate here by tomorrow. Now tell me, would you prefer Lightning Lemon or Gotta-Go Grape?”

“At this point, I’d drink straight-up cat piss if it helped me stay awake.” The bedraggled redhead shot him an appreciative grin before sliding back into her seat. Nino gave her an affirmative thumbs up as the bell rang, signaling the beginning of homeroom.

Adrien sat there ignoring the teacher’s opening remarks, thoroughly confused at the conversation that had just transpired before him. First of all, Nino never, **NEVER** shared his illegal Mexican energy drinks. Even when Adrien asked for a sip once, his best friend had just shook his head solemnly, saying it was best if he didn’t. Second of all, what was all that business with the whispering? What could Alya have told him that could change his mind so completely? Whatever was happening here had to do with what she mentioned, that whole “syncing-up” thing. Adrien silently resolved to approach Nino about it during lunch break.

“Mr. Agreste, would you mind repeating for the class what I just said?” Oh no…
After what seemed like days of studying and drilling, just when Adrien thought his brain might split in half, they were released for midday break. Nino prattled on about the new album he was currently obsessed with as they walked to the small Café around the corner, a favorite spot for the duo. Winter had well and truly set in, prompting them to take a table inside, as opposed to their usual spot out on the sidewalk.

“Dude, I’m so serious, it’s a life changing record. Listen to it and you’ll know what I mean.” The waitress swung by, dropping off a plate for each boy and wishing them good luck on their tests.

At the beginning of the school year, Adrien had approached his father, explaining that many of his classmates stuck close to school for lunch and pleaded to be allowed to do the same. Mr. Agreste adamantly disagreed at first, insisting his son eat lunch at home, but once Adrien convinced him all the saved time would be useful for studying, his father gave in, instructing Nathalie to set up a tab at the restraint of his sons choosing.

Nearly every day since, Nino and Adrien had been coming here. This meant they no longer had to put in orders for their lunch, instead having their usual fare dropped off by the now-familiar waitress the moment they sat down. The duo thanked her, their conversation dying down as they dug in.

“Hey, so…” Adrien began, wiping a bit of mustard off his mouth, “What was that whole thing between you and Alya this morning? I was so lost for the whole conversation…”

“You mean the whole energy drink exchange?” Nino shook his head “Yeah, she drives a hard bargain. Now I just have to find a way to get my hands on a crate of the good stuff by tomorrow.’ He stared at his friend over steepled fingers. “My sources will not be pleased…” he finished cryptically.

“I’m not talking about that part, although I am surprised you gave in.” Aiden shook his head. “I want to know what it is she whispered in your ear to make you change your mind so quickly!” Nino gave a snort.

“Oh man, you are not going to believe this!” Nino snorted out. He leaned in and peeked around the crowed interior before continuing. “Apparently, if girls spend enough time together, they all start to get their periods at the same time.” Nino leaned back in his chair, gesturing the universal “mind blown” symbol around his head. Adrien just looked at him, confusion written prominently on his features.

“What?”

“Yeah, I didn’t think it was possible either but I’ll take Alya’s word for it.” Nino continued, “I mean you saw everyone today. I have to say, as crazy it sounds I can’t help but believe her.”

“I’m…still confused.” Adrien squinted at his friend. “What’s a period?”

I took a good 20 seconds for Nino to process the question. Once he was sure his friend wasn’t just yanking his chain, he barked out a strangled laugh wiping his hands down his face as Adrien looked on, scowling.

“Oh dude, you’ve be kidding me! I mean, has nobody… haven’t you?? Bro, have you’ve got quite a conversation ahead of you!” At this point, he was near hysteric (probably all the caffeine he had pumping through his system) needing to grip the edge of the table as laughter tore through him. Conversely, Adrien sat with arms crossed, a sour expression plastered across his face. He didn’t like the feeling he was being left out of something.
Finally, as Nino’s laughter died down with a sigh, he turned to the pouting blonde and threw a hand out to grip his shoulder. “Don’t worry man, it’s not your fault you’re clueless. And your old pal here is gunna bring you up to speed.” They both stood then, Nino nudging him through the door.

The boys waved to the owner before stepping back into the brisk weather outside. Adrien opened his mouth to continue his line of questioning, but Nino just raised his hand, silencing his friend with the promise to explain everything once they got back to school.

Back on campus, Alya sat hunched over her history text book, resisting the urge to just lay her head down for a few moments rest. Last night had been rough, there had been another attack on Paris and Alya had a duty to her bloggers to document every kick-butt moment of the awesomeness that is Ladybug and Chat Noir. After snapping countless pictures, she dragged herself home to fully compose and edit a post worthy of the Ladyblog. By the time she was satisfied with her work, it was past midnight and Alya mentally punched herself as she crawled into bed. Of course this morning brought yet another inconvenience, and a quick call to Marinette confirmed that she was not, in fact, alone in her misery.

Although she usually headed home for lunch, that last review reminded Alya of just how much work she had to catch up on. So as Marinette prepared to walk home with her, as per usual, Alya just waved her off, saying she could survive off the granola bar in her backpack. Looking concerned (yet too tired to argue) her best friend reluctantly left, promising to bring back an orange scone, Alya’s favorite.

So here she was, 40 mins later, stomach rumbling and barely a page outlined. Needless to say, a nap sounded glorious at this point. Alya felt her lids dropping, confident she would be woken up by the bell for next period. Just a nice little 15 minute rest is all I need, she thought nodding off. But, of course, before she could fully close her eyes, Alya picked up on Nino’s distinctive laughter echoing across the courtyard.

She groaned, knowing there would be no relaxation for her if that livewire was around. It did strike her odd that the duo was back so early, they usually skirted back into class just on the nick of time. She gathered her materials up and headed over to the table they had settled at. Misery does enjoy company she reasoned.

As she approached, Adrien gave a polite wave. This prompted Nino to whirl in his spot, the strange look on his face growing stranger as he registered Alya’s presence.

“Alright,” she said suspiciously, settling her supplies on the table. “What are you two up to?”

“Oh ho ho, you’ve come just in time!” Nino responded loudly before lowering his voice. “I was just about to give our friend Adrien here… the talk.”

Clearly she must have heard him wrong. She glanced between the boys, registering the mischievous glee on one face, along with the slight confusion of the other. Oh God, he wasn’t kidding.

“You mean, like, The Birds And The Bees spiel?” she questioned.

“Woah there, baby steps Alya.” Nino held his hand up. “Lets just start small.” He nudged Adrien
“Ask her what you asked me earlier.”

“Um…What’s a period?” Adrien regretted the question as soon as he saw the surprise on Alya’s face, ignoring his friend’s suppressed chuckles as he felt his cheeks heat up.

“Oh stop that Nino!” Alya snapped, her expression softening as she turned back to Adrien. “Just cause he’s never had anyone to explain it to him doesn’t mean you get to laugh at him.”

Nino sobered, “You’re right, sorry bro.” He crossed his heart and held up a hand before continuing “From here on out, I will be your completely serious guide into the world of Womanhood.” Alya scoffed at that.

Nino turned to her. “And of course you are more than welcome to stick around. You know, you might just learn something.”

“Oh I’ll stick around, but only to correct you when you try to pass on completely false information!”

“I’ll have you know I got a B+ in Health class last year, my best subject being lady problems!” Adrien perked up at his choice of words, a memory sliding back into place.

“The fact that you just referred to Menstruation as ‘lady problems’ only reinforces my decision to stay.” Alya replied. “So go ahead with your lesson, I’ll be sure to cut in when you inevitably mess up.”

Nino took a deep breath, turned to his friend…

And thus began the longest, most awkward 20 minutes of Adrien’s life.

“… so then, on top of all that other gross stuff, girls also have to deal with things like crying and stomachaches..”

“Nope wrong,” Alya cut in for about the 7th time, “It not our stomach that hurts.” She leaned in (and if Adrien could think past the mountain of embarrassment that had been building, he would say she looked like she was about to spout the punchline to a scary story about a man with a hook hand.)

“No, the cramping we feel is the lining of our uterus slowly being torn apart… and expelled.”

Both boys recoiled, unconsciously grabbing at their abdomens. Alya just gave a wise laugh.

“That’s horrible.” Adrien whispered, recalling Lady hunkered over against the wall. Nino looked a bit green.

“Oh it can be,” Alya continued, deriving some sick form of enjoyment from their reactions. Call her a masochist, but she reasoned even though they didn’t have to experience menstruation firsthand, didn’t mean they should know all the gory details. “Like I said before, all girls are different. See like I only get cramps maybe 3 or 4 times a year, but poor Marinette has them every month. Pretty bad too, from what I hear.”
“What’s pretty bad?” poor Marinette herself questioned, arriving to take in the trio. Both boys were staring at the grated table, faraway looks painted across their faces. Conversely, Alya look right at her friend, winking before assuring her it was nothing.

“Well!” she said, pushing herself up and gathering her supplies. “Today was quite educational wasn’t it boys?” They both nodded, still pretty out of it. Marinette glanced over, noticing Adrien’s prominent blush and was suddenly very curious to know just what her spitfire of a best friend could have said to bring the normally very cool Adrien Agreste to such a state.

The bell rang before she could get a question out though, prompting the students to haul tail back to class. One smug, one confused, and two much wiser than when the day had started.

Chapter End Notes

This one is nearly twice as long as the first, it sort of got out of control whoops. Again thanks for all the feedback guys <3
Chapter 3

Chapter Summary

In Which Ladybug Unknowingly Turns Up The Heat, And Chat Feels The Burn. (aka, let the sin begin)

Chapter Notes

And finals are over folks! That means I now have all the time in the world to sleep, eat, and maybe even write a little. Enjoy your chapter you sinners.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

She must have heard him wrong. Ladybug gaped at her partner, the wind whistling in her ears as they stood atop Notre Dame. That’s it, she thought to herself, I must have obviously misheard him with the weather conditions the way they are. Because there’s no way hell he just said…

“Pardon me,” she said haltingly, “I didn’t quite catch what you just said. Would you mind running that by me one more time?”

“Um…sorry for your uterus?”

Lady’s eyelid twitched. Nope, she had definitely heard him correctly the first time.

“That’s…what I thought you said,” she responded, nodding at him slowly. Her eyes held a million different cries for help, but looking back at her partner, he seemed to find no fault at what had just come out of his mouth. In fact, Chat seemed almost proud of himself, oblivious to the internal breakdown his lady was currently experiencing.

“Oh! And I got you this too.” He unzipped his left pocket, fishing out a small foiled-wrapped truffle. “There was more, but this was all I could fit.” He explained sheepishly, extending the candy like a peace offering. “I hear it helps cure lady problems,” he continued, the smallest hint of a blush appearing on his face.

“I….yeah,” Ladybug responded, tentatively taking the chocolate from his hand. She watched as he ducked his head, rubbing his hand on the back of his neck uneasily. Deciding to take pity on the poor cat, she let out a small chuckle, easing the tension between them just enough for her partner to look up hopefully.

“I wouldn’t say chocolate is a cure per say,” Ladybug continued, pausing to pop the newly unwrapped treat between her lips. “But it most certainly doesn’t hurt matters.” Chats eyes traced the movement of her mouth, his blush taking on new meaning as her eyes slid shut, savoring the flavor.

Not that money had ever been an issue, be he was suddenly very glad he had sprung for the expensive stuff as he watched her nod in appreciation.
“Owh muy God!” she exclaimed through a full mouth, grinning in a delightfully goofy way. “Thus is seriouswuy incwudable!” Chat gave her a lopsided grin at the childish way she was enjoying her treat, prompting her to snap her jaw shut. Ladybug let the rest of the exquisite chocolate melt in her mouth, disappointed for its absence. She eyeballed the cocoa power stuck to her fingertips, calculating just how far she could push her bad manners in order to get one last taste.

“Well my Lady, anything to…” Chat’s response was cut short when, to his utter horror and delight, Ladybug brought her gloved fingers up to her mouth, suckling the remainder of the chocolate from her slim digits. Once again her eyes slid shut, enjoying what little pleasure she could derive during this week from hell. She was broken from her reverie at the sound of his choked gasp, one he instantly tried to cover with a cough. He waved off her confused look with one hand, the other still raised in a fist to catch the brunt of his coughing fit.

His eyes had yet to leave hers though, and realizing the rather suggestive position she was in, Ladybug allowed her fingers to spring free with a small pop. She watched his eyes go impossibly wider and before she even knew what she was doing, she shot him an impish wink, not unlike those he threw her way nearly every day.

In hindsight, he could have probably used some warning.

Ladybug registered her own actions a split after he did, her own immense embarrassment prompting her to quickly turn away. She had crossed that thin line between innocent playfulness and full-on flirtation without even knowing it, treading into territory most often inhabited by Chat himself. The fact he was so uncharacteristically lost for words only heightened her suspicion that she had perhaps taken things too far. A strange sort of feeling began to bloom in her chest.

“Well!” she blurted in a forcibly upbeat tone, “We had better get going now, can’t just expect the Akuma to come walking right up to us, can we?” She swiveled back to throw him one more falsely casual smile before taking a running leap from the church, her yo-yo zipping out to catch on the opposite building. As her feet hit the pavement, Ladybug knew fully well the erratic rhythm of her heart had nothing to do with several-story jump she had just taken, and everything to do with the leather-clad hero still perched atop the centuries old building behind her, still desperately trying to pick his jaw up off the ground.

“hhmm-ugggggHH”, Marinette groaned, throwing herself face down on the bed. After the long and strange day that had just transpired, the familiar feel of it under her body helped work out some of the tension she had been carrying around. Above her shoulder, her Kwami flitted around playfully, giggling at her friend’s demeanor and narrowly avoiding the pillow thrown half-heartedly towards her.

“This isn’t funny, Tikki!” Marinette bemoaned, rolling over to glare at the large stuffed cat that dominated the head of her sleeping space. Pretending it was some sort of overgrown voodoo doll, she jabbed it in the snout, savoring her small (if childish) victory. But that wasn’t the feline on her mind at the moment.

“This isn’t funny…” she recalled with a grimace. She had almost all but forgotten his awkward condolences, unable to think past her own bold actions that followed. Obviously he had
managed to work out what had been afflicting her weeks before on their stakeout, and was trying to make up for in his own misguided way. When Marinette thought about it, the gesture was almost… sweet. A word not often associated with Chat Noir. Sauvé, sure. Gratuitous, absolutely. But sweet? It was a strange thing to experience from the rascally boy.

In fact, the more she thought about it, the more Marinette began to appreciate his sentiment. Perhaps going straight to “sorry for your uterus” wasn’t the most tactful way to approach the subject, but the thought was there. And the fact he most likely spent a pretty penny on that truffle…

There it was, that strange feeling flared up behind her ribs again as she recalled her utterly lewd reaction to his present. Sitting up to slowly untangle her hair from its trademark pigtails, Marinette flushed at the memory of the way his breath hitched, eyes focused on her lips as she chewed. The way he had practically melted at her spur-of-the-moment wink. Yes, perhaps the finger cleaning was a tad unnecessary, she thought, absentminded stoking the cat pillow beside her. But hell if it wasn’t the best chocolate she could ever recall having (and that’s big coming from someone who grew up above a bakery.)

“You like himmm.” Tikki sang out in her twinkling voice.

“I absolutely do not,” Marinette shot back, pushing herself up to head over towards her desk. “You know there’s room for only one boy in this heart.”

Tikki flittered over to plop onto the tabletop in front of Marinette, giving her a knowing look before continuing. “You’ve never acted like that around Adrien before…”

“Acted like what exactly?” Marinette replied, chewing the inside of her check guiltily as she opened her laptop and clicked over to the Lady Blog. Although the Akuma attack had happened just hours before, leave it to Alya to already have a full story posted, detailing the fight in its entirety.

“I may not be human, but I’ve been around long enough to understand when someone is flirting.” Tikki zoomed in closer to emphasize her next words. “And you were most definitely flirting with Chat.”

Marinette just scoffed, eyes continuing to scan her friend’s article. She was unwilling to even give thought to such a ridiculous suggestion. She scrolled down to find a gallery full of pictures depicting Ladybug and Chat Noir, working in tandem against the giant, tennis racket-wielding villain.

Most of the shots where blurry, Alya had been complaining about her lack of a proper camera for months now, but others stood out in stark clarity. The first showed Ladybug leaping to dodge a fiery tennis ball, the flaming edge of the spinning projectile coming dangerously close to her face. Marinette couldn’t help the small bit of pride she felt to see the determination on her own face. If only she could feel the same out of costume.

She clicked through a few more pics, the ordeal seeming much more treacherous now that she was an outside observer. As Ladybug, she felt invincible. As if every factor of life around her could bend to her every whim. But seeing the raw power of the enemies she regularly ran up against after the fact never ceased to awe her, putting in perspective just how miraculous her alter ego was.

Finally, the last image of the article popped up on her screen. This one depicted the two victorious heroes, bumping knuckles as a middle-aged woman in a tennis skirt sat on the grass behind them, a confused expression plastered across her face. Despite being quite preoccupied during the battle, Marinette had managed to notice her eager reporter friend dancing around the duo after their victory. Ladybug made sure to smile straight at the camera during her triumphant final moments on the scene, knowing Alya would be thrilled to get such an amazing shot. What she had failed to notice until now
was the fact that her partner had paid no mind to the camera, instead gazing at Ladybug with enough raw admiration in his eyes to make her throat close up.

Marinette clicked her laptop shut. She stood suddenly and grabbed the soft pink towel dangling from the hook over her door, making her way to the hall bathroom. By the time her hand closed around the faucet of the tub, her heart was hammering just as quickly as it has been this morning. Chalking her reaction up to stress, Marinette reasoned a hot soak followed by a good night’s rest would help wipe away the lingering emotions of her strange day. After lighting the stubby tea lights lining the bathroom and squiring a liberal amount of her favorite lavender oil into the tub, she slid in.

Now, if only she had some chocolate…

It wasn’t until that night, until after all the fighting and the lessons and the endless hours in front the camera were over that Adrien finally let himself go back over the events of the day. The embarrassment over his less-than-stellar opening line was vastly overshadowed by the events following his foot-in-mouth condolence. Her reaction had surpassed even his wildest dreams.

Well…perhaps not his wildest.

But, the way she looked at him as she licked the cocoa from her fingers was downright sinful. And if you had told him a week ago that Ladybug would actually wink at him, he would have had you sent off to an institution. Yet here he was, reliving the moment over and over, fervently hoping it wasn’t just a stress induced concoction of his mind. Adrien mentally kicked himself for about tenth time today for ruining the moment with his awkward onslaught of coughing.

“Or technically, with Chat Noir” Adrien thought somewhat dejectedly, toeing his shoes off and placing them inside his spacious closet. The cavernous room echoed with the slap of his bare feet on hard flooring as he made his way to the large windows that dominated the northern wall of his bedroom. Ever grateful for their ability to slide right open (a feature that made his almost nightly excursions possible) Adrien opened the closest one just a few inches, suddenly feeling as though the room lacked air.

I mean c’mon. Ladybug. His Ladybug. Had been flirting. And flirting with him!

So yeah, it was a good truffle, but not good enough to change someone’s personality so drastically. There had to have been something there before. Perhaps his nearly 2 years of almost constant flirting had somehow suddenly broken through? Adrien pondered. Or maybe she had always held some small amount of romantic feelings towards him, choosing now to act upon them.

He sighed, taking in one last lungful of crisp, winter air before closing up for the night.

It’s not as if he was a stranger to being pursued. Leaf through any fashion catalogue or take a 5
minute walk through Paris and you couldn’t go without seeing his face. At school he was widely admired, a great subject of affection for many girls (and if he was being frank, some of the guys too). Some admirers, like Chloe, had a borderline obsession, hounding him in the hallways and showering him with gifts. Or there where the silent types, who just stuttered their way through painfully brief encounters and avoided his gaze like they were looking at the sun. In fact, very few people treated Adrien like an actual human person. Nino and Alya had gotten over the glamour in a matter of weeks, now holding to the same regard they would any of their other classmates. Marinette was usually a tentative fourth to their group, still tripping over herself anytime Adrien addressed her specifically, but he found it didn’t bother him much. That’s just Marinette for you…shy, sweet, and somewhat uncoordinated.

But everything was different when it came to his Lady.

The obvious turn on being her all-around bravery, strength, beauty, selflessness and charisma, all wrapped up in a polka dot package. But Adrien had other reasons to be enamored with her. While he had dozens of people falling over themselves to please Supermodel Adrien Agreste, there’s only one person who truly seemed to care for and admire the most genuine part of his identity. Chat Noir.

The mask gave him the opportunity to be the person he wanted. Someone unique and free of expectation. Knowing someone could still admire him without the façade was the reason Adrien found himself so completely drawn to Ladybug. And the mere suggestion that she could somehow be drawn to him as well…

The image of her fingers sliding out from between her lips flashed once again within his mind. The memory of her winking that same flirtatious messages he found himself constantly throwing at her came unbidden to the forefront of his thoughts. Not for the first time today, Adrien felt his skin flush.

Across the room, Plagg caught sight of his friend once again reddening like a tomato and he began to cackle. Adrien just shot him a withering glare, mumbling something about where the Kwami could stick his cheese before stalking towards the bathroom.

He needed a shower.

A very long, very cold shower.

Chapter End Notes

this took me the longest to write because the story was supposed to end after the last chapter, but all ya'll's words of encouragement have inspired me to beat this horse to death. So no, there's really no projected plotline or length for this but ill keep writing as long as ya'll keep reading. Thanks for the kind comments!
Chapter 4

Chapter Summary

In Which Marinette Rises To New Heights And Adrien Is Late To The Party

Chapter Notes

This chapter is short one (HA, HIDDEN MEANING!) again thanks for all the nice comments! Enjoy sinners.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

“Chat…come stand by me for a second.”

Two black boots skidded to a stop at the edge of the sidewalk. Chat swiveled his head towards Ladybug, trying to decipher exactly what emotion was playing across her cryptic face.

If he didn’t know better, he’d almost say it was mischief. Her mouth was curled inward, lips twitching as if she were trying to beat down a smile. Her blue eyes danced down his body before snapping back up to his face. Seeing him still frozen in his original position, she gestured broadly at him to come over.

Never let it be said Chat Noir ever left a Lady waiting. Regaining his bravado, he swaggered over, grabbing at her hand.

“You know, it’s always my pleasure to…”

“Quiet kitty,” she cut him off, slipping her hand out of his grasp. Ladybug nudged Chat’s shoulder, standing so they were directly side by side. “…and stand up straight!”

The boy obliged, stretching his back with a chuckle. He turned his head to face her and found his lady staring across the short distance between their eyes with a sinister smirk. Chat was about to make another jest before he noticed…

….wait a second.

She was staring across at him.

Not up, but across.

The staunch realization must have shown on his face, because it was at that moment that Ladybug burst out into great peals of laughter

“Oh my god, I’m taller than you!” she cried out, tears of pure glee sliding down her cheeks. Her hands grabbed at her sides as she doubled over with chest-shaking laughter.

Chat sputtered indignantly. “You are not, I’m the tall one!” he responded, crossing his arms
petulantly. At that, Ladybug skipped over, body still convulsing with barely-contained snickers as she stood up primly in front him.

Both heroes stretched their bodies as far up as they could. This led to much poking, with echoed cries of “not fair!” and “that’s your tiptoes!” before they finally settled into identical, stick-straight postures.

And damn it if they weren’t eye to eye.

At any other moment, Chat would have been ecstatic in this position. Their bodies were inches away, their faces even closer. But there she stood, just as tall as he was and just as cocky as he had ever been.

Thinking back over the past few months, Chat had to admit she had been in the midst of a growth spurt. Her change in height must have been gradual it seemed, as the fact she was now equal in stature to him hit Chat like a moving train. ‘When in the world did this happen?’ his mind screamed at him.

“Ok…so maybe we’re the same height.” He muttered, pouting as her eyes widened in victory. She leapt backwards, fist flying up as she sung out a triumphant tune.

“But that doesn’t make you taller than me-e!” Chat screeched out.

Mortified, his hands flew to cover his mouth, Ladybug’s celebration stopping short as she turned to him slowly. He didn’t think it was possible, but she somehow managed to look even more excited than she had before.

“Chat Noir, did your voice just crack?” she asked incredulously.

His face flared up, and suddenly he was glad they took their patrols in the dark of night.

Ladybug’s smug gaze remained glued on him. She was practically vibrating with joy at this point.

Chat made sure to clear his throat before responding, trying to remain cool when all he wanted to do was melt down the storm drain at his feet.

“My voice does not crack.” He replied carefully, his tone falsely low. “I’ll have you know, a fly just flew down my throat.”

She huffed out a laugh, shaking her head with sadistic glee.

“In fact, I’m still very traumatized by the whole ordeal and need to go sleep immediately.”

Her laughter started up again.

‘I need an escape route’ Chat thought desperately. So he did what he always had, flirted his way out.

“Unless of course you’d like to hold me until I feel better.” He suggested with much more confidence than he felt.

Her snickers grew louder, and Chat found it defused his somewhat awkward situation. Soon he had joined in, giggling right alongside her until they were interrupted by a familiar beep.

Taking a deep breath as her laughter died out, Ladybug ran her fingers affectionately through his mused hair. He resisted the urge to purr.
“You know, there’s no reason for you to be embarrassed,” Ladybug began sincerely, “there’s plenty of guys at my school who’s voice’s crack.” She shrugged, her fingers slipping out from between his ears as she ignored his protesting whine.

“It’s just a normal thing, all a part of getting older.” She continued, somewhat ashamed of her previously rude reaction.

Ladybug was no stranger to the physical trials of growing up. So the fact she had been so quick to taunt after he had been nothing but supportive of her throughout her transition into adulthood made her feel even worse.

Of course, being the person he was, Chat recovered from her playful jabs with ease, rolling right back into their usual brand of discourse.

“I appreciate the sentiment My Lady, but my previous statement holds true. This cat don’t crack.” He responded, effectively ending that particular line of conversation. Ladybug took that as a hint to drop it, prompting her to send him a good-natured smile before rounding a corner on the final block of their patrol route.

Although it was mid-April, Paris still held some of its winter chill. Of course it didn’t help they were out in the dead of night, standing on a wide and empty street. A cool wind wound its way up her spine, causing Ladybug to shiver. Say what you would about her costume, but it wasn’t the best insulator.

Chat noticed her discomfort, spouting out a typical line about keeping her warm, then suggesting they wrap it up for the night when she jabbed him in the shoulder. The two said their goodbyes then, each bounding off in opposite directions after promising to meet up in a few days.

Unbeknownst to him, Marinette needed only to cut across a few side streets before she was back at the bakery, silently thankful their trail ended up so close to home. Quick as a flash, she shimmied up to the roof, sliding through the porthole to land softly on her bed.

Adrien, on the other hand, had just managed to slip past the windowsill before his transformation released. His tiny black kwami emerged with a grumble, muttering a few half-hearted complaints before passing out on the massive bed.

Although Adrien wanted nothing more than to fall in behind him, there were a few things that still needed to be done before he could turn in for the night.

His first order of business was to wash off all the grime and sweat one acquired by running around Paris all evening.

Just like the rest of the Agreste house, his bathroom was massive. All white marble and sterling silver fixtures, with a rainfall shower and twin sinks sunk into a long vanity that wrapped around two walls of the room. Why in the world Adrien needed two sinks was beyond him. The same could be said for the modern, square soaking tub that sat unused in one corner of the bathroom. Adrien could count on one hands the number of times he had actually taken a bath, the last being when he was about 12 years old.
So naturally he bypassed it, instead walking into the shower stall and turning the faucet almost fully on.

Adrien’s thoughts wandered once again to Ladybug as he scrubbed at his hair. Not that he made a habit of thinking about her in the shower, he assured himself quickly, dipping his head under the warm jet of water before shaking his clean locks. It just seemed like every day she was bounding ahead of him, diving headfirst into adulthood while he himself stayed young and unchanged.

He had always been ahead of the curve. By the time he was eleven, Adrien had already undergone some growth spurts, towering over the other kids his age (or at least the few he came in contact with). Photographers had sung his praises, exalting his height despite his youth and clamoring to book him for their shoots. Adrien assumed this is why he had gotten so far in the modeling world, he was truly built for the task.

Although his last name probably didn’t hurt either.

When he started attending public school, Adrien had noticed on the first day he was taller than nearly everyone in his class (a fact that had secretly pleased him to no end). Of course, all that had changed in the past few months.

One by one, his classmates hit puberty, that natural affliction that seemed to spread like measles among the young teenagers. People seemed to grow inches overnight. All around him waists shrunk, shoulders widened, voices cracked then deepened. Pimples were popped, bras were clasped, and even facial hair had begun to make an appearance.

“No dude, look! I swear it’s right there under my nose.” Adrien recalled Nino saying to him just a few days ago. Squinting hard, Adrien had just been able to make out a sparse gathering of dark hair beginning to pattern his friend’s upper lip.

Before he could comment on it however, the pair jumped apart at the arrival of a snickering Alya, both boys rushing to explain just why they had been so close only moments before. She had just smirked at them, heading towards the school entrance to meet up with the newly arrived Marinette.

Yes, it seems as though Adrien had hit his stride early, now doomed to watch everyone around him grow and mature as he himself stayed trapped in his perpetual state of youth. Allowing himself to revel in the angst brought on by his age, Adrien turned the shower off suddenly, grabbing a towel to dry his hair gruffly.

‘She’s as tall as me’, Adrien grumbled again, wrapping the towel around his waist as he approached the vanity. He leaned into the mirror, his nose just inches from the reflective surface.

There he was. The same Adrien he had always been. His skin was soft and flawless, thanks to the brutal daily moisturizing regimen he upheld. No traces of acne…but no traces of hair either he thought glumly, eyes scanning the region around his mouth for a single wayward strand. Adrien turned his head.

While some of the guys in his class had developed more defined jawlines, Adrien’s profile remained gently curved, cheeks rounded and chin ending in a soft point. He pouted, the expression only seeming to make him look younger.

No for the first time today, Adrien sighed. Leaning back from the counter, he gathered his dirty clothes up, intent on finishing his nightly routine by checking the Ladyblog. There wasn’t much news since he last checked less than 24 hours ago. Just some new fan theories he skimmed before clicking over to the archive section.
Laid before him was a chronological timeline of the duo’s adventures. Although the photos heavily featured Ladybug (a fact he was more often than not delighted about), there were a precious few that managed to capture them both within the frame. Scrolling to a few months ago, Adrien clicked through every shot Alya had posted between then and now.

The change was gradual at first. But then even he had to admit he noticed her growth, Ladybug slowly closing the gap between her and Chat’s heights with every passing attack. The latest photo of them together only confirmed her earlier remark. She was, in fact, as tall as he was…perhaps even a hairs width taller.

Feeling irrationally put-off, he exited the window before flinging himself dramatically into bed.

It was all so stupid.

Here he was, supermodel Adrien Agreste, feeling inadequate about his looks. The whole situation was trivial, he knew, but that didn’t stop the feelings of jealousy and longing that swirled around in the pit of his stomach. He fell into a restless sleep.

That night, Adrien dreamt he was still modeling junior’s fashion at the age of 25.

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Chapter End Notes

So I kinda maybe started a new Ladybug story so I probably wont be updating as frequently as I have been, but thanks for hanging in there with me! Side note: I've started deleting my own comments after I reply to you guys because I don't want to clog everything up. Just know i'm very grateful and i see everything you guys are saying!
Chapter 5

Chapter Summary

In Which My Children Are Dumb

Chapter Notes

Ha, so funny story I actually finished chapter 6 before working on this one so plan for a double update as I should be done editing it sometime tonight. Enjoy, and thanks again for all the radical comments! (i crave constant validation)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The next month passed without incident.

Unless of course you counted the weekly, city-wide attacks of massively powerful super-villains as incident… Marinette didn’t.


She made a point of being extra nice to Chat whenever they would work together, still disappointed in herself for the childish way she reacted to her own sudden growth spurt. Of course being the type of guy he was, Chat held no grudge towards her, and in fact still seemed to worship the ground she walked on. Marinette was caught between relief and shame, ultimately thankful her partner didn’t have a malicious bone in his body.

He brought her more chocolate, she stopped pulling away when he leaned down to kiss her hand. Their partnership had never been stronger.

Which is why she was understandably distraught at his news.

“What exactly do you mean by ‘the whole summer’?” Ladybug asked slowly, trying not to let her disappointment show. Chat didn’t bother hide any of his negative feelings, scuffing at the ground with the toe of his steel tipped boots.

“Like...three months.” He responded miserably. “But trust me when I tell you I’m doing everything I can to get out of it.”

Ladybug ignored the clenching of her stomach, attempting to flash him a reassuring smile.

“No! I mean, it’s good to see family, right?”

He nodded at her tightly, ear drooping as he dragged his hands down the side of his face.

‘Who in their right mind takes a 3 month trip to Italy in the middle of summer?’

“What about you?” He said quietly, green eyes flicking over to her with concern. “There’s been
some close calls, lately. If something happened while I was gone…”

She cut him off with a raised hand.

“I’ll manage.” Ladybug said simply.

Chat looked at her then, fear and anger mingling into an expression she had never wanted to see on her partner’s face. She resisted the urge to hug him, instead speaking in a falsely cheery tone as gestured for him to follow.

“But c’mon, this patrol won’t take itself.”

With the final week of school rapidly approaching, Marinette lived in a haze. The anticipation of summer break mixed with her trepidation at Chat’s impending departure, the two chasing each other in an uneasy swirl within her stomach. Add onto that the fact she still had end of course exams to study for…

To say Marinette was stressed would be a gross understatement.

Alya finally noticed her friend’s detrimental state when Marinette showed up to school one day wearing two different shoes and an inside-out shirt. She mentally kicked herself for not picking up on it sooner (the blog had been taking up most of her time), hauling her best friend off after class for some sorely needed gelato.

In the middle of drowning their emotions in cold desserts, Alya suggested they form a study group.

“You know, just a casual meet-up with a few classmates.” She said through a mouthful of lemony goodness, Marinette suspicious of the gears she saw turning in her best friend’s head. Nevertheless she agreed, promising to bring a box full of bakery goodies to their next lunch break for anyone who showed up to their impromptu cram session.

Of course Marinette should have known better. As she entered the courtyard the next day, only to stop short when she spotted two very familiar looking boys sitting across from one (falsely) innocent best friend.

“I can’t believe you invited them, how am I supposed to focus on anything with Adrien Agreste right there?” Marinette bemoaned after the fact, sprawling out on the floor of her bedroom as Alya just chuckled from her spot of the chaise. The entire thing had been a disaster.

“Listen, if either of us want even a chance at passing physics this year, we need him. Simple as that. Plus Nino’s our only hookup for pure, unadulterated caffeine.” Alya informed her rationally, squatting down to lie next to her on the pink shag carpet. She had a point there.

The girls remained on the ground for the next 20 minutes, chatting, bickering, and generally just
enjoying each’s company. Or perhaps they were trying to forget the work they had cut out for them in the week to come.

“He likes you, you know.” Alya remarked, breaking the silence that filled the room.

“Who?-oh, shut up!” Marinette waved her friend off with a sputter.

“I’m serious, you’d know that if you just talked to him.” the redhead continued, dangerously close to falling out of her shirt as she rolled to her side. Marinette snickered, sneaking a hand out to hike up her friend’s neckline before she saw something she would regret. Alya snorted her thanks, roughly adjusting bra into a less precarious position.

Marinette wondered, not for the first time, why boys weren’t lining up to date Alya. Her friend had been chubby throughout her childhood (a fact that never seemed to bother her one bit) but just in the past year or so, Alya had really begun to glow up. She hadn’t lost any weight per-say, it all just seemed to shift into the right places.

Those right places being her chest and hips as it were.

‘The definition of a pear-shape’ Marinette’s seamstress side whispered appreciatively, watching as Alya’s figure snapped into the picture of womanly charm. Of course Alya didn’t share the appreciation, fuming as she had to get more and more of her clothes altered in order to properly fit. In fact, her fiery personality only seemed to grow alongside her.

Well, maybe Marinette could see just a little bit why her friend didn’t have guys knocking down her door.

“Sorry, sis.” Alya apologized before frowning down at her cleavage, “Now you two behave and DON’T make me come down there.” She shook a finger at the front of her shirt for good measure before dissolving into chuckles.

“I wish I had that problem…” Marinette whined softly, glancing towards her own, significantly smaller chest.

“Please, do you know how much I spend on bras? Besides, you’ve got a great pair there. Very proportionate.” Marinette broke out into laughter of her own, watching Alya over-animatedly examine her breasts.

“What are you now? A titty aficionado?” Marinette managed through her snorts. Alya nodded solemnly, sitting up in order to properly examine the subject beneath her.

“Why the curvature alone…” She continued, air tracing the outline of her friend’s cleavage like some sort of expert analyst “I dare say it’s a solid 10/10”.

Marinette clutched at her belly, body shaking giggles echoing throughout the room as she rolled to her side. Unable to hold up her serious façade, Alya joined in, throwing herself back on the floor in order to wrap her arms around her hysterical best friend.

Marinette slammed the pencil down in frustration, her final essay still no less un-finished than it had
been when their study group began working, nearly 45 minutes ago. Both Adrien and Alya jumped at the sudden outburst, causing a sheepish grin to break out on her face.

“Oh…ugh, sorry guys,” Marinette absently shuffled the papers on the table before her, only to lay her head down on top of them seconds later.

“I’m never gunna get this done,” She announced, voice muffled by her face-full of homework.

During the second convening of the study group, Marinette found she was much more focused to the task at hand.

It probably had something to do with the fact she was too tired to be embarrassed. In fact, she never really registered Adrien’s presence unless he addressed her directly. And even then she found it difficult to work up blush, too enthralled with the task at hand to dissolve into her usual lovesick self.

“Worry not, dudes! It’s Nino to the rescue once again!”

Marinette’s head perked up at the familiar sound of a full can being placed before her on the table. Nino plopped 2 similar cans in front of her fellow students, a half-finished energy drink hanging out of his mouth. ‘About time’ she thought.

The table rang out in a chorus’ of thanks, the trio popping open their respective cans and slurping them down with an almost animalistic fervor.

Alya downed hers first, crushing the empty container between her hands. Adrien and Marinette weren’t far behind, polishing off their 8 ounces of what might have been battery acid before tossing the empty cans on the rapidly forming mountain beside them.

“It is normal to smell colors?” Marinette asked distantly, head spinning with the rush of chemicals to her brain.

“I’d be more worried if you didn’t.” Nino responded, placing a supporting hand on her shoulder before plopping down into the unoccupied chair to her left. “So, what subject are we on now?”

“English essays.” Alya replied ominously. She stared down at her own, very blank page before reaching under the table to grab another Lightning Lemon.

“Shit, I forgot!” Nino cursed, eyes widening between the frames of his glasses. “Isn’t it like 30% of our grade??”

“40%.” Adrien corrected dejectedly.

The entire table groaned in unison.

Three hours, two six-packs, and a few frustrated tears later, the four teens emerged victorious, each clutching a (somewhat) neatly written final between their shaking hands.

The group chatted idly about their summer plans as they packed their things to leave. Alya had just finished describing the amazing internship she had landed, when she turned to Adrien to inquire about what he had on his plate over vacation. His expression immediately darkened, hands pausing atop his backpack as he slumped back down into his seat.

He muttered something under his breath.

Marinette was taken aback. Adrien Agreste never muttered.
“C’mon man, whatever your pops has planned for you can’t be that bad.” Nino said knowingly. Adrein just sighed, letting his head fall back to hand off the top of his chair. (Marinette tried not to squeak at the sight). He straightened.

“My dad is forcing me to tour with his company all summer.” Adrien began through clenched teeth, fists balling up on the table before slowly relaxing. “It’s some… big campaign for the launch of his signature line later this year. He’s insisted that I be a part of the lineup.”

The table fell into silence.

“I mean…it can’t possibly last all summer?” Nino questioned hopefully.

“It might as well be.” Adrien grumbled. “I’ll be gone for three months, returning just a week before school starts…” he trailed off dejectedly. Nobody had a response.

Adrien suddenly shook his head, a rueful smile returning to his face as he addressed them

“But hey, I didn’t mean to drag you guys down with all my drama.” He continued smoothly, turning back to best friend. “Tell me what your plans are for the summer!!”

Nino hesitated for a moment before catching the hint that Adrien was looking for something else to focus on. He flashed a kind smile, diving headlong into the description of his summer itinerary.

From her spot across the table, Marinette’s heart sank. Even when he was hurting, Adrien still tried to be the best friend he could be, listening with rapt excitement that didn’t reach his eyes as Nino detailed his plans.

Eventually the group had parted ways, agreeing to reconvene on the day before their last exam.

The final week at school flew by. Despite the oppressive cloud of exams floating above everyone’s heads, Marinette found most of her classmates to be in a state of high excitement once the last day rolled around. She herself found little reason to get worked up over the idea of summer vacation. Everyone else seemed to have elaborate plans laid out, whereas she foresaw a long an uneventful break ahead of her.

Chat and Adrien would be gone. Alya and Nino might as well be, with the busy schedules they had planned out. All that was left for Marinette was a few more hours of sleep each day and some extra shifts at the bakery. ‘Summer of my dreams,’ she thought petulantly.

However, her self-depreciating thoughts dissipated with one look at the empty seat in front of her.

A three month fashion tour around Paris sounded like a dream to Marinette, but Adrien seemed less than thrilled about the whole thing.

He’d taken the opportunity to say his goodbyes at the end of their meeting the night before. Turns out he would be departing earlier than expected, Mr.Agreste insisting his son leave for the airport
immediately following the completion of his final exam.

Their study meeting had dragged on, Nino drawing it out in a blatant attempt to prolong his friend’s inevitable goodbye. But even he could only hold out so long, before the energy drinks he had been downing all night began to wear off. By the time their phones read 10, everyone at the table was on the verge of crashing.

The session was tentatively ended by Alya, reminding everyone they had no chance of passing their exams if they slept through them. Nodding in agreement, Adrien had gathered his things up slowly, sadness permeating his falsely pleasant expression as he turned to face her.

“Thanks for putting this whole thing together, Alya.” He said, hauling his bag over one shoulder. “I don’t think I would have been able to pull off my finals without it.”

“You’re a smart kid.” She replied, playfully boxing at his shoulder. “And I expect you to fill me in on all the details of your trip as soon as you get back.” Adrien gave her a genuine smile, vowing to take lots of pictures.

Next he turned to Nino.

Marinette had to swallow a sudden lump in her throat watched as the two normally so lively boys pulled each other into a silent embrace, releasing it seconds later with affectionate thumps on the back and promises to text each other every day.

Caught up in the emotion of the moment, she almost didn’t notice when Adrien placed a soft hand on her shoulder, squeezing as he gave her a friendly smile.

“I hope we get the chance to hang out when I get back.” He had said, voice sad but sincere.

Marinette had just nodded, stuttering out a small goodbye as she focused on not melting into the sidewalk.

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She hadn’t seen him that whole day, a blessing and a curse all in one.

They hadn’t been scheduled to take their math exam together, and the crestfallen expression on Nino’s face confirmed her suspicion that Adrien had already been picked up.

Alya was doing her best to engage him. She tried to get him to talk about something, anything to get his mind of his absent best friend. It was futile at first, but as the clocked counted down the time left in their last period, Nino began to act more and more like his old self.

Then the bell rang. The final, final bell.

The class erupted into chatter, student flying from their chairs to race out the double doors. Marinette found herself incapable of not cracking a smile, Alya grabbing her arm in excitement as the pair gathered their things to leave.

Almost as an afterthought, they swept Nino up along with them, declaring that he would be accompanying them to the gelato shop around the corner in celebration of another school year
survived. He gave them the first genuine smile they had seen out of him in days.

The trio made their way down the sunny streets of Paris, laughing and joking.

‘Perhaps this summer won’t be all bad’ Marinette thought optimistically, twining her arms with those of the friends beside her.

She found herself looking forward to the one last patrol she had planned with Chat Noir later that night.

He didn’t show.

Chapter End Notes

WARNING THE NEXT CHAPTER IS PURE SIN
THIS FIC IS RATED T FOR A REASON.
(also have I mentioned how much I just LOVE the fact they took out the horizontal line feature when editing fics? so great!)
Chapter 6

Chapter Summary

In Which We Are All Dirty Sinners For Reading Such Filth

Chapter Notes

This chapter was posted around the same time as the previous one was, so please be sure you read that one before soldiering on.

ill see you all in hell kiddos

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Ladybug still insisted on going out for patrol at least once a week.

Albeit they were shorter and much less eventful without her partner, but the fresh air paired with a good dose of exercise prompted Marinette to get out more. A concept she had struggled with as of late.

Her summer vacation had started strong. Marinette had practically lived in her bed, making up for all the hours of sleep she had lost over the past few months. Despite most of her time being tied up at the magazine publication she was interning for, Alya still regularly made plans to meet up with Marinette, filling her in on all the juicy details of her experience there.

Marinette had even met up with Nino a couple times in those first few weeks, that is until he started his new summer job at the zoo. Between her shifts at the bakery and the occasional outing with a classmate, Marinette was content.

Of course the magic wore off after about a month and a half. As her friends got busier, Marinette saw them less and less. Her lack of a schedule was no longer freeing and long empty days began to wear on her mental health. Marinette tried to find ways to occupy her time.

First she tried sewing, quitting almost immediately out of a frustrating lack of inspiration.

Next was her video game phase. Let’s just say, there’s only so many times you can slay the Archdemon or assassinate the pope before you started you start to burn out.

Now the days had started to blur together, she couldn’t tell you the date if her life depended it on it. Marinette could feel the summer coming to a close though. She was strangely excited over the fact there was only perhaps two or three weeks before school resumed.

‘What kind of teenager’s entire life revolved around going back to school?’ she questioned.

Of course she had to find something to fulfill her time up until then, so she chose to throw herself
into her work as Ladybug.

‘Just because there hadn’t been an attack yet, doesn’t mean there wasn’t one coming’ she reasoned, pulling herself from summer’s lazy embrace to remain vigilant. Hawkmoth had been uncharacteristically quiet the whole break, a fact that worried Ladybug to no end. If he was planning something big, she wasn’t convinced she’d be able to handle in on her own.

Though she’d deny it if he asked, Ladybug found herself missing Chat. His incessant come-ons did grind her nerves sometimes, but they did fill the silence she felt so keenly in this moment.

And maybe she did like the attention…just a bit.

Ladybug slipped through a dark side street, toeing her way up a chain-link fence in order to hop atop the adjacent roof. Padding the edge, she looked over the Parisian skyline, admiring for perhaps the hundredth time the soft glow emitted by her city’s trademark tower.

She could see why people came here to fall in love.

Of course she couldn’t exactly agree to it being the most romantic place on earth. After all the drunken bums she had found passed out by dumpsters, Ladybug hard a hard time seeing Paris as the City of Love.

But there were also times when the splendor would outweigh the scars, she reasoned.

The sunlight bouncing off an ivy-covered building at just the right angle. The distant sounds of music on a star-filled night. These glimmering moments were the ones Marinette treasured the most, the ones that reminded her how lucky she was to live in such a place.

She let out a distracted sigh, too caught up in her own thoughts to hear the distinctive sound of claws scraping up concrete. Her momentary spell was broken however, when she registered a low, sinister chuckle coming from the rooftop behind her.

She tensed up.

Reaching slowly towards her yo-yo at the intruder’s noise, Ladybug readied herself to strike. Weeks of inactivity only fueled her desire for a good old-fashioned fight and her body lit up with the possibility of finally getting some action. Before she could turn and face her opponent however, the shadow spoke with a familiar bravado.

“If I had known you’d miss me this much, I would have left sooner and returned earlier, My Lady.”

Relaxing her battle stance with a snort, she returned her weapon to its proper place. ‘Who else would sneak up on Ladybug?’ she said, mentally teasing herself for her own paranoia.

“Well, isn’t it nice of you to finally-” her reply was cut short as she twirled to face him, immediately smacking right into her partner’s chest.

With a face full of black latex and a few mumbled curses, Ladybug steadied herself, hands gripping at his shoulders for stability.

His much broader shoulders.

Blinking rapidly at the form in front of her, Ladybug realized her chin was at an equal height to his sternum. So she looked up.
And up, and up.

Until her gaze landed on his familiar green eyes, perhaps the only thing that hadn’t changed about him in the months they were apart.

Chat Noir stared down at her, the rakish grin he wore only widening as he registered the shock written on her features. Driven by the heat of the moment and the high that came with rendering his Lady speechless, Chat poured all his days of missing her into one heart-shattering wink.

Then, by some divine miracle he silently promised to give thanks for later, the impossible happened.

Ladybug blushed.

Chat let out a triumphant yell, eyes widening in glee as jumped backwards to imitate the victory dance she herself had done nearly six months ago. Ladybug glared at him (although there was a discreet smile in the look), scoffing at the way he carried on like a kid with a sugar rush.

Coming down from his high, Chat stopped his celebration (if for just a moment) to turn back towards Ladybug. His heart warmed in his chest, watching her stand there with arms crossed and cheeks the color of her mask, his homecoming was everything he had dreamed it would be.

He imitated her stance, putting on a false pout that caused them both to dissolve into a round of giggles. Being with her now felt simultaneously familiar and foreign, Chat realized, suddenly very aware of just how much he’d grown since the duo had last seen each other.

The best analogy for his situation was that of a potted plant suddenly being allowed to grow in open pastures.

Weeks upon weeks of shuffling between home, work, and school (with only the occasional outing as Chat to break up the monotony) had been stifling Adrien. Apparently it had a negative effect on his health as well.

Turns out, his self-proclaimed summer from hell was just the push his body needed to begin growing again.

It had started in Prague.

On the company’s fourth day there, Adrien had woken up to a sensation he hadn’t felt in years. Grinning through the discomfort, he tried not to get too excited. There was still a possibility he’d perhaps pulled something, and the shooting pains in his legs had nothing to do with growing.

Later, once the tour hit Barcelona, photographers had a hard time getting the suddenly ravenous model to put down the fork and pose. Adrien was sure he had set a new hotel record with the sheer amount of room service he went through in his two weeks at the resort.

It wasn’t until a moth and a half later, when he’d reached Hong Kong only to find the clothes they had prepared for him were two size two small, that Adrien allowed himself to fully realize the changes he was experiencing. It’s happening, he thought with a shock.

On the plane ride to Berlin, Adrien had to introduce himself to his own father over the phone, the older man unable to recognize his son’s newly deepened voice on the other end of the line.

In London, Adrien no longer had to wear platforms in order to compete with his stiletto-wearing co-
models, instead clearing their heads with ease.

By the time he had reached Milan, Adrien Agreste was a new person.

Designers gaped as the lanky, fresh faced, 16 year old boy they all expected to walk through the door was suddenly replaced by a strapping young man.

Photographers went crazy. All of them clamoring to capture the newly cut jawline and rapidly sharpening cheekbones he now proudly displayed.

Even his father had stared him down appraisingly during one of their rare encounters, and Adrien recalled there being just a small hint of… was it pride?… in Mr. Agreste’s voice as he commented on his son’s sudden growth spurt.

As the weeks wore on, Adrien grew more comfortable in his new form. In between shows, the young man frequently visited the gym at whatever hotel he happened to be staying at. Missing out on his regular nighttime escapades, Adrien had a lot of pent up energy to expend, so he hit the treadmill every chance he got.

He often found himself wondering how his Ladybug was doing back in Paris during his absence. There had been no big news regarding her in quite some time, a fact that both pacified and worried Adrien.

A small, self-depreciated part of his mind whispered that she was probably getting on just fine without him, but a louder voice reasoned that perhaps even someone as amazing as she was could find it in her heart miss him just a bit.

Needless to say, by the time the tour was wrapping up, Adrien was antsy to get back home.

Very antsy.

He never thought he’d admit to missing his room. He definitely never thought he’d long to go back to school, long for a return to a set schedule and the familiar faces of his classmates. But as he touched down at the Charles de Gaulle Airport, Adrien felt a sort of peace wash over him, knowing he was back on French soil.

Walking out of the terminal to see Nino waiting for him with a “Mr. Huge Nerd” sign clutched in his hands and a goofy smile plastered across his face only heightened Adrien’s sense of belonging.

After giving him a hearty bro hug, Nino had leaned back to hold Adrien at arm’s length, addressing him as “the giant who ate his best friend.” Adrien slapped him away, chuckling as Nino hauled a suitcase over his shoulder, assuring him the girls back at school would explode once they caught sight of him.

But that wasn’t the reaction he was looking forward to the most.

Almost immediately after reaching home, Adrien had awoken Plagg up from his jetlagged slumber, promising him copious amounts of cheese if he would just cooperate. The kwami begrudgingly agreed, disappearing into his friend’s silver ring with a twinkling pop.

“Claw’s out!” Adrien said to the empty room, reveling in the sensation of becoming his alter ego after so many weeks without transforming. His civilian clothes melted away, replaced by the tight comfort of his cat suit wrapping its way around his body. Becoming Chat Noir after having to masquerade as Adrien for so long lifted a weight from his shoulders, one he hadn’t been away of until the pressure was gone.
Adrien turned to leave he reveled in the feeling of rightness that came with his transformation. He flexed his claws, sliding one up under the window latch to release it.

‘Had the suit always been this form fitting?’ He thought idly, catching a glimpse at his reflection before heading out for the night.

With a practiced ease, Chat had slid out from between his window panes, having to crouch more than he could ever recall in order to squeeze through. Leaping his way through the familiar streets surrounding the Agreste house, his adrenaline surged, not entirely due to the exertion.

He was going to see his Lady again.

His mind snapped back to the present situation, looking over to see her still standing with arms crossed and just a hint of a smirk playing at her features.

God, how he’d missed her.

“You stupid cat, I almost knocked you out.” She grumbled, playfully punching at his shoulder. Her face had returned to its regular tone, he noticed with some disappointment.

‘Now that won’t do at all.’

He snatched at her hand, holding it out grandly as he had done many times before.

“Oh but you’ve already knocked me out with the sheer force of your beauty. I didn’t think it was possible, but I’d dare say you’ve grown even lovelier since the last time I saw you.”

‘Ah, there it is’ Chat thought triumphantly as her face slightly flushed once again. But he didn’t stop there.

“Of course… you do seem to have shrunk a few inches as well…” he remarked snarkily, earning a huff from his partner as she slipped her hand from his grasp.

“In fact…” he continued in a falsely innocent tone, crooking a finger to beckon her forward, “Come stand beside me for a second.”

She whirled on him, stomping her foot as she suppressed a chuckle. Maybe she had missed him more than she let on.

“Now you’re just being cocky.” Ladybug sputtered out, unable to completely hide the grin that had snuck onto her face.

“Suit yourself.” Chat shrugged, taking the initiative by padding over to plant himself directly in front of her.

Thus ensued round two. Ladybug stood up as straight as she could manage, rolling onto her toes when she still didn’t stack up to him. Chat called her out with a tsk, pushing her back down as they squabbled about what constituted standing on your tiptoes.

In the end it didn’t matter. With both of them stock straight, stretching to their fullest height, Chat was still a good head taller. He smirked, she gloered.

They stood in face-off for a few moments, Ladybug silently fuming as Chat attempted to reign in his excitement. He knew he had won, but that didn’t mean he would let her off that easily. After the
taunting she had given him when their roles were reversed, Chat was intent on returning the ribbing two-fold.

He leaned over, trying to control his laughter as he crooned out her name.

“Oh, Ladybuuuuuuuuug…”

She pointedly ignored him, trying to swallow a grin as she looked everywhere but at him. Chat circled around her, attempting to catch her eye as she swiveled to avoid him. With an evil glint, Ladybug glanced briefly in his direction before sprinting towards the edge of the roof. Her yoyo zipped to latch itself around a nearby chimney, allowing her to swing over and perch atop it.

Hearing her laughter echo across the space between, Chat accepted her silent challenge with a grin. He leapt after her, scrambling up a nearly vertical wall as Ladybug shot off in a different direction.

This continued for the few minutes, Paris’ beloved heroes laughing and taunting each other as they raced across starlit rooftops.

“I’m not quitting till you say it!” Chat called ahead of himself, wind whipping through his mused hair as he gave chase.

“Say what, alley cat?” Ladybug responded innocently, taking a brief pause to stick her tongue out.

Apparently her short diversion was all the time Chat needed to gain on her. He flipped himself over the edge of the roof, landing just feet away from her as she squawked at his sudden appearance.

Chat made a swipe to grab at her, but she was too quick. Ladybug ducked gracefully under his arm, still refusing to meet his gaze as she twirled out of the vicinity with a triumphant “ha!”

With another flick of her yo-yo, the chase was back on.

Chat jumped after her immediately. Feeling his heart soar and adrenaline rush as he weaved his way across turret and trellis alike, his eyes never left her back.

Being able to joke around with his Lady so freely, for them to be so comfortable with each other even after their months apart… it made Chat feel as though he had never truly left her side. The familiarity between them made everything about the night feel warm and golden.

“You say it, and I stop chasing you…” He sing-songed, quickly gaining ground towards her.

“Not in your dreams!” She shot back confidently.

Of course that confidence was short lived as she realized they had reached the end of the row of houses. Ladybug’s eyes scanned her surroundings, shoulders drooping as she realized there weren’t any buildings close enough for her to lasso her way around. She was cornered.

‘Gotcha’

Chat traipsed lazily towards her, watching as Ladybug resumed her crossed-arm stance, eyes glued to the ground. Not a gesture of defeat, he realized, but one of amused defiance. Seeing her standing there, pose confident and jaw working to ward off the grin that threatened to split the bottom of her face…

It reminded Chat of why he’d fallen for her in the first place.

He stopped before her, appraising the girl with amusement for before continuing in a victorious
drawl.

“My Lady.”

“Chat.”

“I just want to hear you say it.”

“I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

That was a lie. Ladybug fidgeted below him, unwilling to admit defeat just yet.

“Oh, I think you do know,” Chat continued, leaning down in an attempt to draw her gaze.

He turned his head every which way, chucking when she petulantly refused to look up from her feet. Chat realized his victory would not be easy to seize, but when had that ever stopped him in the past?

Without thinking, he slipped two fingers up under Ladybug’s chin, slowing lifting her head until their gazes were even. Her blue eyes snapped to his, sending an unidentifiable jolt down his spine as he realized the intimacy of their position.

“Who’s the tall one now?” Chat whispered, surprised at how low his voice came out.

The words hung between the pair like a physical presence. A challenge and a prayer all at once.

Chat’s body lit up like a lightning rod when he heard her gasp in response. Ladybug’s eyes widened, pooling with an unexpected heat before dipping down to trace the line of his jaw.

‘She…she’s certainly never looked at my like that before’ he thought distantly, chest tightening as the pair unconsciously moved closer to each other, his hand still lightly grasping at her chin. A surge of confidence, real confidence, shot through his veins.

Because here she was, pining for him.

For one brief moment it was Ladybug who was completely entranced by her partner and not the other way around. Chat reveled in the feeling, taking advantage of the moment by pulling her impossibly closer… until her chest flattened against his.

The sense of control was dizzying.

Knowing beyond a doubt it was him (and not some fancy chocolate) that caused her to stand there, faced flushed and breathing labored, was enough to drive him insane.

Chat had the sudden urge to pin her against the nearest wall and see if he could make her purr.

His hands moved on their own accord, planting themselves roughly on the sides of her hips when…

Chat’s mind shut down, air whooshing its way out of his lungs when he spotted it.

The very corner of his Lady’s lip, trapped delicately between rounded teeth. A tiny, most-likely unconscious movement that suddenly had him floundering.

And just like, the control was hers once again.

Amazing how Ladybug always managed to somehow seize the upper hand.
Adrien melted like putty in her grasp, arms slipping from her body to hang deadened at his side. She made a mournful noise at their sudden departure, shooting him looks he thought should be illegal. The want on her face was intoxicating, drawing Chat closer until he felt his mind spiral out of control with thoughts of her.

He found he didn’t dislike the sensation of falling.

Intent on erasing the space between them, Chat placed his hands on Lady’s flushed cheeks, heart pounding a dangerous staccato against his ribs as he pulled her back towards him. An expectant breath escaped her parted lips head angling subtly upwards when…

BEEP! The sound of her miraculous broke the spell surrounding them with a snap.

Both heroes jumped apart, severing the contact between each other as if they had been burned.

Never before in his life had Chat wanted to physically fight a piece of jewelry, but there was a first for everything, right?

“Ladybug…” he began, reaching towards her in a desperate attempt to recapture the moment. Chat’s heart sank as she stepped back, shaking her head as if trying to clear it of the lingering emotions still hanging heavily in the air.

In a moment, ladybug’s gaze returned to his, an intense and unreadable look swimming in her eyes.

“Sounds like my cue to go.” She chirped out in a forcibly casual tone. Chat deflated further, watching as she stalked to the other end of the roof, prattling on about how busy she was going to be tomorrow morning.

“And you know what they say.” Her voice had reached a fever pitch at this point but she soldiered on, still avoiding his gaze while desperately trying to force the air back into her lungs, “Early to bed, early to rise!”

Chat didn’t trust himself to say anything. Or perhaps just he didn’t trust himself not to beg. So he nodded, swallowing the lump of raw emotion in his throat in order to muster up a fabricated grin.

Ladybug must have seen through the half-hearted smile, he realized pitifully. She turned to leave with an awkward wave.

‘Don’t let her go’ Chat’s mind screamed desperately, watching her take a few steps backwards in preparation to sprint off. But he was frozen, unable to make his voice cooperate with his thoughts.

Ladybug eyed the adjacent building, grasping her yoyo from its place on her hip (‘God, her hips’ Chat thought plaintively) and twirling it absently between her fingers. She wound up her throw as he prepared himself for the ache of her departure.

It didn’t come.

Ladybug suddenly dropped her aim, turning with raw determination written across her face.

Taking five long, purposeful strides in his direction, Ladybug threw her arms around Chat’s shoulders, squeezing him tightly before whispering into his collarbone.

“I missed you.”

Then she was gone, disappearing with a flash of red into the dark Parisian night.
Admittedly I might have gone a bit overboard this time
where in the world is this story even going? nobody knows, not even the author!
Art alert!
>>>http://bullysquadess.tumblr.com/post/138444280622/toni-tomato-my-lady-chat-i-just-want-to
Chapter 7

Chapter Summary

In Which The Story Drags On And The Readers Beg For The Sweet Release Of Death.

Chapter Notes

This chapter is more or less a setup for future events. It is also coincidentally the longest one to date. You've been warned. Enjoy sinners.

Marinette was awoken the next morning by the buzz of her cell phone.

Groaning out a stereotypical teenage objection, she nuzzled into the mattress, mind still blissfully floating in a semi-conscious state of restfulness. Based upon the amount of light filtering its way through her eyelids, Marinette guessed it was sometime around noon. A perfectly acceptable hour to remain asleep.

Just as she was about to drift back off, however, the annoying device vibrated again.

“mmmmmmnnnn-ngh”, Marinette whined out, rolling over to grasp blindly at it. ‘What’s so important that it can’t wait a few more hours?’ she thought sleepily, eyes squinting at the sudden brightness. The joints in her fingers popped pleasantly as she lazily dragged them across the screen, imputing her password to check Alya’s new message.

[ Guess who’s back in town?! ]

Suddenly, she was wide awake.

Marinette flopped back on to the bed with a soft shriek, hiking her comforter up to smother her flushing face as the events of last night began to replay themselves in her mind.

Her joy at seeing Chat again morphing into something entirely foreign as he stood before her, the usual playfulness rolling off of him in waves, despite his newly matured appearance. The way he chased her, cornered her, and dragged her chin up to meet his intense gaze. The low growl of Chat’s voice as he stared her down…as he pulled her closer.

Each recollection brought a new and unexpected heat to boil in the pit of her stomach. To her surprise, Marinette found it was the same feeling she got whenever she got a leg-up on him.

‘Bad choice of phrasing’ she chided herself, trying to find the proper words to describe the sensation.

It wasn’t just simply pride.

No, it was more akin to the rush Ladybug felt when free-falling through the air, only to swing away when her body was inches from hitting the ground.
It was the exhilarated panic of Adrien’s hand gripping Marinette’s shoulder mixed with the victorious flood of relief when she received an outstanding grade in class.

It was the primal feeling of might that enveloped her every time she transformed, the satisfaction of snapping a cursed object in half after a long battle, and the high that came with knowing there was a pair of green eyes tracking her every movement.

‘Lust’ her downstairs head whispered.

‘No, Power’ rationality corrected.

“Alya!” Marinette squeaked, pulling herself both from her intrusive thoughts and the cocoon of blankets tangled around her bare limbs.

“How in the world did Alya know Chat was back?”

Marinette stared, dumbfounded at the innocuous text, wracking her brain in order to decipher just how her obsessive best friend had managed to find out about Chat’s homecoming. After a moment, it hit her, and Marinette had to refrain from slapping herself.

There in her mind’s eye was Ladybug and Chat Noir, teasing each other loudly throughout the streets of Paris. Their trademark costumes fully illuminated by the bright starlight as they stared each other down. The way he had pulled her into him….gloved hands grasping at her hips. The way they had embraced in full view of the street below.

“She knows,” Marinette though desperately, pitifully. ‘Somehow she had been out last night and she saw us. Maybe took pictures of us. She knows everything and she’s going to tell the whole world that Ladybug and Chat Noir are…”

She scrambled from the bed, fingers tanging themselves in her wild mane of bedraggled hair as Marinette began to pace. Before she had the chance to launch into a full blown panic however, Marinette’s phone alerted her to another message.

She dove towards the device, clutching it in shaking hands as she opened the text. Marinette deflated, eyes scanning their way down the screen as a relieved sigh worked its way from her throat.

[ Adrien’s plane landed late last night and Nino is PUMPED ]

Leave it to her to get worked up over nothing. Of course she wasn’t talking about Chat.

Marinette’s heart slowly returned to its regular timing as she opened the attachment on Alya’s message, only to double in tempo as she registered what she was seeing.

Before her was an image of Nino, his arm excitedly draped over the broad-shoulder boy beside him as the two posed for a selfie in what looked like an airport terminal.

Of course it wasn’t Nino’s goofy expression that had Marinette suddenly on the verge of total collapse.


Without thinking, Marinette flung the phone across the room in panicked knee-jerk reaction. It landed with a dull thump before bouncing its way off of her chaise to clatter onto the floor. She squawked, immediately flying down the ladder after it.
Tikki took in the scene with confusion, eventually giggling as she watched Marinette dive to the ground and shimmy her way under the lounger.

“No wonder your parents refuse to buy you a new phone.” She tittered out, earning only a distracted wheeze from the girl below her.

Marinette examined the thankfully un-cracked screen before her, mustering up her grit before unlocking it. Keeping a solid grip on the device, Marinette navigated her way back to her inbox.

The image flashed its way across the screen once again, drawing all the air out of her lungs in the process.

Because looking back at her was none other than Adrien Goddamn Agreste.

His once-familiar face, the ideal cover-model of tween magazines everywhere, was gone. Gone where the flushed, downy cheeks. Gone was the child-like wideness to his eyes, the thin curve of his neck, the small protrusion of his rounded chin.

Yes, her childhood crush, Adrien Agreste, was gone it would seem… because the young man smiling brilliantly at the camera was nothing short of a bona-fide teen heartthrob.

Marinette stared at the image, mouth agape, for no less than 15 minutes straight. Every time the screen would grow dim due to inactivity, her finger would poke forward of its own accord, bringing the picture back into stark clarity.

‘Well’, she thought dimly, eyes tracing the stunning profile before her ‘It was nice having at least one semi-coherent interaction with him before she passed the line into never being able to look Adrien in the eye again’.

Those stunning green eyes.

She vaguely registered 5 new message had announced themselves across the top of the screen in the time she had spent dazedly ogling her phone, and with a strength she didn’t know she possessed, Marinette reluctantly minimized the picture. Good thing she had already set it as her home screen background.

Marinette clicked over to the conversation thread titled “Bestie <3”, a little guilty she had yet to respond to her best friend despite the little “Seen 17 Minutes Ago.” message displayed under Alya’s first text of the morning. Below it was 5 more unviewed texts.

[I know you must be sleeping so WAKE UP HO]

[I Either that or ur dead on the floor from the pic… please try not to cry]

[I gotta hand it to the kid, puberty really hit him like a freight train tho ;)]

[Anyway, the boys want to meet up sometime today, tell me ur free]

[Mari????]

Marinette stared at the messages, unsure of how to respond. Did she want to see Adrien? Absolutely!

From a safe distance where he could neither see nor hear her. Deciding to take it slow, she tentatively typed out a text.
Sorry, I’m awake now!

Alya’s reply was instantaneous.

Right…. So you free today?

We’re trying to get some plans going but it’s hard when you and Adrien don’t respond -_- 

Marinette’s first instinct was to lie. Nobody would question her if she said she had duties at the bakery. Of course, knowing her friends, they would keep asking her to hang out every day for the next week, and there’s only so many excuses she could use before they got suspicious.

“You’re being stupid” she chided herself, still clutching her phone as she tried to steady her breathing. Marinette rolled out from under the dusty piece of furniture, pushing herself up to settle instead in the computer chair under her loft.

come up with and ill be there J 

Easier said than done. She rolled idly around the room, kicking piles of fabric around and running over loose pieces of sketch paper. Summer was not a time for cleaning it seemed. Her phone chimed. “Jeez, Alya was especially impatient today.” Marinette furrowed her brow, watching her screen light up with rapid fire texts.

SHIT

GIRL

I THINK THERE’S AN ATTACK GOING ON RIGHT OUTSIDE OF THE OFFICE

WTF

Marinette’s eyes widened, finger’s fumbling to type out the string of questions she had. “Tikki!” She yelled, mind trying to keep up with Alya’s never ending messages as she began a one-handed climb up the ladder to her left.

Where are you?? Are you ok?

holy fuck

no, no its ok im fine

im still in the building

but I just saw chat noir LEAP BY THE WINDOW OMG

‘Oh great, looks like she was late to the party.’

stay inside

“Tikki, Spots On!”
Ladybug reached the scene just in time to take a D to the face.

In fact, she just narrowly missed an extremely fast L before running right into a K, sprawling on to the ground as more and more flying letters zoomed around the business plaza. The swirling maelstrom of typeface rose up in heavy clouds, blotting out the sky like a plague of birds as they formed whole sentences and paragraphs.

Ladybug swung her yoyo in a wide arc around her, knocking letter from the air as she made her way towards the shrill voice booming its way from beside a fountain.

“How DARE you dictate what font I can and can’t use,” The typewriter-wielding akuma shouted, hands flying over the keys as whole alphabets sprung to life out of thin air. “I am HELVETICA!”

“Oh you’ve got to be kidding me!” Ladybug teased, coming to a stop behind what she assumed to be a very disgruntled, very possessed columnist. “Who cares this much about typeface?”

The Akuma turned towards her with a shriek, hurting sentences like spears to lodge themselves in the ground at Ladybug’s feet. “IT CHANGES THE OVERTONE OF THE DISCOURSE!” it wailed, willing more and more letter towards the newly arrived hero.

Ladybug flipped backwards, dancing through the literary hell storm as she formulated a plan. It was obvious her target was the large, antiquated typewriter… she just had to clear a path towards it. Of course, it was at that moment her partner decided to make an appearance, shooting down from a window to perch himself on a lamppost at the opposite end of the courtyard.

“I don’t know, I’m more of a comic sans guy myself!” He taunted, effectively drawing the Akuma’s attention away from Ladybug. ‘Good Cat.’

Springing into action the moment the monster was diverted, Ladybug sprinted towards the fountain, swatting letters left and right. Her feet pounded the concreate walkway, driving her closer to her target. Meanwhile, Chat was leaping from one floating paragraph to another, waving his arms wildly as he explained the appeal of Calibri to the screaming Akuma.

Lady dove forward, aiming to wrench the accursed object away when a string of text wrapped around her ankle, effectively flinging her face-first into lukewarm fountain water.

She came up sputtering, spitting out a few pennies as she heard Chat’s insatiable laugh from somewhere across the plaza get cut short by a surprised yelp. Seconds later, he landed with a splash next to her. Chat resurfaced with a noise that sounded suspiciously like a hiss, shaking his damp hair out as he glared at the distant akuma.

Taking great care not to slip, Ladybug stepped from the fountain. Water dripped down her arm as she held a hand out to hoist her equally drenched partner from the low stone enclosure. She ignored the slight swoop of her belly as he rose up beside her.

“How Boy, she should NOT have done that!” Chat announced, looking very much like the drowned cat he was as he planted his hand on his hips. Unable to stifle a chuckle, Ladybug pulled a quarter from beneath his collar, presenting it to him with a small “ta-da!”
He turned to her with a grin, expression slowly morphing as he took in her dripping wet appearance. Ladybug could almost see him going over the events of the night before in his mind. Eyes idly making their way down her body before…

She dashed off, weaving her way once again towards the villain as she shook the image of him from her thoughts. There were other things that needed to be done. More important things than ogling your partner.

At least that’s what she told herself.

Chat had caught up with her by the time they reached their foe, the Akuma launching words to shatter the widows of the publication building ahead of them. The heroes skidded to halt a few feet behind it’s back, silently weighing their options.

“Distract it again,” Ladybug began, unwinding her yoyo, “I need some time.”

Chat nodded, grabbing a nearby O and allowing it to pull him towards the swirling mass of letters centered around the Akuma. As he zoomed towards the creature, he resumed his font-based trash talk, drawing it’s attention and buying Ladybug just enough time to conjure a lucky charm.

Very nearly falling over when a giant eraser plopped into her grasp.

‘Of course’

Within minutes she had closed the distance between her and the Akuma, clearing her path free of the pesky letters with large swipes of the pink tool. This time, the villain was too wrapped up in furiously explaining the difference between serif and bold to notice her approach. Ladybug snagged the typewriter, immediately slamming it into the ground as ivory keys popped in every direction.

With one last shriek, the akuma was surrounded in a murky, purple haze before emerging as a very confused graying man, lying dazedly among the no-longer-floating letters.

In her periphery, Ladybug saw Chat struggling to remain up right as the words beneath him began to crumble. Apparently the sentence he had been riding on had lost it’s lift, leaving him suspended for a few moments before plummeting to the ground with a yelp.

Too focused on cleansing the dark butterfly flittering its way out of the wreckage to be concerned for her partner’s well-being, she just rolled her eyes at his dramatics. He’d had higher falls.

“Bye little butterfly,” Ladybug crooned, tossing the cleansing artifact high above her. Wave of light shot out, effectively erasing (ha!) the piles of letters scattered around the plaza and restoring the shattered windows to their former state.

After the damage was repaired, Ladybug’s attention shifted to the gathered crowd of people who had turned out to watch yet another superhero beat-down. Police had already set up a do-not-cross line (hey, at least they were good for something) but Ladybug knew the importance of connecting with the people of Paris, so she made her way towards the perimeter. The crowd screamed it’s adoration, people cheering excitedly as Ladybug waved at them graciously.

She acknowledged their shouts with a modest smile, stiffening just an inch when she saw Alya at the forefront of the throng, furiously snapping pictures. It was at that moment Chat decided to join her, fangirls in the crowd going absolutely insane as he casually slung his arm around her shoulder.

“Pound it,” he said, not even trying to hide the pride in his voice as his head cocked in the direction of the pair’s adoring admirers.
Ladybug snickered. If she thought the screaming was loud before, it was nothing compared to the absolute roar that followed her dutifully pressing a fist into his waiting knuckles. She couldn’t be sure, but Marinette swore she heard Alya’s trademark whistle rise above the cheering.

At the sound of their synchronized beeps, however, the heroes sought their exit. Ladybug turned to Chat, inclining her a head in a gesture that clearly said “follow”. Anticipation bubbled in his chest.

Shooting the crowd one last salute, Ladybug zip lined her way up over the lip of the roof. Moments later, with a wink that elicited many a girlish squeal from the gathered masses, Chat made his departure, leaping his way from ledge to ledge, until he landed solidly atop the building.

Ladybug had made her way few blocks south (hyper-aware of the second shadow she had trailing behind her) before sliding down into a secluded balcony. Chat touched down moments after her.

It was a beautiful space. A short, wrought iron fence enclosed the modest area, the view leading out into a private lot dotted with small trees that bent in the afternoon breeze. But Marinette turned from the sight, leaning the small of her back against the railing with a sigh as she faced Chat.

Without the distraction of an Akuma, the air between them became heavy once again. His eyes met hers tentatively, an unexpressed hope nagging gently at the corner of his expression. She could tell they were both thinking about the same thing. Trying to process where exactly things stood between the two after the events of the previous night.

Both of them attempted to break the silence at once.

“Sorry I-“

“We should-“

They flashed each other wistful grins, Chat gesturing grandly for her to speak first. Ladybug started again, ignoring the second waring of her miraculous.

“I just wanted to say I was sorry for being late.” She told him sincerely.

“Oh, it’s no problem. I had everything under control.” He waved his hand dismissively.

“No, it is a problem. I don’t like having to rely on…” Marinette caught Alya’s name on the tip of her tongue, swallowing it down before continuing. “…other people to know when my partner needs me.”

“Well now that you mention it… I did try contacting you through my communicator, but I guess it doesn’t really work unless we’re both suited up huh?” Chat looked at her lamely, shrugging his shoulders.

“Yeah, this clearly isn’t the best case scenario.” Ladybug huffed out, exasperated and a little ashamed she had nearly slept through an attack. If she hadn’t shown up…

There had to be a better way.

“What if I just gave you my number?” she blurted suddenly, the idea leaving her mouth before she even had time to ponder if it was a good suggestion. *Oops*…

“Your…number?”

“As in, my phone number.”
She was met with a blank stare. She said her next words slowly.

“I’m talking about my personal, civilian cell phone, Chat.”

His confused look morphed into understanding, before slowly being taken over by sheer glee. Ladybug watched with dread as he swallowed a smile. What had she just done?

“I mean, because, I have it with me nearly all the time. Of course not when I’m in costume, but that’s irrelevant because mostly I’m with you when I’m Ladybug so I don’t need to reach you—“

Yepp, she was definitely rambling at this point.

“—it would be good so we could connect with, or that is, talk? To each other. When we’re civilians…” Ladybug trailed off lamely, deciding to just tap out while she was ahead.

Since when had she stuttered around Chat Noir?

“Yeah, that’s a good idea.” He responded carefully, tone measured but victory written boldly across his features. Ladybug had the sudden urge to dunk him back into the fountain.

“Alright, don’t get smug there, kitty.” She muttered, turning to rifle through a conveniently placed jar of writing utensils sitting atop a crate at the edge of the terrace. Uncapping a blue marker, she faced him, once again ignoring the falsely innocent look he threw her way.

“Cut me some slack, it’s not every day such a beautiful girl offers me her number.” This earned him a snort. “Let me revel in the victory a bit, hmm?”

“Whatever. Where do you want it?”

*He could think of a few places…*

Rolling her eyes at his shit-eating grin, Ladybug stood on her tiptoes to sweep back his wily bangs, hastily scrawling a series of numbers across his forehead before letting the hair slide back down to cover it.

“I’m sure I don’t have to tell you this, but that number is for emergencies only…”

Chat took a deep breath, mouth stretching comically wide before she steamrolled past him.

“And before you inevitably say some dumbass comment about what constitutes an emergency I’d like to clarify by saying AKUMA INCEDENTS ONLY!”

“Of course, of course.” Chat said with a laugh. “This is strictly business.”

His tone still worried her.

“I’m serious Chat…” Ladybug trailed off with a challenging stare, the beeping of her miraculous prompting her to grasp at her yo-yo before shaking a finger at his face.

Chat had the decency to look thoroughly warned, although he grinned as he promised to message her as soon as he could. So she would have his number, of course.

The pair shot off into opposite directions, just managing to slip out of sight before their transformations melted around them.

Marinette vaguely heard the sound of distant whooping.
Oh God, what had she done?

She returned home to find 13 new messages lighting up the notification on her phone. 12 were from Alya, an excited play-by-play of the day’s events complete with pictures. The last was from an unknown number. A single message containing nothing more than a winking cat emoji.

Chapter End Notes

Wouldn’t be a Ladybug fit without a good old fashioned Akuma attack!
Ps I wrote you all into the story...

as the Ladynoir loving fucks who screamed when they bumped fists you’re welcome
Chapter 8

Chapter Summary

*Hotline Bling playing distantly in the background*

Chapter Notes

It's double update time again! This chapter was getting ridiculously long so I've decided to split it into two. Enjoy sinners.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Her first message came two days later.

It simply stated the word “Akuma”, followed by an address.

Adrien had to resist the urge to screenshot it.

Chat Noir reached the scene in record time, waving a cheery hello to his partner before jumping right into the fray. A brief skirmish, a little cataclysmic action and one lucky charm later, the incident was all wrapped up in a nice, white bow.

Or perhaps a white butterfly would be more accurate.

Of course there wasn’t much time sit around and gossip (a fact Chat noted with no small amount of disappointment), as the use of their unique powers had quickly depleted their miraculous. Both heroes vaulted their way up to the rooftops, her with an effortless flick of the wrist and him with a series of leaps.

After putting some distance between them and the scene of the akuma attack, Ladybug slid up next to Chat, looking him over appraisingly.

“You know, I’m just a bit proud of you kitty.”

‘Oh this he had to hear.’

“And why is that, exactly?” He replied, leaning a hip against the chimney to his left.

“You’ve had my number for nearly 2 days now and you’ve somehow managed to not make me regret my decision.”

“My Lady flatters me with her high praise.”

“No, I’m serious!” Ladybug gestured broadly, a genuine smile working its way onto her face. “I had expected to receive at least a dozen texts in the first night alone.”
“Well I can certainly remedy that,” Chat began with a grin, “I still have 14 more cat-themed emojis I have yet to send you.”

Their miraculous chimed in unison as Ladybug flashed him a withering look.

“And yet, here I am with just a single ladybug one.” She announced, walking backwards with a shake of her head before beelining across to the nearest rooftop.

“Call me sometime!” Chat yelled at her retreating form, cupping his hands around his mouth for emphasis before dropping them with a snort. He could spot her eye roll a mile away, watching as she threw him a non-committal gesture before disappearing over the skyline.

*Boy, he sure could pick ‘em.*

From then on, his phone was his greatest treasure. Adrien never let it leave his hand.

It was the first thing he grabbed when he woke up in the morning and the last thing he tentatively laid next to his pillow at night.

When he showered, it sat on the bathroom counter. When he ate, it took a place right next to his fork, like a millennial’s version of the finest cutlery setting. No matter what Adrien did, his phone always remained within reach.

There was something so exhilarating in the idea he could, at any given time, type out whatever message he wanted into the tiny box, and it would pop up in the hands of his Lady just seconds later.

Adrien imagined a dark-haired girl walking down the streets of Paris. Perhaps she was with friends. Perhaps she was wearing red.

Perhaps she would stop at the sound of her phone alerting her to a new text, pausing to slide a gloveless hand into her purse to fish out the device. Adrien imaged the girl’s blue eyes, unhindered by a mask, scanning down the screen, her lips quirking up at its contents before she typed out a reply.

The mental image was enough to drive him insane.

Every time his phone chimed loudly (he kept the volume all the way up for posterity’s sake) Adrien unlocked it within seconds, desperately hoping to see a new message pop up next to her name.

There had been 2 more Akuma incidents since the first text, one each day. But of course for every treasured (if brief) correspondence he had with his Lady, there were 20 more from other people.

More often than not it was Nino, sending Adrien some shitty screenshot of a Tumblr post or complaining about his job while on break. The two had kept a running dialogue over the summer, texting near constantly as a substitution for actual interaction.

‘*Nino’s no Ladybug*’ Adrien thought idly, reopening their message thread to check his newest received text ‘*but he might just be the next best thing*’.

[I have feeling I know the answer, but im going to ask anyways ]
Ever since his homecoming, Nino had kept trying to rope Adrien into an outing with a few friends from school. Of course, their previous attempt at hanging out had been thwarted by the akuma attack, making Nino all the more antsy to spend some much-needed time with his best bro.

That was a positive thing, Adrien supposed. Years ago he would have given an arm and a leg to have such dedicated friends. Now there were difficulties, however.

Although he was technically “home”, the company’s tour didn’t officially end for three more days, with a closing show in Paris’ fashion district to kick off the fall season. That meant Adrien was still a prisoner to his schedule, unable to sneak in more than an hour or two of free time between the endless fittings and show coordination meetings.

His dangerously overcrowded schedule was killing him, Adrien realized one night.

If the daily (yes, daily) akuma attacks didn’t put him in the ground, his modelling career definitely would. Adrien had yet to get a proper night’s rest since the beginning of the tour, and it was starting to show.

Heghosted through the next few days, walking when he was instructed to walk, fighting when he was instructed to fight, and smiling when he was instructed to smile. It was hell, but it was over.

Despite his exhaustion, he managed to give a spectacular performance at the finale, one that would undoubtedly be featured in numerous publications over the next month. He was too tired to celebrate.

Adrien returned home the night after the wrap-up drunk on the thought of not having to set his alarm. Nearly collapsing onto his King-sided bed, he barely had the forethought to remove his shoes before crashing, much less plug his phone in.

So he slept, much too deeply to hear a familiar ring floating its way across his darkened room.

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Marinette hissed at the cold bite of the icepack, the sound slowly evolving into a relieved sigh as she leaned back farther into her office chair. Tikki buzzed around, mumbling in concern.

“Oh my, how are you going to explain this one away?” The kwami asked, carefully laying her tiny hands on the girls face.

“I’ve decided the old standby ‘accidentally punched myself while ripping seams’ excuse would do just fine.”

“You’ve only done that once though…”
“Well now I’ve done it twice, apparently!”

It had been a lucky hit. Or perhaps an unlucky one depending on who perspective’s you were viewing the situation from. The akuma had been furious when it realized Ladybug had managed to grab it’s cursed object, mad enough to lash out with a blind punch just moments before she had the chance to snap the artifact over her knee.

Ladybug took the hit directly in her left eye, spewing a curse she instantly regretted (there where little ears in the crowd!) before cleansing the dark butterfly flitting its way around her head. *Man did that shit sting, though.*

When the possessed citizen came to, she instantly put two and two together, eyes widening as she took in the bruised up hero before her.

“Oh my God… did I do that?” The woman cried out, leaping from the ground. “Oh goodness, Ladybug. I’m so sorry! I was just so upset and then…”

Marinette couldn’t find it in her heart to be mad at the innocent lady, instead assuring her she wasn’t to blame before making a speedy exit.

Swinging her way back towards the bakery, Marinette had ducked into a secluded spot a few blocks away in order to release her transformation. Without the power of her kwami enveloping her, she instantly felt more scrapes and bruises burning along her sides, the main source of her discomfort still radiating from below her left brow.

It felt bad.

Marinette slid the cool compress from the side of her face, walking over to her vanity to assess the damage.

The light-strung mirror in the corner of her room only confirmed Marinette’s suspicions. ‘*It certainly was a shiner alright*’ she thought with a grimace, poking at the discolored skin with the tip of her rounded nail. Thankfully the swelling had gone down to a more manageable level, indicating the bruise would probably be quick to fade. *‘Lucky me’* Marinette waxed ironically.

So she was a bit banged up, it wasn’t big deal. Sure, she’d escaped fights in much better condition, but she’d certainly come out worse as well. In fact, it wasn’t her first time fighting an Akuma without Chat Noir.

While he was an invaluable asset in the fight against Hawkmoth, it was only Ladybug who was capable of cleansing a cursed akuma. So yes, there had been at least a few incidents before where she could remember wrapping things up alone.

Of course, she hadn’t texted him those times, she recalled with a flash of irritation.

Marinette furrowed her brow, turning to grab her phone and navigate her way back to their message thread. She tapped on the little icon labeled C.N.

[ Akuma at Versailles ]

He had yet to reply.

Actually, he had yet to even open the message, Marinette noted, regarding the tiny (sent 11:43 pm) underneath her text. ‘*Well it had been late*’ she thought, glancing over to see her clock now read 2:20, ‘*it’s not unreasonable for him to have been already asleep at that time.*’
Ladybug had noticed a lull in her partner’s energy level these past few day. When she questioned him about it, he had just waved her off, winking his tired-looking eye as he conjured up another cheesy line. Of course she didn’t buy it. She still saw the way his body seemed to drag itself along the sidewalk, still spotted the exhaustion spreading across his features when he thought she wasn’t looking. ‘It was probably a good thing that he got a full night’s rest.’

Then why was she still so ticked off?

Marinette pressed the home key with a sigh, closing out her apps before plugging the phone back into its charger. She stripped off her clothes, assessing the minor cuts along her thigh with disinterest. Pulling on a fresh pair of underwear and a long shirt (Marinette distrusted anyone who wore pants to bed) she climbed the ladder to her loft, flopping down into the familiar embrace of her comforter.

Sleep didn’t come easy, despite her exhaustion. Marinette tossed for nearly an hour, still ridiculously put-off by the events of the day. She wasn’t mad exactly, but something still didn’t sit right in the pit of her stomach. A strange emotion she couldn’t quiet put her finger on plagued Marinette, chasing away all chances of drifting off peacefully. After a few more minutes of tossing and turning, she realized what it was. Her irritation instantly multiplied.

Marinette missed the damn alley cat.

Which was ridiculous of course, they had just seen each other the day before. Him all posturing and flirtatious, her light-heartedly dodging his advances as the pair worked in perfect synch. She had no reason to be so upset over one day without the company of her insufferable (if sometimes endearing) partner.

Yet here she laid, chest heavy and unable to sleep because she missed Chat Noir. Of all people!

Marinette rolled over with a scoff, trying desperately to ignore the flutter of her stomach. ‘This is just my period making me emotional’ she reasoned. She hoped.

Shaking the burning memory of his green eyes from her thoughts, she fell into a feather-light slumber…

Chapter End Notes

So here a little little fun fact: My irl job is actually as a seamstress and I have on more than one occasion smacked myself in the eye while seam ripping. Isn’t sewing fun?
… only to be awakened less than 6 hours later by a frantic buzz filling her dawn-streaked room.

‘It had to be Alya’ was her first thought.

Well perhaps more like her second thought, her first though contained much more harsh language.

“Please make it stop.” Tikki whispered drowsily from her spot atop the cat pillow. Marinette had mentally counted about 7 separate vibrations at this point and with a groan at the way her back popped as she rose, the sleepy teen reluctantly stirred.

She wrapped the blanket around her shoulder in an attempt to retain some of her former comfy-ness, hobbling down the ladder like structure that led to the main floor of her room in order to retrieve her violently shaking device.

‘Somebody better be dying.’

Marinette yanked her phone from the desk, smoothly lying down on the chaise in her half-awake state. She arranged the blanket in a comfortable swaddle around her form, blinking up at the round window hanging above her. Although it wasn’t by choice, there was still something so magical about rising with the sun she thought idly, taking a moment to enjoy the early morning quiet before yet another buzz drew her attention once more.

To her surprise it wasn’t Alya.

Marinette watched with a grim fascination as Chat Noir proceeded to blow up her inbox, suddenly much more awake than she was a few minutes ago. She scrolled quickly to the top in order to read his messages from the beginning, the first on being from around 15 minutes ago.

[ Akuma at Versailles ] (read 6:19 am)

[ oh god ]

[ shit ]
im so sorry I feel asleep early and I didn’t see this message

I just woke up

are you alright?

ladybug???

LADYBUG PLEASE ANSWER IF YOURE OK

FJCK

IM SERIOUS PLEASE PLEASE ANSWER

The texts went on and on, getting progressively more frantic. A peculiar heat curled it’s way around her ribcage, and she couldn’t fight back an ironic smile as the messages continued to pour in. ‘He’s genuinely concerned,’ Marinette realized with another clench to her gut.

She stared down the wall of text, giggling to herself before deciding to end his misery. Her hands snaked out from their blanketed cocoon in order to interrupt his unending stream of worried exclamations.

Chat, I’m fine.

The tiny 3 dots stopped bouncing on his side of the screen, indicating he had stopped typing.

Maybe a bit pissed you decided to wake me up before 7…

She couldn’t help but tease.

but other than that im alright *eye roll emoji*

His response was immediate.

You had me worried... im so sorry

are you hurt?

Marinette tensed up at the serious concern of his reply, unsure how to respond to this new side of her partner. She chewed on the tip of her nail, taking a moment to stew on the new information she had just been handed.

He had always been protective, she realized slowly.

Always jumping to put himself right in the line of fire, Chat usually came out more worse for wear out of the two heroes. Ladybug had just assumed it was part of his reckless nature, perhaps an attempt to show off. But now, when she thought back to incidents like their fight with Timebreaker, Marinette saw a clear pattern, one in which Chat was always the one to take the hit for her.

The moment of clarity sent her head spinning, Marinette realizing for the first time just how much Chat Noir genuinely…

‘Cared’ seemed like the wrong word.

People who cared for you would ask about your day, would be sure to hold doors and smile and pat
your back when things got tough. Alya cared for her. Nino cared for her. Marinette’s friends and family and teachers and neighbors cared for her.

Throwing yourself into imminent danger time and time again. Running yourself ragged but still keeping up a pleasant face… that went beyond care. Those where the actions of someone who felt something deeper, something rawer than just friendly attachment.

‘Love’

The word came unbidden to her mind, causing a wave of unlikely heat to roll down her entire body. Marinette pushed the blanket surrounding her to the floor, the weight it oppressive amidst the new flood of emotion she was desperately trying to process. The four-letter word continued to bounce its way around her skull, flashing like lighting behind Marinette’s eyes as she forced them back down to the phone in her slightly shaking hands.

[ are you hurt? ]

Marinette swallowed the lump in her throat, fingers hovering over the keyboard. ‘Im fine’ she began to type... backspacing almost immediately with a shake of her head. Something about his honest concern made her want to give an honest answer.

[ A little banged up but nothing too bad… ]

Marinette hit send, folding her knees up under her with a held breath as Chat immediately open the message. She watched the typing icon pop up once more, pulsing on and off for the next 50 seconds. His hesitance made her nervous.

When his reply came, it was shorter than the pause would have suggested.

[ Where are you? ]

Well, whatever she was expecting, it certainly wasn’t that. Marinette continued to reply truthfully, confusion mingling with anticipation deep in her gut as she cautiously answered

[ In my bedroom ]
[ Why? ]
[ I need to see you ]
[ ??? ]
The fact that you’re admitting to being injured at all lets me know its worse than you’re letting on

and I need to assess the damage for myself

seriously Chat, im fine!

I wasn’t there for you last night, let me be there for you now

The sincerity of his words hit her like a freight train, causing another sharp swoop in her belly. The sensation had happened a lot lately, at least in regards to one person in particular. Marinette straightened up on her lounge, bluish black hair falling in front of her face as she mulled over this turn of events. ‘It seemed there would be no way of assuaging his fears over the phone’ she realized, heaving a conflicted sigh as she typed out a quick “Alright.”

I can be at Notre Dame in 5 minutes

ill wait in the usual spot

Ill be there in 10…

Marinette clicked her phone off slowly, body tingling but mind numb.

Or perhaps it was her mind that was tingling and her body that was numb. It was hard to tell through the maelstrom of conflicting emotions swirling around her head.

Forcing the thoughts down, she gathered her blanket, heaving it blindly up into her lofted bed. This earned her a muffled cry from the previously asleep Kwami.

“Sorry Tikki, but this is your wakeup call.” The teen crooned over her shoulder, parting her hair into it’s trademark pigtails. Or, that is, Ladybug’s trademark pigtails. Marinette had retired the style from her everyday ensemble years ago, now either letting her locks hang freely or arranging them into a stylish French braid, but the functionality of pigtails was still her best bet when it came to crime-fighting.

Marinette re-examined her face with a sigh. The hours of rest had done little to dull the purple hue of her left eye and she knew the mask would only cover so much. Never-the-less, she smeared some concealer careful over the tender flesh, dulling the effect but not erasing the damage.

Chat wouldn’t be pleased.

She steeled herself for the inevitable lecture ahead of her, calling out for Tikki to transform her before Ladybug slipped her way out of the skylight.
Adrien was pissed.

Stomping his way around the stone gargoyles that flanked the edge of the building upon which he now stood, he mentally kicked himself for about the eighth time since he woke up this morning.

Despite the fact he was free to sleep in for as long as he desired, Adrien’s eyes still snapped open at their usual 6 am, a fact he cursed until he spotted the flashing of his phone’s notification banner. His stomach dropped to his knees in a way that was completely different form the other times he had received a text from Ladybug.

She had needed him, and Adrien had slept through her message.

Immediate panic worked its way up to his throat. Adrien paced around his still-dark room heart hammering as he sent her reply after reply, only to be met with an empty screen. He had to find her, to see if she was ok.

Chat was already suited up, one foot out the window when she finally responded. Relief flooded the boy as he dropped to the floor. ‘Ladybug was alright’ he thought heart still hammering as he sent her another apology.

The feeling didn’t last long though. A minute later she responded to his inquiry of her well being, her answer the one he had been dreading. Adrien’s face hardened at the text, ribs squeezing like a vice around his heart.

[ A little banged up but nothing too bad… ]

The words rattled around in his head as he continued his frantic pace atop Notre Dame. His Lady was hurt. She was hurt because he couldn’t be bothered to wake up when she needed his help. Chat scuffed his foot against the stone beneath him, growling at no one in particular as his fists balled up in frustration. The loathing he felt…

“Well Good Morning Sunshine.”

Chat pivoted at the familiar voice, watching Ladybug descend from the nearest tower with a crooked smile. He didn’t register the expression, instead focusing on the way she gingerly lowered herself down, favoring her left foot when she landed a few yards from him. He had yet to see her face.

“I didn’t think it was possible for you to be awake this early, aren’t cats supposed to be nocturnal?” Ladybug grinned at him, remaining planted where she was.

Her tone was light, too sweet for the situation. Chat knew she was avoiding the subject, trying to gloss over his mistake with her usual kindness. He didn’t deserve to be let off that easy. When he approached her, about to launch into a long winded apology, the words died in his throat with a disgusted fizzle

For the first time since her arrival, Chat was close enough to notice the discoloration under the right eyehole of her mask. A dangerous concoction of anger, concern, and self-hatred flared up in the pit of his stomach, expression growing stormy as his hand reached out to tilt her head. ‘This is my fault’, he thought miserably, examining her black eye with frustrated breaths of air puffing out of his
clenched teeth.

“Alright before you say anything, let me just-“

“I did this.” Chat cut her off with a low whisper, fingers stroking the edge of her mask. Ladybug rolled her eyes, forcing a laugh that only made Adrien’s guilt multiply before continuing in her infuriatingly casual tone.

“You most certainly did not.” She scolded gently, “An akuma did and you know that.”

“I should have been there.”

“To do what? Block the fist?” Ladybug shook her head, still trapped under his touch. “It’s nothing. I was careless and it landed a cheap shot. It really doesn’t even hurt that much.”

“That’s a lie” Chat thought dejectedly, still glaring at the mottled skin that marred the blue of his Lady’s eye. He had been a model long enough to realize when someone was wearing makeup, and the fact Ladybug had tried to downplay just how bad the injury was only sent another wave of revulsion over him.

“Stop saying it’s nothing!” he began, sounding more bitter than he intended. “You’re injured. You got injured while I was at home sleeping.” Chat dropped her chin, turning away to knead at the edge of his temples. “This wouldn’t have happened if I had just been there.”

“I hope you’re not implying I can’t take care of myself…” she said from behind him, an edge of warning creeping into her tone.

“You know that’s not what I meant, so stop trying to change the subject!”

“So what is the subject exactly??”

“The subject is that you’re hurt, Ladybug!” The two where eye to eye now, arms crossed and stances defiant. “You’ve got a blackeyes and a bum leg, yet all you want to do is stand there and cover it up with cheap concealer and cheaper excuses.”

Marinette’s eyes narrowed, head cocking sideways at his remark. Chat stood firm.

‘Where in the world does he get off lecturing me?’ she thought icily, not liking the way Chat was eyeing her like a disappointed parent. After a brief stare down, Ladybug released the breath she was holding through her nose, the air escaping with an annoyed hiss.

“Whatever Chat,” she said, tuning as she grasped at her yo-yo, “You can’t stay mad at me forever so when you decide to stop behaving like a child, you know how to reach me.”

She toed the edge of the church, wind whipping at her body as she looked over her shoulder at him.

“At least I promise to answer.”

Regretting her decision to come in the first place, Ladybug readied her leap, only to lock up in place when she felt a hand close around her wrist from behind.

“Ladybug.”

Something in his tone made her pause, body still poised to exit but mind drawn to the pleading sound evident in his voice. Marinette forced herself to relax, shoulder sliding downward as she turned to face him once again.
Despite the brevity of the situation, she almost wanted to smile at his adorably down-trodden expression. Chat’s leather ears drooped, belted tail hanging limply as he looked at her with the very picture of kitten eyes.

“I’m not mad at you,” he began softly, still clutching at her hand as he cautiously threaded their fingers together. Marinette’s heart fluttered of its own accord. “I’m pissed at myself.”

He took a moment, trying to accurately formulate his next words.

“I asked you to come here because I was worried about you, but it wasn’t because I don’t think you’re capable of protecting yourself.” Here he gave a tentative smile, one that turned her legs to liquid.

“I mean you’re the all-powerful Ladybug.” Chat said, regaining a bit of his former cheer as he heard her chuckle softly. “I know you could handle anything by yourself…”

He trailed off, squeezing her hands just a smidge tighter before continuing in voice so sweetly sincere Marinette felt the need to look up and confirm it was in fact, Chat Noir who uttered the words.

“…but that doesn’t mean you should have to go at it alone.”

Her lips were on his before she had even made the decision to kiss him.

Chapter End Notes

*spreads my arms wide and waits for the outrage to come pouring in*
Chapter 10

Chapter Summary

*Insert Shitty Joke About How I Havent Updated Since Last Year*

Chapter Notes

So i think this could be sufficiently labeled as a slow burn fic because holy mother it's chapter ten and they are just now kissing?? Enjoy sinners.

Now with art because I couldn't resist! >>>

See the end of the chapter for more notes

If you had asked Adrien last Monday how he thought his week would end, he would have given you a long, very thought out list of possible outcomes. He might have said it would end in an epic day of lounging at home, winding down from his whirlwind tour. Perhaps his Sunday would consist of another schedule being thrust in his face or perhaps it would be spent with friends.

Needless to say, a kiss from Ladybug was more than he would have ever dared to hope for.

He registered the action a split second after her lips connected with his in a hurried clacking of teeth. Chat felt his eyes bulge wide, all traces of anger (at himself, at the situation) fleeing as a rush of anxious glee swooped in to replace it. The kiss was inexperienced, both parties too stunned to do much more than press together in a quick and fumbling embrace, arms stiffly hanging down by their sides and bodies connected only the precious contact of their faces.

Nevertheless, it was the most incredible thing Adrien could ever recall experiencing.

He couldn’t bring himself to close his eyes like they do in the movies, instead letting his gaze wander over Ladybug’s features as she continued to press her lips tentatively into him. They were soft but insistent, clumsy but passionate as they danced against his own. She was more beautiful than he had ever seen her.

‘This is happening’ he thought dizzily, hoping to draw her closer but unable to make his body comply.

The kiss ended far too soon, Ladybug withdrawing after just a few precious seconds of contact. She drew back with whine that shot straight to Adrien’s stomach, lips curling inwards as a fiery blush peppered its way across her features.

She had yet to open her eyes.

The two heroes stood opposite each other for a good 30 seconds, wind whipping at their forms as the heated cloud of emotion swirling in the foot of space between seemed to hang on for dear life.
Neither of them spoke, the only sound punctuating the early morning stillness being the occasional chirping of birds passing by. That, and the roar of blood in Chat’s ears as he watched his Lady’s eyelids finally flutter open.

Beneath the shocking impact of blue was something almost feral. ‘She had been wanting to do that for a while’ Chat realized with a flip of his stomach, unable to completely hide the vicious streak of happiness he felt.

It must have shown across his face however, as Ladybug’s blush deepened, prompting her to cross her arms and huff out an exasperated snort. Chat couldn’t help it now, trying half-heartedly to swallow his self-satisfied grin before letting it break over his face in a look of complete victory.

“You kisssssssssssssed me…”

She whirled at the sound of his childish singing, and Chat had to repress the urge to burst out laughing at her absolutely scandalized expression.

“Oh, what are you? Six years old?” She asked through clenched teeth. Adrien could tell she was repressing a grin though, by the way her lips tugged up at the corners. He really loved her lips.

“You kisssssssssssssssed me!” he repeated gleefully, leaning his body forward for emphasis as he shot her a particularly rakish look. She dodged his expression with a playful narrowing of her eyes before ducking behind the column next to his.

“Chat Noir you are actual, literal trash!” He heard her exclaim out of his line of sight. Quick as a flash, he weaved his way behind her pillar, leaning around the corner until his head was inches from her spotted shoulder before drawling low into her ear…

“Trash you kissssssed.”

Ladybug jumped, surprised by his proximity as she gave a small shriek. She turned to him with an exaggerated frown, poking his chest with the tip of her gloved finger as he continued to laugh.

“You keep this up and it’ll be your last.” She warned.

“Oh, so you were planning on there being more?” Chat inquired in a falsely innocent tone, heart still rocketing against his ribs.

“That’s not-“ Ladybug interrupted herself with a huff, face heating up once again. “You are…”
Chat grinned, that same sense of heady power rushing back over him like it had during their last heated encounter, now a week past.

“Seems as though I’ve left you speechless.”

“God, do you ever stop talking?”

“Not when there’s still so much to say, My Lady.”

His “Lady” readied a response, the words dying on her tongue as she was struck with wicked inspiration.

“If he wants to play this game, then so be it” she thought tartly, stomach turning pleasantly. Shifting her body so that it was facing his as they continued to lean against the cool, marble pillar beside them, Ladybug leaned in close. “Good thing I’ve figured out how to shut you up.”

Chat looked like he was about to reply with a quip of his own, but she didn’t allow him the chance.

Marinette primly rolled up onto her toes, once again pressing her lips firmly against his for just a brief moment before breaking off with a grin. It was quicker than their last, an incredibly chaste kiss more akin to the pleasant pecks she received from her Aunts on the holidays, but it still seemed to send Chat whirling.

Now it was her turn to be smug. Watching as her partner stood silent, a wide eyed look of contentment warming his feature, Ladybug marveled at her neat little trick. ‘Who would have thought there was a mute button on this thing?’ she asked herself gleefully, perking her eyebrows up at her awe-struck companion before lazily making her way to the next column in the row.

Her hips swaying perhaps just a bit more than usual.

“That’s twice today you’ve kissed Chat Noir.” Marinette’s brain whispered, and she flushed, a little stunned at her own forwardness. ‘What in the world have you done now?’

“You realize that’s just an incentive for me to talk more.” Chat called after her, sounding a bit breathless as he followed her farther towards the northern tower of Notre Dame.

“Don’t press your luck, Kitty.” Ladybug hopped down to the level below them, wincing as the impact sent a shock of discomfort to her sore knee.

Chat was on her in an instant, wrapping a hand around her waist as concern replaced the want in his expression.

She was sad to see it go.

“That hurt, didn’t it?” It wasn’t a question.

Ladybug looked up to find his black mask was furrowed in concentration. Her stomach did flip flops as he pulled her closer, supporting her weight almost completely as he gently lowered her to sit on the ledge below.

“Just a little tender is all.” She responded as he plopped himself down beside her. “I wasn’t lying when I said it wasn’t a big deal, I’ve gotten worse injuries from tripping down the stairs at school.”

“I find that hard to believe.” Chat said cooly, gaze still focused on the way her hand massaged at her kneecap. His shoulder sat pressed against hers.
“Most of my coordination comes from being Ladybug, I think.” Marinette admitted with a small chuckle, extending her leg gingerly before leaning back against the wall behind her. “I’m a complete klutz once the suit comes off.”

She watched Chat file away the information, his green eyes glowing at the tiny factoid like she had just handed him some priceless treasure. ‘Careful now.’ Marinette chided herself.

“I have no doubt My Lady is just as flawless out of her suit as she is in it.” He said resolutely, maintaining a purely conversational tone before sending her a flirty look at his statement’s double meaning. “Feel free to shut me up any time now!”

“Oh, aren’t you just so suave.” Ladybug said, slapping at his shoulder with a roll of her eyes.

They fell into a comfortable silence, one that neither of them felt the need to break as the heroes took in the sunny atmosphere of another Parisian morning. Or perhaps late morning, if the brightness was any indication of how much time had passed.

Ladybug looked out from their vantage point, watching as the square in front of them began to fill with more and more people. Some had stopped what they were doing to peer up at the façade of the church, squinting and pointing at the duo with eager expressions and pleasant waves.

‘Ugh-oh, busted’

Chat noticed her shift in expression, following her eyes downward to take in the crowd that was rapidly forming below them. With a grin, he stood up, hauling Ladybug gently to her feet alongside him before peering over the edge. It was impossible to hear at this height, but she had a sneaking suspicion his attention was met with more than one adoring scream from below.

“Looks like we’ve been caught.” Chat said humorously, making a grand show of bowing and flexing before turning back to her with a mischievous twinkle in his eye. “What do you say we give the people a show?”

Ladybug knew exactly what kind of show he was thinking about by the way his eyebrows wiggled suggestively, but she had other plans. Another wicked plan hatched in her mind, and Marinette strode to the end of the ledge, pulling Chat along with her. “Sounds good to me.”

With a look that clearly said ‘this is too good to be true’, Chat made a move to pull her closer, Ladybug cutting him off with a raised hand. She had to resist the urge to laugh at his disappointed pout.

“So, you ever heard of the game Assassins Creed?” She asked innocently, eyes looking pointedly at the steep drop ahead of them.

Chat looked confused for a second, following her line of sight before the implications of her words sunk it. His eyes widened, mouth falling open in protest.

“Ladybug don’t you-”

‘Too late’ Marinette thought, reveling in self-satisfaction at his gob smacked expression before launching herself into a swan dive off the side of the church.

It was a move she had done a hundred times, but her stomach still swooped at the exhilaration of free-falling. Below her, the crowded stood in awe, some cheering and other snapping pictures at their polka dotted hero sailed through the air. Marinette laughed, swiveling her body into action as she neared the ground. Her yo-yo zipped out with incredible speed, hooking itself around the church’s
lowest archway (which was still quite far up) and swinging its wielder safely to the concrete below.

Her landing was feather-light, knee not twitching in the slightest as Ladybug touched down delicately.

“Good Morning!” She greeted the cheering crowd pleasantly, heart still thrumming with adrenaline. They responded in earnest, prompting Ladybug to strike a few heroic looking poses as dozens of phone cameras flashed in her direction. Seconds later, she felt a shadow come crashing down beside her, Chat having finally clawed his way down the façade of the building.

Her partner brushed himself off roughly, hair falling wildly around his face as he made an attempt to join in on her impromptu modeling session.

“Look you long enough.” Marinette couldn’t help but whisper smugly, keeping her pleasant smile forward as she twined her arm with his.

“Had to restart my heartbeat.” Chat remarked between his teeth, grinning alongside her as his chest heaved beneath his tight, black suit.

She found she didn’t dislike the sight.

“Yeowch, you look terrible.”

“Yeah? Well you should see the other guy.”

It was T-minus one week until the start of the new school year, and with Alya’s internship now over, the girls were ready to milk every last minute out of their remaining summer. They had plans laid out for the next 5 days solid, intent on going out with a bang.

And of course by that, they meant long nights filled with movie marathons and late days of enjoying the last of the warm weather as they hit every outdoor space within a 9 block radius.

Alya had visibly cringed when she caught sight of Marinette’s black eye as the girl pooped up on her doorstep, steering her clumsy friend towards the kitchen in order to root around for something to help take the edge off.

“You know, I was glad when you picked up sewing,” the redhead began in a lecturing tone, smearing a pungent concoction of ground up herbs around the smaller girl’s bruised eye. Alya’s father was in to natural medicine, keeping a wide collection of holistic remedies around the house for use by friends and family. In fact, he had labeled an entire section off for supplies strictly for Marinette. “… of course now that I’ve had to nurse how many seamstress related injuries, I almost wish you had stuck with Aikido.”

Her patient just shrugged guiltily, blinking though the thick sludge around her eye socket.

“I live a dangerous life.” Marinette said distantly, ruminating on the truth of her statement. Alya obviously didn’t catch the meaning, packing the tiny jars back away before helping her friend off the
“That you do, my delicate flower.” She crooned, eyes suddenly lighting up. “Oh! So you know how I said over the phone I had something cool to show you?”

“Yeah I remember.” Marinette replied, following her friend up to her second story bedroom. Contrary to her own (usually) put together room, Alya’s space was an explosion of stuff. Marinette had learned to accept her cluttered ways, kicking clothes free of her path as she settled on the bed, Alya heading over to snatch her laptop before perching next to her.

“There was a sighting yesterday at Notre Dame.” She began, imputing her password before flashing Marinette a look of sheer excitement. “Chat Noir and Ladybug where there! No attack, no ceremony, just hanging out atop the church together! How frickin awesome is that?!?”

‘Pretty frickin awesome’ Marinette thought to herself, recalling the events of her and Chat’s little “hang out.”

“That’s great, did you get some pictures?” She asked, already knowing the answer. Marinette knew for a fact her friend wasn’t in the crowd. However she tensed up when she got an unexpected reply.

“I didn’t but one of my readers was there and got this incredible shot!” Alya said proudly, clicking through a few more folders before bringing up an image across her laptop screen.

Marinette let out a breath of relief, noting that whatever filter the photographer used had all but erased Ladybug’s black eye. ‘That would have been a difficult coincidence to explain away’

She studied the picture further, lips quirking up and fingers fluttering in her lap at the identically rakish expressions displayed across the subject’s faces. It seemed comfortable on Chat’s face, resting at the edges of his feature as he shot the camera a toothy smile. Of course the damned cat was winking.

Ladybug stood tall beside him despite their height difference, hip cocked confidently and face flushed with what everyone else would assume was exertion. Of course Marinette knew otherwise, the memory of her lips pressed against Chat’s coming unbidden to the forefront of her mind.

“They look great.” Marinette said distantly, eyes still focused on the easy embrace Ladybug shared with Chat. That she had shared with Chat.

“Oh yeah, I would totally hit that.” Alya replied instantly, causing the girl beside her to release a small choke.

“Which one?” Marinette asked, not sure if there was a reply she should be hoping for. Alya looked thoughtful for a second, eyes flicking back the screen before shaking her head with a resolute smile.

“Both.”

‘Oh, ok. Not the worst answer she could’ve gotten.’

“Thiiiirrrrrrsty…” Marinette tittered with relief, poking her friend in the shoulder before glancing back at the image. She had to admit, they made an attractive couple.
'Of course not like that’ she reprimanded herself sharply.

“Oh you’re one to talk Miss. I-Almost-Broke-My-Phone-Because-I-Saw-A-Pic-Of-Adrien.” Alya taunted, crossing her arms with a smirk. “Tell me again how you plan on getting through life without ever seeing him again?”

Aaaaahhhhh the other blonde boy making Marinette’s life a pubescent hellscape.

She had somehow been able to wiggle out of every attempt that was made in order to arrange a hangout including the two of them, a fact she was both relieved and extremely guilty about. Before he left for the summer, Adrien had become something almost akin to a friend to Marinette. Of course she attributed it mostly to the fact they were both exhausted during the scant 2 weeks of their almost friendship. Adrien probably only said those nice things about hanging out to her because he was too tired to noticed how weird she was behaving around him.

However Alya was right, she couldn’t avoid the boy forever.

“Well, maybe not the rest of my life,” Marinette began slowly, throwing herself backwards against the headboard, “I’ve mostly accepted the fact I’ll have to face him sometime…”

“Perfect!” Alya cut in, leaping form the bed to rifle through her closet. Her next words were muffled but still sent a shot of cold fear coursing down Marinette’s spine. “Because we are all going to that music festival in downtown this Friday!”

Chapter End Notes

Hello naughty children, it's discourse time.
So I have some rather sinful things planned for future chapters... things that might go just a bit beyond a T rating. So my question is, do I dump all of my remotely smutty stuff into a separate M rated fic in the the same series or do i just bump the rating on this fic and drag you all into the gutter with me? Pls discuss.
Chapter 11

Chapter Summary

In Which We Get Some Plot To This Puppy

Chapter Notes

*Glances over at the 40+ comments I got on the last chapter crying out for more sin*
*casually changes the rating to M*
Welcome to my trash world.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Adrien was frustrated, in every sense of the word.

From the moment Ladybug first pressed her lips into his, to her reckless freefall off Notre Dame, to the way she had just slipped away from him once they had found solitude from the crowd, he was frustrated.

Spinning listlessly in his office chair, Adrien stared unseeingly at his high ceiling, recalling the way Ladybug had immediately stiffened up when he took her by the hand, trying desperately to sort out just exactly where things stood between the two.

He had looked at her, she had stared at the ground.

“What does this make us?”

“I...don’t know.”

“You know how I feel about you.”

“I do.”

“And?”

Ladybug ran, as Ladybug does.

When she had shook her head at him, stepping backward before slipping down a side street, Chat wasn’t sure if it was a gesture of rejection or an attempt to clear her own thoughts. Either way, he was left standing alone, feeling a little piece of himself shatter at her every retreating footprint.

But hey, what’s new?

Adrien knew he sounded desperate and perhaps he was. Nearly 3 years he had spent with her, spent pining after her. From day one, Adrien had been drawn to her in an emotional way, one that went beyond boyhood crushes on girls in skin tight suits. And while the physical attraction was definitely there (more so now than ever before), he had fallen for Ladybug in every way one could imagine.
When the two of them fought the Bubbler, he fell for her passion and emotional maturity.

When they had faced off against Story Weather, he fell for her cunning and wit.

When she had battled his Copycat, he fell for her unwavering loyalty.

Each new experience with Ladybug brought out deeper and more complex feeling of attachment, and each day Adrien found more and more reasons to love her.

One of the best things about being Chat Noir was that he never had to try and filter his emotions. He could curse and flirt and pout and laugh in a way Adrien Agreste would never be allowed to. Everything about his alter ego was raw and genuine, intense in a way that sometimes surprised even the boy behind the mask himself. And it was no different when it came to his feelings towards Ladybug.

Through the entirety of their partnership, it had been no secret Chat Noir was head over heels for her. He obviously never made an attempt to keep it a secret, taking every opportunity he got to shower her with his affection.

It was light and fun, their game of cat and mouse…

Cat and bug?

Anyway.

Chat would flirt and fawn, Ladybug would tease and sidestep. She never shut him down too hard, usually waving off his antics with an airy retort before getting back to business.

Of course, there were those few rare and precious moments in which Chat would see just a glimmer of response. Whether it be a lingering look or an off-handed compliment, Ladybug had a way of giving off just enough of a reaction to feed the flames of his desire and keep him coming back for more.

Those were the unspoken rules of their game, the ones she had just thrown out the window.

You see, as long as Chat knew his feelings weren’t returned by the object of his affection there was no need to really dissect it.

He was in love with Ladybug. He knew it. She knew it. Hell, all of Paris knew it!

Of course now things got difficult, as Chat’s one-sided infatuation suddenly wasn’t so one-sided.

‘Twice. Ladybug kissed me twice yesterday.’

Adrien stilled the motion of his chair, his mind suddenly doing enough spinning to last a lifetime.

He couldn’t tell you how many times he had imagined kissing Ladybug. It was practically a hobby at this point, Adrien’s fantasies only getting more drawn-out with each passing month. In some versions of their fictional kiss, she was the one to instigate it, other times he would.

Sometimes it was sweet and slow, usually followed by some sappy, un-Ladybuglike declaration of love. The kind of idle daydream Adrien would have in the middle of class or during a lull in a
Sometimes it was carnal and heated, filled with shivery moans and scraping fingernails. Those most often happened during their weekly patrols, when the often uneventful nights meant Chat had little else to focus on but the lean, athletic body moving its way under the moonlight ahead of him.

Sometimes the kisses weren’t on the lips, instead trailing their way to more exotic places. Adrien reserved these particular fantasies for nighttime, when he was fully able to enjoy the vivid mental picture and the imagined sensation of her mouth as he ground out his pent up heat into the palm of his hand.

One thing these imagined kisses all had in common however, was the fact he didn’t just stand there like an idiot as Ladybug smooched him silly.

Adrien let out another groan, one that quickly turned into more of an exasperated cry as he slumped further in his seat. If you gave him a journal, he could fill the pages (front and back!) with everything he wanted to do to Ladybug. He could write paragraphs and poems and maybe even whole symphonies about every sinful act he had committed towards her in his own hormone-addled mind.

Yet when the time had come to put his overactive imagination to use, what had Adrien done?

He froze.

Ladybug had kissed him and he couldn’t even will his hands to work, couldn’t force his mouth to move. For the first time in a long time, Adrien had felt less like a hero, and more like a boy in a ridiculous costume, Chat Noir’s usual charisma nowhere to be found.

_And now, he could never show his face around her again._

Of course it was at that time his phone decided to chime, the noise rousing Adrien from his internal monologue and drawing his attention to the fact his room was gotten dark. _‘How long had he been out of it?’_ Scoping the handheld up off the side table, Adrien unlocked it with a swish of his fingers. The screen said it was now 7:48 pm.

It also said there was a new message from Ladybug.

[ Patrol tomorrow night? ]

[ I need to see you. ]

[ Of course! ]

Adrien couldn’t wait.

Marinette woke long after her friend, as per usual. Stretching out in a bed so familiar it might as well
be hers, she shook the lingering sleepiness from her eyes. The sounds of many small feet pattering their way around the hallway leaked from the crack under Alya’s door. It was the usual tune of the household, one that Marinette had grown to love throughout their years of friendship.

“Well, Good Afternoon sleeping beauty.” Alya said from her spot by the window, snapping her journal shut and wading her way through the clutter in a path to the bed.

“Yeah, yeah, like I’ve never heard that one before.” Marinette said, wincing as her much heavier, much more alert friend dove onto the mattress beside her with a grunt. The newly awakened girl shot a few inches in the air, landing with a grumble at the mischievous look in her companion’s eye. ‘God, it was too early for her antics.’

“So… you gunna tell me who C.N is and why they cant wait to see you tonight?”

Marinette almost swallowed her tongue.

“Did you go through my phone?!”

“Oh, so C.N is a he? How interesting! How very, very, very interesting. Spill the tea.”

“The teahouse is closed, come back later.” The reply was muffled through the blankets, Alya ripping them off in a righteous flurry before affixing Marinette with her best “investigative reporter” look.

“Marinette Dupain-Cheng, if I find out you’ve been running around with some guy behind my back and refuse to tell me all the nasty details, I will never speak to you again and I mean it!”

“He’s a friend.”

“Wrong answer, try again.”

“A colleague?”

“Marinette!”

The smaller girl heaved an exasperated sigh, realizing a half truth was better than Alya figuring the whole situation as she spoke in a tentative voice.

“Alright, he’s just some guy I’ve been texting.”

The redhead’s eyes blew wide with glee, before she narrowed them again in a mock look of concentration.

“Some guy you’re meeting tonight, aka the night you swore you were busy too hang out on because you had ‘things’ to do…” Alya split a grin, elbowing Marinette conspiratorially. “Guess I know now who ‘things’ is now, you Minx!”

“You know what I miss?” Marinette sputtered suddenly, fighting to tame the blush that threatened to
overtake her entire upper body. “Being asleep and not awake and not having this conversation!”

“No, so fast, I need some more details if you’re going to be out gallivanting the night away with a mystery boy!” Suddenly her notebook was open again, pencil ready to jot down anything of importance.

“Alya, I’m not.”

“Name, Age, Height, Weight, Eye Color, School, Neighborhood, Dick Size.”

“C.B, No, Tall, No, Green, No, No, and ALYA!”

“Hhhhmmmm. Tall, green eyes, and a dick as big as I am…sounds like a winner to me.”

Marinette ground the palms of her hands in to her eye sockets with a groan, shoulders jerking at her friend’s next words.

“Are you sure you’re not talking about Adrien?”

“Of course not!” Marinette squawked, face flushing at the insinuation. “You think I kept his number after the whole voicemail fiasco?”

Her heart rate quickened as she remembered the plans they had to see Adrien on Friday, just 3 short days away. Marinette had tried to beg off from the concert, crying out to Alya that she just wasn’t ready, but her friend was having none of it. Alya had insisted she come, compromising by allowing Marinette some personal time over Wednesday to mentally prepare herself before the week-long sleepover resumed.

Marinette’s little freak out was halted by the next words out of her friend’s mouth.

“Well you definitely have a type…” Alya drawled out thoughtfully, still scrutinizing the girl before her.

Marinette’s mind ticked disjointedly in time with her heartbeat, Alya’s words rattling around uncomfortably.

Adrien was tall.

Chat was tall.

Adrien had blonde hair with green eyes and so did…

‘Holy shit, do I have a type!’

‘That’s ridiculous’ Marinette reasoned, trying to think past the thumping against her ribs. ‘I have a crush on Adrien.’ She nodded resolutely. ‘Chat’s just my partner… my newly cut, leather-clad heartthrob of a partner whom I kiss on top of buildings sometimes.’

She so had a type.

Marinette recalled with a shiver the way Chat had looked at her once they had made it to a more private place. The way his eyes had pooled with longing when he asked what the kiss had meant, and the way his face had fallen as Ladybug had stepped away.

Unable to process her own feelings, Marinette had just ran.
“So. What kind of texting are we talking about here?”

Alya’s question snapped Marinette from her reprieve, allowing her the opportunity to abandon her frustrating line of thought.

“Oh, you know. I send him words, he sends words back, we communicate like normal people. What the hell kind of question was that?”

Alya quirked an eyebrow up, giving her friend a peculiar look that let Marinette know she was in for a hell of a conversation.

“Don’t act like you don’t know what I’m talking about. Your big sis Alya here has texted many a boy in her time, and I know just as well as you do how quickly words turn to pictures turn to actions.”

“Ok, now you’ve really lost me.” Marinette said sincerely, not liking the way her friend’s features lit up wickedly at the response.

“I’m asking if Mister Green-Eyes has sent you any steamy pics yet. And if so, have you sent any back?”

“Absolutely not!” Marinette shrieked with a violent shake of her head, face heating up as her bestie roared with laughter beside her.

‘This wasn’t happening, they are not having the sexting talk.’

“Oh, we are so having the sexting talk!” Alya said as if reading her friend’s mind.

45 minutes, 6 separate crisis’ and countless extremely awkward screenshot examples later, Marinette was just about ready to melt through the floorboards and Alya was still talking.

“He’s just a friend.” She mumbled under the girl’s loud lecturing on proper goodbye etiquette. “Just a friend and yet here we are…”

“Oh don’t you pull that shit on me!” Alya broke off suddenly. “You’re going out tonight with a boy I’ve never heard of until just now! It’s obviously something, even if you won’t admit it to yourself.”

Something about the words made Marinette flinch.

‘It’s obviously something, even if you won’t admit it to yourself.’

“Now, of course, is when we move on to my patented ‘Nude Gospel’! The Ten Commandments of Slutty Pics if you will…”

“You know what? I think maybe I’ve learned enough new and…interesting things today.” Marinette
raised her hands in pleading gesture. “How about we take a rain check on that ‘Nude Gospel’ and instead maybe get in some more video game time before I have to head home?”

Alya sighed, slinging her arm around the suddenly much wiser girl before her.

“All right, you’re off the hook for now, but I expect full details when you get back here Thursday night!”

Accepting that that was the best offer she was bound to get, Marinette relented, allowing herself to be drawn down the stairs with a sigh.

She had the feeling this wasn’t going to be her last confusing conversation of the day.

And she wasn’t wrong.

Hours later, as Marinette sat stiffly atop a brick chimney near their usual patrol point, she could practically feel the questions rolling of off Chat Noir’s body, the young hero planted firmly on the rooftop below her.

“You do realize I don’t bite unless asked to?” He questioned, eyeballing the feet of space Ladybug had put between them. The words were as stiff as his posture, like Chat was saying them out of necessity rather than in an attempt to get an actual reaction. She didn’t like the way they rolled off his tongue to drop like glass marbles to the ground.

"The distance is for my sake, as well as yours.” She replied, voice surprisingly even considering the way her stomach clenched as the implication of her words hit. Apparently, Chat hadn’t miss the meaning either, judging by the way his eyes snapped up to meet hers in heated flash. Ladybug suddenly had trouble remembering what she even wanted to talk to him about.

“Afraid you can’t keep your hands off of me?”  He said in a low, teasing voice, inching his way towards her perch without ever breaking eye contact. ‘There’s no logical reason he should this much power over me’ Marinette thought desperately, fingers digging in to the bricks beneath her as she swallowed the lump in her throat at his distracting approach.

“‘Ooops, bad phrasing’ she realized a second too late, noticing the visible shiver that ran down Chat’s body.

‘And by that of course,” Ladybug continued quickly, trying to stomp down a shudder of her own, “I mean your legs will be broken! By me! For using my number to send non-akuma related messages!” She was practically yelling at this point, hands gesticulating wildly in the dim glow of the moonlight. “I’ll have you know my extremely nosy best friend saw that message. And let me tell you, she was quiet eager to hear exactly what my relationship was with this ‘C.N’!”

A beat.

“What did you tell her?” Chat asked quietly, now standing directly below her as his claw scraped absently at the tall chimney. His face held a strange mix of hope and apprehension, chin tilted upwards as he awaited a response.

“I told her you were a guy…” Ladybug began tentatively, her own very conflicted feelings suddenly
making it hard to form proper sentences.

“That I am.”

“I told her we had been texting”

“That we have.”

“I might have also told her we were on a date tonight.”

Chat’s lips quirked up a bit at that, just enough to ease the tension settling in Marinette’s chest.

“If I had known this was to be date, I would have worn something nicer. Maybe grabbed bouquet on the way over.” He purred out cautiously, trying on a smile that all but melted any anger she might have felt towards him. Ladybug gave a quick laugh.

“Flirt all you want, but you’re still in trouble.” She said in a mock serious tone, trying to reconstruct some semblance of authority before the situation spiraled out of her control. Of course Chat’s falsely guilty expression and his adorable (totally not adorable!) gesture of defeat only cemented the fact she had already forgiven him. ‘Stupid cat.’

A silence stretch between them, one that reminded Marinette of the real reason they were here right now.

“I-I didn’t mean to run.” Ladybug said in a voice hardly above a whisper, body flooding with shame as she recalled the way she had bolted like a coward at his question, a perfectly reasonable one after her sudden shift in behavior. After she had all but jumped him.

“It’s my fault, I shouldn’t have pressed you.” Chat responded instantly.

“Don’t say that!” She shot back stiffly before taking a second to measure her tone. Marinette’s stomach churned with guilt. She had been the one to kiss him and then run off, yet Chat was the one trying to take the blame. Even worse, she couldn’t even apologize without sounding like she was lecturing him.

Ladybug tried to keep her next words light, almost getting struck blind by their glaring truth.

“I didn’t run because I didn’t feel anything.”

Chat gave a start at her reverent tone, hope flooding his eyes with a light Marinette found to be inexplicably addictive and most definitely dangerous. Words and feeling slid by each other in a frantic dance before getting caught on the edge of her teeth. Ladybug couldn’t keep eye contact with Chat, the look on his face just made her heart beat too fast and her palms sweat too much and if she didn’t glance away she might just collapse in on herself.

“You felt something?” It was phrased like a question but rang out like a prayer. Ladybug could only nod, unable to draw her gaze up from the hands folded in her lap.

“You’re saying you felt something…feel something… towards me?” Chat tried to clarify in a carefully measured tone.

Another nod.

“Then what’s the problem?” He said, as if it were the most simple thing in the world.

Ladybug’s head snapped up at that, taking in the barely contained joy etched across her partner’s
features. ‘What was the problem?’ she wondered briefly, brow furrowing as Chat continued on in a casual tone.

“So you feel something towards me?” He chuckled in wonder, glancing up with a shrug. “You should know by now that I’m not exactly frigid towards you, myself. Did you seriously think I would turn you down? Me? The guy who’s been throwing himself at you for the last 3 or so years?”

‘Well he had a point there’ Marinette pondered, eventually realizing the fault in the situation.

“Its not that I thought you'd reject me.” She began slowly, mind working as she slid off the chimney to pace the roof below. She gathered up all the thoughts that had been swirling around her mind over the last few days and tried to boil them down. “I think the problem is, I’m not sure if whatever I feel towards you matches the...intensity?...of what you feel for me.”

To her surprise, Chat responded with a giddy laugh as he threw his arms in the air grandly.

“Who cares?” He practically sang, face split apart with that wild grin that made her stomach do all kind of acrobatics. “I’ve been trying to win your affection for years! Do you really think I mind if you don’t fall immediately head over heels for me?!”

Ladybug made noise somewhere between a shriek and snort as Chat suddenly scooped her up, twirling her in some cliché Disney move before planting her once again upon the ground. The two stared at each other for a beat.

“You feel something…” He began wondrously, gesturing to her now slightly-flushed face before letting his hands flutter in the space between them. “…and however small that something is, it works for me.”

Marinette couldn’t help but giggle at his awe-struck expression, feeling the tight knot of anxiety slowly unravel from behind her ribs. ‘He wasn’t mad....Hell, he was practically jumping with joy at the mere insinuation that Ladybug’s feeling towards him went beyond that of partners!’

“So you’re ok with not labeling this?” She asked tentatively, gauging his reaction.

“This?” Chat asked in a falsely oblivious tone. He was still smiling.

“Us.” Marinette clarified, enjoying the way his ears perked up at the word (almost as much as she enjoyed letting it slip off her tongue.)

“As long as there’s an ‘us’, I’ll be the happiest cat in all of Paris!”

“You aren’t all that hard to please, are you?” Ladybug said slyly, poking a finger to the center of Chat’s chest.

“Not at all,” he responded, still grinning, “Especially if it’s my Lady doing the pleasing.”

“Oh shut up!” She scoffed, flushing despite herself.

“You could make me…”

“You’re right, I could. It’s mighty hard to talk with a broken jaw!”

“See, I had other ways in mind.”

“You couldn’t possibly be suggesting I cut out your tongue?”
“Well, you were close on the tongue part…” Chat sent her a suggestive wink, one Ladybug quickly fanned away with a roll of her eyes.

“Enough! When I said we were going to patrol tonight, I wasn’t kidding.” She said, unhooking her yo-yo with a content smile.

“Of course, duty calls!” Chat responded, bowing with a grand gesture to the adjacent rooftop before straightening suddenly. "But first, I thought you might like this."

Ladybug watched in trepidation as he burrowed around in his front pocket, suspicion bursting into happiness at the sight of the tiny, foil-wrapped treasure he extracted between two gloved fingers. Chat laughed at what must have been her dopey expression, extending the chocolate to her with a flourish.

"How did you know?" Marinette questioned him, quickly unwrapping her treat before popping it excitedly in her mouth. Just as amazing as she remembered.

"It's the 5th isn't it?" Chat said simply, shrugging his shoulder with a smile before leaping his way across to the next building over.

A little stunned at his sensitivity, Ladybug stood rooted in place, taking a moment to finish chewing before following Chat's shadow along their regular route, a large smile plastered across her face.

Chapter End Notes

*throws exposition in your face* gee I wonder where this story is going???
So I know this chapter actually doesn’t have much mature content but future installments will be taking full advantage of the new rating.
On another note. I watched the English premier of Copy Cat today and boy was it nice seeing it poke all kind of holes in my plot! So for the sake of the story, I’m working under the assumption Marinette deleted Adrien’s number and that’s why she can safely text Chat Noir.

As always, your comments are the highlight of my day! <3
Chapter 12

Chapter Summary

In Which Marinette Is Confused And Alya Is Bae (aka the alternate title to this entire fic.)

Chapter Notes

Heres the new chapter! But first, the answer to a question nobody asked! I've been listening to Ellie Goulding's new album "Delirium" on repeat while writing this. My little shipper brain can apply each and every song to a specific event so idk check it out if you'd like??
Enjoy sinners

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Marinette couldn’t explain to you how they’d gotten into this position even if she tried.

The pair slid heatedly against each other, chests mashed together and hands freely wandering the newfound edges and curves that crested from behind skin-tight suits of red and black. Chat groaned into her mouth, hand ghosting up her ribs in a frenzied dance that matched the beating of the organ below his wandering fingers. Ladybug responded in earnest, letting her tongue blaze a path along the inside of the boy’s check before dipping down to meet his own.

This patrol wasn’t exactly going according to plan.

Had she have been in a clearer state of mind, Marinette just might have entertained the thought that perhaps Ladybug and Chat Noir making out atop a very public, very visible rooftop wasn’t exactly an ideal situation. But she wasn’t in a clear state of mind, as evidenced by the half-formed pleas for “more” that spilled from her lips as Chat moved his way down her neck.

This kiss was different than their first. Feelings sure when they had once been tentative; Motions effortless where they had once been stiff. Marinette was rising and falling all at once, lost completely in the hypnotic feel of teeth scraping at her jaw, of claws biting softly into the inflamed skin of her lower back.

“You want this.” Chat breathed against her aching flesh, gazing up with an unholy expression written across his angelic features. She couldn’t decide if the words were a question or a command.

She couldn’t decide which one turned her on more.

“I want this.” Ladybug confirmed, a bit breathlessly, drawing his face up to connect with hers once more. She shivered as he drew up to his full height, their kiss becoming impossibly deeper at the new angle this position allowed for. Marinette felt all traces of doubt evaporate as she positively writhed in the sense of rightness that came with being entwined with Chat Noir like this.
She felt powerful. Powerful in a way that went beyond the superficial sense of confidence that came with her suit.

Because with his eyes closed like this, body shaking and hands begging for more, Chat wasn’t responding to Ladybug. He was responding to her, to Marinette. To the girl behind the mask and the very same girl who threaded her fingers through his hair as she pulled their lips apart with a gasp.

“You want me.” She whispered into the darkness, voice sluggish with desire.

“I want you.” Chat affirmed in what could only be described as a growl.

Eyes flashing, he slowly backed her against the wall to their left, pinning her there despite his body hovering just inches from her own. He leaned down to whisper against her lips, “All of you.”

The words caused her back to arch pleasantly against the mattress beneath her, hands twisting themselves into the sheets as Marinette gave a moan.

‘Wait…’

All too quickly, the heat of Chat’s body was fleeing, the scene around her shifting in and out of focus before fading into darkness. Marinette felt her eyes slide open, flitting their way around the walls of her bedroom before snapping shut once more.

‘I didn’t…’ She thought with a groan that wasn’t completely out of frustration. Marinette unconsciously squeezed her thighs together, reveling in how the pressure made her insides squirm. Her blankets felt too hot, only managing to magnify her uncomfortable state of arousal. With a twist of her stomach, she pressed two fingers to the crotch of her panties, the dampness there only confirming that she had, in fact.

‘Oh my god’ Marinette thought, trying to find the strength to be embarrassed through the overwhelming waves of desire that still coursed through her brain to shudder down her form. ‘I just…and it…with Chat???’

Marinette tried to find her bearings, listing out facts to help bring her back down to earth.

*It was late Tuesday night. Or possibly early Wednesday morning.*

Hours ago, she was on patrol. Hours from now, she’d be back at Alya’s.

*Her name was Marinette, her favorite color was pink, and she just had a wet dream about Chat Noir.*

‘Shit.’

She threw the covers off suddenly, climbing down the ladder on shaking legs before booking it to the hall bathroom. Flicking the light on, Marinette blinked through the sudden brightness, bracing her hands on the counter as she sucked in lungfulls of air.

“What the hell was that?” She asked the empty washroom, trying desperately to tame the lust that still licked at her core with heated flashes. Her forehead practically sizzled as she laid it against the cool porcelain of the sink, Marinette swallowing down a lump of shame as the image of those eyes, the ones that weren’t the correct shade of green, refused to leave her brain.

This certainly hadn’t been the first time she’d experienced a dream like that. She had been getting them since the vague idea of sex had even presented itself to her, maybe around the age of 13 or so.
Of course they predominately featured Adrien, but Marinette had also come to accept the fact her subconscious mind would sometimes wander to other boys, mainly her other classmates or possibly a handsome movie star or two. She never really read too far in to it. After all, dreams don’t often contain a lot of logic or deeper meaning.

But this, this was something else entirely. This wasn’t something she could dismiss as a product of hormones.

Because now she and Chat had made the decision to become a thing. And because Marinette wasn’t just simply bothered by the dream, she was positively aroused.

Even now, standing here minutes later (by which time she would have normally wound down from her tightly coiled state) Marinette still wanted nothing more than to pick up right where her dream left off, moaning and bucking under…

‘That stupid fucking cat’ Marinette thought angrily, helplessly. “Him and his stupid flirting and his stupid tight suit and his stupid sexy voice and the stupid way he just-“

He liked her.

No.

He liked Ladybug.

Marinette glanced up at the mirror, feeling less like the Superhero than she ever had before.

Reflected back from the toothpaste-stained surface before her was a rats nest of blue-black hair, sweeping it’s way over tired, dull eyes. She regarded the red splotches that marked up her bare face, not the work of some delicate blush but the pattern of acne she tried so desperately to cover up during the day.

Her gaze traced the stretchmarks that bent their way around her stomach, down her thighs and across her hips, frowning as her fingers wound around the jagged path they carved out. She turned every which way, examining her reflection while mentally cataloging each bump and mark and flaw that dotted its way across her body.

Marinette wasn’t Ladybug.

Ladybug was smooth, flawless. The only spots she had were where the ones that fanned out along her costume, the only red on her face was that of her mask. Her hair was smooth and her eyes where bright. She never stuttered or tripped or made dumb mistakes. She was never embarrassed, never conflicted, never confused.

Chat loved Ladybug, wanted to be with Ladybug.

She wasn’t Ladybug.

Still staring at the mirror before her, Marinette yanked her sleepshirt down as far as it would go, suddenly fighting the urge curl up inside of it until she was completely hidden. Her arousal had all but fled, leaving a dull feeling of inadequacy in its place to settle like a stone in the pit of her stomach. Marinette turned on the cold faucet, splashing some water to her deadened face before drying off and exiting the bathroom.

As she climbed back up to her bed, she wanted nothing more than to just sleep. No dreams, no expectations, just sleep and sleep until she woke up as a new person. Someone who didn’t trick
people into feeling things for girls who don’t truly exist.

Just as she was settling in however, Marinette perked up at the tiny vibration working its way from under her pillow.

Pulling her phone out to glance at the banner spanning the top of the screen, Marinette couldn’t decide on whether she should laugh or cry. She settled on weighty sigh, staring at the message until her eyes crossed.

It was many minutes before Marinette typed out a reply, heartbeat faster than she would have like it to be.

[ sweet dreams my lady <3 ]

[ goodnight chat ]

Us.

The word echoed in Adrien’s ears as they went about their patrol.

It slid around his tongue as he bent down to kiss Ladybug’s hand when the time came for them to part. It stuck in throat as returned to his room, plopping down on the floor in a state of pure elation.

Us.

It punctuated his thoughts, his moans, the jerk of his hips as he recalled the way his Lady had said the word. The look in her eye told Adrien she meant it as something so much more than a simple pronoun. It settled deep in his stomach, bursting in an explosion of light and feeling right alongside him.

Us.

When he woke, it was the first thing that came to mind, causing a sleepy smile to stretch its way across his face. The warmth of its meaning kept Adrien floating all day. From his lonely breakfast, to the grueling 6 hour fitting session, to another boring piano lesson, nothing could dent the sense of perma-happy he was feeling.

“You’re doing that thing again.” Plagg said, scowling as he gestured to his chosen’s expression.

“If by ‘that thing’ you mean smiling, then yes… I am.” Adrien responded shortly, unlocking his phone so he could re-read Ladybug’s little “goodnight” text for perhaps the hundredth time in the 24 hours or so since she had sent it. Setting the device down on the desk beside him, the teen commenced his nightly bedtime ritual of checking the Ladyblog.

Adrien prided himself on being Ladybug’s biggest fan. Throw him in the ring with Alya or Chloe, or
any other die-hard fangirl, and Adrien would have them bested in no time.

With a hand tied behind his back.

Maybe two.

He tracked the #Ladybug tag on every social media platform known to man, always looking for hints as to what his Lady could be getting into without him. Twitter and Facebook where always good sources, but the Ladyblog was leagues beyond, compiling all the trending data into one convenient site. It was a stalker’s dream.

‘Of course, I’m not a stalker’ Adrien assured himself, bringing up dozens of images of Ladybug across all three of his computer monitors. ‘I’m just a concerned partner is all.’ He clicked over to the blog’s homepage, stopping up short at the sound of his phone blinging out another alert.

He tilted his head in confusion. The sound wasn’t the same ring he heard when his phone was asleep, it was the subdued ding of another text popping up in his currently open conversation.

A.K.A, his Ladybug message thread.

Adrien tried not to get too excited, giving up when he saw there was, in fact, a new little chat bubble floating right under her name.

[ How are you doing? ]

It was simple question that sent a jolt right to his Lady-centric heart. His smile widened, earning a groan from Plagg before the Kwami flew off to busy himself elsewhere.

‘Stop acting like a twelve year old with a crush and respond already’ Adrien commanded himself, straightening with a manly huff when he noticed he was sitting in a fetal position atop his office chair. Part of him wanted to tease her about sending “non-akuma related” messages, but then again, she’d probably never text him again. And Adrien couldn’t bear that.

[ Well rested and eager to see my Lady once again ;) ]

[ and you? ]

Adrien held his breath as the typing icon popped up on her end. Where they really texting each other in real time and not amidst a panic? He quickly exited his open windows, shutting his computer down and instead settling comfortably on the large bed just across the room. ‘Why settle for stories and pictures when I have the real thing right here?’ Adrien thought giddily, returning his attention to the screen below.

[ I’m good, if less rested than you are ]

[ ?? ]
He had to fight down an irrational flash of... what? Jealousy, perhaps, at the implications of her words. What (or who) was keeping her up at night.

[ oh, lol its nothing ]

[ my friend insisted on having an end of summer sleepover and we haven’t been doing much sleeping tbh ]

[ sorry didn’t mean for it to sound like I was complaining :/ ]

[ no, no its cool! ]

[ my friend and I are planning on doing the same thing tomorrow actually ]

[ sounds fun! ]

It was true, Nino had somehow managed to secure 4 tickets to the 18+ music festival coming up at the end of the week, and boy was he excited about it.

“Nine bands, three stages, one night only!” Nino had told his friend, practically yelling over the receiver. “It’s gunna be sooooo lit!”

Honestly, Adrien was hyped as well. He had never really been to a concert before, and certainly not one of this magnitude. Plus, as Nino had also wryly pointed out over the phone, it would be nice to show up with two very pretty girls on their arms...

‘Not the lady you should be thinking about’ Adrien scolded himself, returning his attention back to his phone.

[ What are you up to right now? ]

‘Wow, how smooth and not at all creepy.’

[ horror movie marathon ]

[ sounds like fun to me! ]

[ not really...wanna hear something embarrassing? ]

[ always >:D ]

[ Im a bit of chicken so I thought maybe texting you would help keep my heart rate down ]
Adrien was caught floating between pure elation and dejection.

On one hand, Ladybug relied on him enough to turn to Chat when she was frightened. He imagined being there to wrap an arm around her during the scary parts, being able to watch her blue eyes peek out from behind latticed fingers as she burrowed in to his side. The thought made Adrien’s stomach do backflips in the most satisfying way.

Of course on the other hand, Ladybug had just essentially said texting him slowed her heart rate. ‘Not really something you wanted to hear from the love of your life.’ Especially when Adrien was sitting in his room, practically giddy over a string of casual messages.

[ hope you don’t mind! (I can stop if it’s annoying) ]

[ you could never annoy me, my lady ]
[ your texts are the very highlight of my life ]
[ you must live quite a boring life then ]
[ HOLY SHIT ]
[ SOMEONE JUST GOT THROWN INTO A WOOD CHIPPER ]
[ savage! ]
[ is he still alive???? ]
[ YOU ARENT HELPING ]

Adrien couldn’t help but snicker, the mental image of his ever-so-brave Ladybug huddled under a blanket as some B-rated slasher film flashed in the background was just too good.

[ LEGS ARENT SUPPOSED TO BEND THAT WAY ]
[ oh god quick please tell me something to take my mind off of this]

And so he did.

For the next hour or so the two went back and forth, sending nonsense messages and exchanging small talk interspersed with her hysterical movie reactions and his own gentle teasing at her theatrics. It was light and comfortable, neither of them taking the conversation in direction that could potentially reveal anything about their identities. It was like a scene out of one of Adrien’s cheesiest romance fantasies.

‘But of course, they did have to go to sleep sometime.’ He thought glumly, as Ladybug hinted at the fact she was beginning to settle in for the night.
[ oh wow ]

[I just realized how late it is... you're not tired? ]

[of course not, cats are nocturnal remember? ;) ]

[CATS are, BOYS aren't ]

[ don't get it twisted hero ]

[ well it's my guess that neither ladybugs nor girls are nocturnal ]

[ so if anyone should be tired, it should be you princess ]

[ HA not likely ]

[I used to be a morning person, but years of being chased across rooftops by a certain someone after dark has changed all that ]

[ you saying I keep you up at night?? ;) ]

[ that you do ]

[ but im not complaining... ]

[ besides, I'm sure there's been times I've kept you up as well ]

[ you've got that right ]

[ for patrol I mean! ]

[ of course, of course ]

[ CHAT ]

[ Ladybug? ;) ]

[ that's it im going to sleep and so are you ]

[ alright ]

[ but for the record... ]

[ we don't have to be on patrol for you to keep me up at night ;) ]

[ GOODNIGHT ]

[ goodnight, my lady ]

Marinette locked her phone with a small click, peeking over to confirm Alya was still sleep. Thankfully, the redhead had passed out for the night, good news considering she might have (definitely) been suspicious at seeing her friend blushing in the blue light of her phone screen at
nearly 1 am. And Lord knows Marinette couldn’t handle a second interrogation after the one she had been subject to earlier that day.

“I want. To know. Everything.”

Alya was nearly frothing at the mouth by the time they had met up at their usual corner coffee shop, the teen dragging Marinette into an empty booth before grilling her on every single detail of her little night off.

“We went for a walk. We talked. At the end of the night, he kissed my hand. The end?” Marinette tried sheepishly, nursing her grande sugar-filled abomination between nervous hands. The previous night’s patrols (both real and imagined) still weighed heavily on her mind, and the intense look Alya was giving her made Marinette feel completely transparent. Like she should just give up and spill every secret she was keeping bottled up.

Somehow, she didn’t think “I’m Ladybug and I’m kind of a thing with Chat Noir” would go over too well. Not well at all.

“You’re killing me here, Mari.” Alya moaned, hands out in a pleading gesture. “I think I’ve been pretty understanding, considering you kept this guy a secret for God know how long! At least give me the dirty details.”

“C’mon, girl. This is me we’re talking about. Do you really think there’s all that many dirty details?”

Marinette took another sip of her drink, expression miraculously neutral considering the entirety of last night’s fantasy was flashing though her head. Alya eyed her friend suspiciously, not at all convinced.

In fact, the two spent nearly an hour going back and forth before her curiosity was sufficiently sated.

“And finally, I gotta ask… what is this boy to you anyway?” Alya questioned, finishing off her 3rd latte before slamming the empty cup back onto the table

“I’m not sure yet.” Marinette responded quietly, fingers picking at the lid of her half-finished frappuccino.

“So you like him?”

“Yes.”

“Does he like you?”

“Yes.”

“Then I’m happy for you!”

Marinette looked up, Alya smiling at her like a proud parent before continuing in a pleasant voice.

“You guys both like each other. You’ve been texting back and forth and now you’ve finally gone on a date. My little Marinette is growing up!” She concluding, wiping away a fake tear.

‘Little Marinette’ for her part, just sat stunned at her friend’s uncharacteristic change of heart.

“So…you’re not going to dig further?” She asked tentatively, earning a laugh.
“As much as I want to know all about this guy, I trust you to tell me more about him once you’re ready.” Alya looked at her kindly, still smiling almost in a look of almost-wonder. “Honestly, I’m just pretty proud of the fact you seem to finally be getting over Adrien.”

‘Ah, there it was.’

Marinette groaned, leaning her head on the table dejectedly.

“That’s the problem,” she whined “I don’t know if I’m over him, Alya!”

“Well I mean, you have been less stuttery around him. Before he left for the summer I mean.” Her friend pointed out, shrugging. “Plus you seem to really have feelings for this new guy…”

Another groan.

“Listen, I know he was your first crush, but maybe it’s time to face the fact you just aren’t into Adrien anymore.” Alya rationalized, poking Marinette’s nose until the smaller girl looked up at her.

“And maybe that’s even a good thing.” She finished with an encouraging smile.

Marinette just didn’t know anymore.

Not then, and not now, as she laid on Alya’s couch hours later.

‘Maybe tomorrow will be less…’

‘Confusing?’

‘Frustrating?’

Marinette couldn’t decide on a word.

These days Marinette couldn’t decide on a lot of things.

Chapter End Notes

Me: "Boy I sure do hate the whole 'it was just a dream' trope!"

...*writes it in anyways*

Feel free to some scream at me on tumblr, im there under the same username :)
Chapter 13

Chapter Summary

In Which We Finally Make It To The Goddamn Concert

Chapter Notes

Well as usual, this chapter got way out of hand. Like 6k+words out of hand. SO its double update time once again. You can expect the next part to be posted ummmm maybe tonight or tomorrow morning??

Enjoy Sinners.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“I’m not going.”

“Hm, that’s funny! You’re going.” Alya deadpanned, trying unsuccessfully for the fourth time to wrangle her hair into some semblance of a ponytail before letting her wild curls fall freely around her shoulders. “Fuck. I know the concert’s at night but it’s still going to be hot as balls unless I find a way to get my hair up.” The two girls had been lazing away for about the last hour or so, blaring music as they primped and/or complained.

Well, Marinette primped and/or complained, swearing up and down she wasn’t setting foot out of the bakery while simultaneously trying on the entirety of her closet in order to find the perfect outfit. Meanwhile, Alya had just had simply fished an army green crop top and a paired of fitted-yet-torn skinny jeans from her bag, throwing them on as her best friend looked on venomously. After smearing some burgundy lipstick across her mouth and touching up yesterday’s eyeliner, Alya was already a knockout, accomplishing in 5 minutes flat what Marinette had been attempting for the better part of an hour.

“I’m not going.” She repeated once again, earning a snort from Alya.

“If I didn’t love you so much, I would have chucked you out the window after the tenth time you said that. No, I’ll give you till the twentieth repetition… then we’ll see how well you fly.”

“What am I up to?” Marinette questioned, stepping into a pair of baby blue high-waisted shorts. She zipped them tight, hand moving upwards to fasten the 4 nickel buttons that trailed their way up her abdomen.

“18, I think.” Alya replied, motioning for her friend to twirl. “Wear it, it makes your ass look great.”

Marinette picked at a run in the cotton, turning in the mirror to get a better glance at the pockets before turning back to her friend. “Thanks, still not going.”

“Watch it Cheng. One more strike and you’re-”
Her phone chimed.

Both girls dove at once, a flurry of elbows and half-hearted curses as they wrestled for control of the device. The scuffle ended with Alya victorious, silencing the phone and stuffing it deep within her bra before turning to chastise the girl beside her.

“I told you Mari, you’re hanging out with your friends today. Your beau can wait.” She steered Marinette over towards the vanity, plopping her down before rummaging thought the stash of makeup she kept hidden in the drawers. “Your face, however, cannot.” Marinette just grumbled, begrudgingly allowing her friend to begin smearing foundation down her cheeks with an applicator sponge.

Despite her sour mood, she could admit when she needed help.

‘And boy do I need help’ Marinette thought, eyeballing the irritated patch of pimples that had taken root between her brows. It’s like her body knew how important tonight was and decided to send one last “fuck you” by way of an acne flare-up the likes of which she had never seen before. Luckily, Alya was a seasoned pro at cover-ups, having dealt with the same problem for many years now.

“You sure you won’t let me do your eyes?” The larger girl questioned, squinting as she dusted away with some setting powder.

Marinette considered. “I just don’t think I’ll look good with filled in brows…” she trailed off, admiring how improved her appearance was looking already as Alya finished off the base makeup.

“Mari, please. Everyone looks good with filled in eyebrow. I promise not to do them as thick as mine and I’ll only line the tops of your eyes. Just let me get at that face girl! This is a once a year event and I need everyone seeing how hot you look even at night.” Sensing she was in for a losing battle, Marinette reluctantly nodded, settling in as a grinning Alya went to work.

Her thoughts wandered, as they had a lot lately, to Chat.

She wasn’t too concerned about whatever message he had just sent her, the duo had taken down an akuma this morning and it was practically unheard of for Hawkmoth to release two so close together. It was a quick fight. Marinette had managed to cleanse the butterfly, dodge an invitation to join Chat in a nearby alley for a little “discussion” (not at all what he had in mind, she knew), return home and slip back in bed, all before Alya got out of the shower.

More likely than not, the alley cat was sending her unflattering screenshot of Ladybug. It seemed to be a new favorite pastime of his, finding the worst action shots of her as possible and cropping the images so her double-chinned expression all but filled the frame. Marinette pretended to hate it at first, eventually embracing the silliness as she responded with some of her own embarrassing pics of Chat.

So much for strictly business.

*Things were…nice between them,* she thought idly, looking down at Alya’s command as the girl applied a thin coat of mascara to her bottom lashes.

Marinette hadn’t really been sure what would happen if she addressed her feelings towards her partner. Part of her expected her life to fall apart completely, or at the very least change drastically. Yet so far the only real difference their conversation had made was in the way Marinette felt about her newfound admiration for Chat. Turns out being up-front with your feelings really helps shed some emotional weight… Who knew?
They had yet to kiss since that day atop Notre Dame.

Meanwhile, her dreams just kept on coming. No pun intended.

“Aaaannnnndddd, we’re done.” Alya broke through her thoughts with a wave of her hand. “Some of my finest work if I do say so myself.”

Marinette leaned forward to appraise the product, gladly noting her acne was much less noticeable than before. Her black eye was all but invisible. More than that, her over-all appearance had improved. The subtle changes Alya applied made Marinette look older, more refined somehow. From the dark streaks of powder threaded through her brows to the expertly applied lipstick (in her favorite shade of light pink no less!), all traces of the swamp witch Marinette had felt like earlier were gone.

“You are godsend.” She said, smiling up Alya before letting her eyes flicker back to her reflection.

“I’m a godsend who’s running late.” The redhead responded with a grimace, flashing her phone screen to illuminate the fact they had a scant 5 minutes before their cab was set to arrive.

Marinette squeaked, fingers flying up to quickly braid her hair up into a manageable crown as Alya began packing up her satchel. Minutes later, the smaller girl stood poised by her trapdoor, mentally checking she had everything she needed for the night. Water? Check. Charger? Check. Cash? Check. Tamp-

“So Mari, are you going to put on a shirt or did I miss the memo this was a topless affair?”

‘SHIT.’

Although traffic was killer, the girls managed to reach the venue right on time, Marinette thankfully wearing a shirt. They could heard the thrum of live music even before they exited the cab. The two shared a look of excitement, giggling as they gathered their things and paid the driver before stepping out into the temperate night air.

The concert was being held in a roped off city block. Large tents were interspersed throughout the space, people weaving and coalescing into concentrated crowds centered around the 3 massive stages positioned at each end of the venue. Although dusk had just set in, the dipping strands of glittering, purple string lights that crisscrossed the courtyard were already lit up, casting everything below in a moody fuchsia haze.

“Guess I can cross ‘sneak into a concert’ off my bucket list.” Alya proclaimed, the satisfaction evident on her features as they were successfully waved through the turnstiles. Marinette just nodded, unable to keep the grin off her own face as a heady sense of nervous giddiness tore through her.

As someone who regularly snuck out at night to fight crime, she shouldn’t have been this worked up. But Marinette found it was hard not to get excited as she weaved through the crowd, soaking up the atmosphere of the night with her best friend by her side. Letting the noise of the event flow right through her, Marinette practically felt all her frustration at the tumultuous summer she had experienced dissipate from her body, leaving in its place a simple appreciation for the here and now.
All her silly fretting over acne, and feelings, and boys who-

“There you ladies are!” The girls tore their eyes from the scene before them, pivoting to greet their friend as he materialized from the crowd. Marinette felt another swell of happiness at seeing Nino, noting that in the 3 weeks since she had last saw him, he had yet to shave the gathering of dark hair dotting its way across his upper lip. *Typical.* He was dressed casually, comfortable in his iconic snapback and a t-shirt for a band she didn’t recognize. “We were beginning to think you two had stood us up.”

Alya smirked. “After forking over the money for the tickets, we wouldn’t miss it if we were dead.” Marinette responded with an enthusiastic nod, suddenly thankful she had pushed past her reservation to come.

“Glad to hear it.” The boy grinned, pulling them in for a hug before holding the girls out at arm’s length to look them over appreciatively. “Might I add you both look exceedingly hot tonight?” Nino doubled over with an “oof” as two friendly elbows jabbed into his gut. “And just as feisty as ever I see!”

“You better believe it so don’t try anything fresh.” The redhead wagged a finger in his direction as Marinette just snorted. She’d noticed Nino had become quite the flirt as of late, his half-joking come-ons directed more so towards Alya than herself. He swore up and down that she would one day fall prey to the raw, animal magnetism of his ‘stache, her frequent shutdowns never seeming to dampen his spirits.

*Hm, now who in the world did that remind her of?*

“I guess we should be thanking you for the tickets.” Marinette said kindly, shifting to avoid the swell of people passing on her left.

“You’re presence is all the thanks I’ll be needing. Besides, it’s been forever since we all hung out together.” Nino replied, eyes flicking to something past her head. His grin widened. Marinette cocked her head at his look, about to question his expression further when she felt a warm weight settle its way around her neck from behind.

“What the-” her mouth snapped shut as she turned to register the fact someone had stepped their way between her and Alya, slinging an arm around each girl’s shoulder before squeezing tightly. Marinette’s face was inches away from a cologne-scented linen shirt, the wine colored sleeves bunched up at the elbow to reveal tanned, toned forearms.

‘Dear Lord, that couldn’t be…’

Marinette felt all the color rush from her face as she peeked down at the hand on her collarbone. A squarish silver ring rested on the fourth digit, glinting under the string lights above them. The voice beside her spoke low and friendly.

“Hey there,” Adrien said, his blonde head nodding towards Alya before tuning to flash Marinette a mega-watt smile. “Long time, no see!”

‘Aaaaaaand, I’m fucked.’

The picture hadn’t done him justice. Not by a long shot.
The overhead lighting only seemed to highlight the planes of Adrien’s face, illuminating his features like he was a marble statue on display at the Louvre. He was certainly the picture of Greek beauty, all chiseled jaw and sloping nose, with lips that bowed at such an angle that Michelangelo himself would be clamoring to capture them. His hair was longer, swept to the side in golden swatches that danced across his forehead and poked out from behind his ears.

And Lord was he tall.

Marinette was pinned down by his laser stare, Adrien’s eyes crinkling adorably at the corners as he grinned down at her. All at once, every bit of blood in her body seemed to race up her shoulders, scorching the area where his arm met bare skin. ‘Why in the world did I let Alya convince to wear the strapless top?’ Marinette thought dizzily, still unable to make any sort of greeting past the strangled gurgling working its way out of her mouth.

Thankfully, she didn’t get the chance to embarrass herself further (given a few more seconds Marinette might just have started panting) before Alya mercifully cut between them

“Well look who decided to show up!” She said with a smirk, pulling Adrien in for a full hug. Peeking around his shoulder, Alya mouthed something similar to “You good?” in Marinette’s direction. Her question was met with a swift shake of the head, followed by a tentative nod and finally a confused shrug. “Nice to have you back Agreste.”

‘Not good. Not good. Not good. Not good. Not good. Not good.’ Marinette’s mind chanted, desperately trying to process. The frantic girl gave a shuddering breath, willing her blush to fade away as Adrien turned to address the group.

She was Ladybug, capable of toppling villians, averting disasters, saving the day, and-

‘Goddam if he didn’t look good though…” her traitorous mind whispered.

“It’s really great to be back.” Adrien was saying, still standing just inches away. If he noticed something off about her behavior, he didn’t mention it to Marinette, instead maintaining his pleasant expression as she focused on not evaporating in to thin air.

“Well I say we get our get our group selfie out of the way now, while we’re all still looking fresh and not sweaty.” Alya coaxed an eyebrow up, motioning for her friends to fall in as she opened her camera app. Nino slung an arm around her shoulder, tugging Marinette in towards him as he flashed a thumbs up. Likewise, Marinette placed one slim hand on the back of Alya, her other arm tucked delicately behind her as she found the lens with her eyes. She held in a dreamy sigh as she felt Adrien come up to stand behind her, face leaning towards the camera in a perfect model smile as he laid a hand gently atop her shoulder. Alya snapped a few just to be sure, but announced they all looked great after further review.

“Hey, send me that one ok?” Adrien asked kindly, looking down at her screen with a smile. Alya was more than happy to oblige, sending a copy to each of her friends before they hunkered down to decide where they would head off to first.

The teens perked up as a loudspeaker announced the arrival of the next band on Stage A, some group Marinette just vaguely recognized.

“Oh we gotta go!” Nino said frantically, waving his arm in an attempt to corral his friends towards the throng of people congregating around the southernmost stage. “I’ve been wanting to see these guys!” Thankful for the distraction, Marinette let herself be swept up by the motion, hooking a finger through Alya’s belt loop to insure they didn’t get separated. Of course if that failed, she easily be able
to locate her group by the blond mop of hair peeking from above the crowd…

‘Cool it Mari’ she chided herself ‘you’re just out her enjoying your time with friends. It doesn’t matter that one of them is a drop-dead gorgeous supermodel who-’

“You haven’t collapsed so I take it that’s a good sign you’re over him.” Alya drawled in her ear, pulling her friend close to be heard over the noise around them. Marinette noticed their little group had stopped about 6 rows from the front, finding a spot to nestle in amongst the other concertgoers around them.

“Over him is a strong phrase.” She tittered back, peeking over to where the boys stood just feet away.

“Either way I’m still proud to see you upright.”

“Give me till the end of the night.”

Their conversation was drowned out by an eruption of applause, effectively signaling the next band had taken the stage. Nino already had his phone out, ready to record the action as he glanced over excitedly. Marinette felt some of her own tenseness ease up at his brilliant expression, cracking a tentative smile as they swapped thumbs up.

‘As long as I don’t look right him, maybe I’ll get through the night.’ She thought, keeping her eyes glued forward as she swayed alongside Alya to the opening number.

But of course nothing was ever that simple.

Thankfully, the noise discouraged most idle conversation and Marinette had thankfully managed to avoid any extended small talk with Adrien. In the few times he had tried to engage her that night, Marinette found her voice to be amazingly steady, words still a bit slow and awkward but nowhere close to the intelligible stuttering she would have pulled 6 months ago.

Nearly an hour passed without incident. Now their group had decided to move towards Stage 3 to see the Sidewinders, a fairly popular band that had a huge cult following in Paris.

Marinette bounced on her toes as her little unit nudged their way through the crowd, excited to see the group she had been waiting for all night. Maybe it was the high of being out, of being able to dance around in comfortable comradery, enjoying the music and enjoying the atmosphere, but Marinette suddenly felt invincible. Like she was ten feet tall.

Upon reaching their destination however, it was brought to her attention she was not, in fact, ten feet tall, as evidenced by the sheer wall of bodies blocking her view from the stage. They hadn’t managed to get very close to the action, the throng of people closing tightly around them as people shuffled around in an attempt to get as far front as possible. Of course this wasn’t much of a problem for her friends, all three of them able to see fairly well at their height, but she was another story.

Marinette tried standing on her tiptoes, deflating with sigh as it made no difference. She heard more than saw The Sidewinders enter the stage, righteous short girl fury bubbling up within her as they began to play. Not thinking she’d be heard over the loud music, Marinette let loose a low string of
curses, immediately stiffening as she was met with a chuckle.

“What’s wrong?” Adrien asked, amusement mixing with concern as he slid in beside her. “I didn’t think a nice girl like you even knew words like that.

‘He thinks I’m nice.’

“Oh, you heard that…” Marinette said sheepishly, straining to make her voice heard over the cheering crowd.

“I did.” He responded with a shout of his own, eyebrow quirking up with a continued question. Onstage, the band had launched into the opening verse of Marinette’s favorite song off their new album, sending another jolt of annoyance through her system.

“Just, I was really looking forwards to seeing this band…” She began, gesturing to the crowd of people in front of her. “But now looking forward, I can’t even see the band.” Marinette ended with a huff.

“Here, need a lift?” Adrien asked kindly, hunkering down slightly as he extended a hand out to her.

Marinette froze. ‘He can’t be offering what she thought he was…’

“You mean like, on your back?” She squeaked out, palms growing damp with nerves.

“I was thinking more like my shoulders.” Adrien responded “Figured I’d grow tired slower that way…not that you really seem all that heavy!” He rushed to add. Maybe she was imagining it, but Marinette could swear she saw the traces of a blush marking its way across his cheeks.

“I um, well sure…” She forced herself to say evenly, figuring it would be rude to turn him down. “Thanks!” She tacked on, hesitantly stepping forward to grab his outstretched hand with heart hammering against her ribs. Adrien dipped down lower, gracefully helping her mount his shoulders before rising up.

Marinette soared above the crowd, the light-soaked stage before her looking breathtaking from her new vantage point. All around her, camera flashed out, people bobbing like an ocean beneath her. The exhilaration of being able to watch the performance almost outweighed the sheer, unbridled joy/terror of the notion she was sitting atop Adrien Agreste’s shoulders.

*Of course she had imagined many scenarios in the past where her thighs where wrapped around Adrien’s head, but most of them entailed her sitting the other way…*

‘Behave!’ she chided herself harshly as she felt Adrien peer up at her.

“You good up there?” He asked, head pitched backwards and hair sweeping off his forehead. Is it possible to look like a dream?

“All good.” She managed to squeak out, conjuring a smile as she focused on not dropping into a dead faint. Of course it was at that moment that Marinette wobbled slightly, eyes going wide as his large hands flew up to grab her knees. “Thanks,” she choked out, removing the death grip she had around his head. Balancing her center of gravity, Marinette settled back solidly, Adrien shooting her one last smile before returning his gaze to the stage.

He never moved his hands from their position atop her flushed thighs.

The action that didn’t go unnoticed by either Marinette or Alya, the girl on the ground shooting her
friend a wink and a thumbs up before yelling out something that sounded suspiciously like “Get it Marinette!”

It was drowned out by a thunderous explosion rolling across the square.

Chapter End Notes

Heres the fanart
>>>http://bullysquadess.tumblr.com/post/136824960152/bullysquadess-i-wanted-to-challenge-myself-to
Adrien felt Marinette seize up on his shoulders, her heels digging into his sides as he swiveled at the commotion. Rising up from the rubble of what had once been Stage 2 was a floating figure, its voice blaring out to echo across all corners of the venue.

“TESTING TESTING. 1, 2, 3! THIS IS SOUND-CHECK COMING TO YOU LIVE FROM PARIS.” The Akuma flew up higher, pulling a massive bass guitar from its back before continuing in a booming wail. “NOW WHO’S READY TO HEAR SOME REAL MUSIC?”

All around, people clapped their hands to their ears in a vain attempt to block out the screeching chords that flew out in glowing waves to cover the courtyard. By now, the bands had stopped playing, the crowds shifting and yelling as panic began to settle over the concert.

‘Can’t I just have one night for myself?’ Adrien thought angrily, watching the Akuma flit around before strumming out another powerful soundwave. Above him, Marinette shifted her weight into a graceful dismount, landing lightly beside him before grabbing a stunned Alya and Nino by the arms.

“We need to leave now!” She yelled above the chaos, inclining her head with a jerk as she ushered the trio in the direction of the exit. “Everyone needs to get out of here!” Panicked strangers seemed to gravitate towards the girl, following her until practically the whole crowd was in on the evacuation.

Adrien was swept up with them, taking a second to marvel at Marinette’s sudden leadership. He hadn’t seen this side of her since they had faced off against the Evilllustrator. And even then, he hadn’t been Adrien at that point, he had been…

‘Oh right,’ Adrien realized with a grimace as another powerful chord rung out into the night air. ‘I’m Chat Noir. Which means this is kind of my problem right now.’

Looking forward to confirm his friends had reached relative safety, Adrien broke off silently, gliding his way amongst the bodies to duck into an unoccupied food truck. He leaned against the counter, pulling back his collar to fish Plagg out from the pocket of his undershirt.

“What gives?” The kwami grumbled, rubbing at his eyes with tiny fist. “I was in the middle of my nap!”
“How could you sleep through that racket the Akuma was making?” Adrien asked incredulously.

“Doesn’t sound all that different from the racket those so-called bands were making if you ask me.”

“I didn’t, and we don’t have time for this. Claws out!”

Praying no one had seen Adrien slip in, Chat Noir exited the food truck, leaping atop it to take stock of the situation. The area had been more or less evacuated, the only remaining civilians where a few dozen unfortunate souls who had been corralled behind a ring of metal grating, wincing as the Akuma serenaded them. Chat decided they would have to be his first priority, readying himself to move when the van rocked beneath him.

Damn, she was quick.

“How in the world did you get here so fast?” Chat questioned his newly arrived partner, heart thumping pleasantly to see her again.

“What, you think I don’t go to concerts?” Ladybug said by way of greeting, ignoring the way Chat tensed up beside her.

*Ladybug had been at the festival.*

‘No,’ Adrien thought dizzily, ‘*the girl behind the mask had been at the concert.*’ He could have seen her, could have bumped into her without ever knowing. He had been in the same area as his Lady for the past 2 odd hours without even realizing it. ‘Holy Shit’

“Perhaps your luck is rubbing off on me.” Chat drawled out, leaning on his baton to send Ladybug a brilliant smile. “It’s not often I get to see my Lady twice in one day!” She gave him an indulgent look.

“Nice to see you too, Chat. But I believe we have bigger and louder things to attend to, if I’m not mistaken.”

Her point was emphasized by another guitar solo piercing the still air with jolts of light and sound.

Ladybug drew up to her full height, unhooking her yo-yo before sending him a determined smirk that made Adrien almost happy his concert had been interrupted. “It clearly wants an audience, so I say we give it one,” she said, leaping from the roof and sprinting off the moment her feet hit the ground. Chat was right behind her.

“Please tell me we get to smash the guitar!” He yelled, jumping over piles of rubble as the duo made their way to the stage.

“Is it ever really that easy?” Ladybug screamed back, straining to be heard over the ever increasing volume of the impromptu performance. “My guess is it’s in the guitar pick!”

‘Tricky’ Adrien thought, skidding to a halt as they reached the Akuma.

**‘WHATS THIS? MORE ADORING FANS? OF COURSE YOU ARE!’** The wild-haired rocker turned on them, swooping down in an attempt to scoop the heroes into his makeshift mosh pit.

“Nice try!” Ladybug called, dodging away with a roll. “But I’m more of bluegrass fan!” Her yo-yo latched on to the Akuma, reeling him downwards with a shriek to land on the cement. Chat pounced, grabbing at the pink guitar pick before snapping it between his fingers.
'Too easy' he thought triumphantly, only to be caught off guard as a wave of sound came crashing into his body.

“DO YOU TAKE ME AS AN AMMATEUR? OF COURSE I CAN PLAY WITHOUT A PICK!”

Adrien picked himself of the ground with a roll of his shoulders, wiping the dust from his suit. So obviously that hadn’t worked. “I don’t think the Akuma is in his guitar pick!” Ladybug called a bit lamely from her position a few yards away.

“No kidding!” Chat yelled back “So what now?”

“Get the civilians out, I’m working on something!” Trusting Ladybug to handle herself, he sprinted towards the enclosure, claws working at the latch for a few seconds before the gate snapped open.

“Shows over folks,” Chat said, ushering the concertgoers in the direction of the exit and nodding at their thanks. Once he was sure they were out of harm’s way, his attention snapped back to Ladybug, watching as she circled her way around the Akuma.

Was it weird he thought she looked really hot while fighting for her life? Probably.

Did that stop him from admiring the way she ran and twisted as she took on her adversary? Absolutely not.

Chat circled back towards the action, meeting up with his partner just as she was summoning a lucky charm. He couldn’t help but raise a questioning eyebrow as she examined the water gun that plopped into her grasp. “Your guess is as good as mine at this point.” Ladybug grumbled, giving the blaster a few pumps before aiming at the akuma. “Hey Superstar, over here!”

The monster turned just in time to get a stream of water directly in it’s face, sputtering as it shook. “NO WATER AROUND THE SOUND EQUIPMENT!” It shrieked, unstringing the massive instrument from around its body before hurling it directly at the pair.

“Cataclysm!”

Chat summoned his hero power, stepping in front of Ladybug with hands raised. The guitar shattered on impact, exploding in a mass of black pieces around them. The Akuma screamed again.

“Well, looks like you got to smash the guitar after all.” Ladybug said a little dazedly, kicking the remnants aside as she planted a quick kiss on his cheek. “Thanks for the save, Kitty.”

“Anytime.” Chat replied with a smirk, face tingling where her lips had just been. “So it’s not the pick, and it’s not the guitar, so where’s the Akuma?”

“I think I’ve worked it out, but I need to be able to get at its back. Think you can help me out?”

“Say no more.”

This time it was Chat who bent down to kiss her cheek, reveling in the small smile he drew out of her before bouncing off. *Oh yeah, he could definitely get used to that.*

Things moved much more quickly after that point. Within minutes, Chat was able to successfully position the akuma, carving a clear path for Ladybug to squirt the mic pack fastened to its back with a powerful jet of water. With an electronic hiss, the device fizzled off, effective silencing the screaming akuma and releasing a tiny black butterfly into the blissfully quiet night.
“No more evildoing for you.” Ladybug said triumphantly, snapping her compact around the akuma before releasing it once again. Chat saw her reach over to where she had left her lucky charm, shoulder stiffening at his evil chuckle. Without turning to face him, she raised her arms above her head, “I swear to God if you-“

Tiiiiiiiiiiisssssss! The spray of water hit the back of her costume before she had the chance to finish her threat, causing Ladybug to shriek as the cold liquid ran down her spine.

“Chat Noir you are dead to me as of this moment!” She squealed dramatically, charging at him only to receive a second icy blast to her shoulder. Chat danced away, raining cold fury down upon her with non-stop laughter. Ladybug chased him across the courtyard, sputtering curses the whole way.

Adrien knew their transformations (and by extension their time together) were about to end, and he intended to milk every precious second out of their encounter. He skidded to a stop when he reached the edge of the Seine, leaping off the concrete ledge at the end of the concert venue to land on the sidewalk nearly 10 feet below. Just as he swiveled to face her however, a familiar cable wrapped itself around Adrien’s weapon, dragging it out of his grasp.

Uh oh.

Ladybug stood above him, a wicked look of “payback” on her face as she rained fire (water?) down upon him.

“Truce, truce!” Adrien yelled through his laughter, trying to deflect the onslaught but still managing to get soaked.

“Those who start wars don’t get to call truce!” Ladybug sang back at him, leaping down to get closer to her target. She lunged, spraying him point blank in the face with a giggle. Chat gave a shocked sputter, hands reaching out to grasp at her wrists as Ladybug continued to frantically unload the remainder of the plastic tank onto the boy’s cheek.

After a few seconds, Adrien gave up, simply letting the hysterically laughing Ladybug drench him until finally there was no more water left. She dropped the gun with a smirk, still giggling as she took in the way his blonde hair stuck plastered to the edges of his mask.

“You done?” Chat asked in a falsely lecturing tone, delighting in the way her eyes lit up with happiness. They hadn’t had fun like this in a long time, and he would have gladly taken a hundred more water guns to the face if it meant Ladybug would keep looking at him with that giddy expression.

“Yes.” She said, exhaling primly as she swallowed a smile.

“Good, cause I’m just getting started!” Still holding Ladybug’s wrists, he shook his damp hair out fervently, cascading droplets of water down upon her. She snorted, ducking to block the shower. “And I’m not stopping until you’re as drenched as I am!” He taunted, butting the top of his head into her cheek in a move signature of his namesake.

“Gah! Down kitty!” Ladybug choked out through a mouthful of damp hair, “What in the world was that for?”

“Payback.” Adrien replied simply, still nuzzling against her neck. Ladybug giggled at his retribution, allowing him to paint her scarlet until he was satisfied she was no longer dry. As he moved to straighten back up however, his lips unintentionally grazed her jaw, drawing an expectant breath from the girl in front of him.
Oh, now that was something he wanted to hear again.

Thinking that perhaps he'd imagined the sound, Adrien decided to press his luck, steadying himself before leaning in to kiss the spot once again. This time her sigh was louder, shooting straight into his gut like lightning.

‘Well, now’s as good a chance as I’ll ever get.’ He thought to himself, heart rocketing against his ribs as he reached up to lightly cup her chin. Chat sucked in a breath.

This time, it was Ladybug’s turn to be stunned, stilling against him for just a second before she melted in to the kiss. This time Adrien’s eyes slid shut, hands obeying his command as they snaked themselves around her trim waist. This time he could taste her.

This time the kiss didn’t end after a few brief seconds, instead allowing time for them to fall into a comfortable rhythm against each other. Adrien swore he could feel every nerve in his body light up as Ladybug’s fingers delicately traced their way up his suited chest, settling at the exposed flesh on the back of his neck. Tiny patches of fire rose up where she touched him, spurring him forwards to increase the intensity of their kiss.

Adrien felt a flicker of panic as he registered her withdrawing slightly. He didn’t want to be done with her but if he had somehow overstepped…

Turns out he needn’t have worried, as Ladybug had barely taken a breath before she was back on him, rolling to her tiptoes to press against him urgently. Her lips were hot and insistent, their tantalizing presence so much better than any half-baked fantasy Adrien’s mind could have ever cooked up. His fingers curled at the contact, taking great care not to dig his claws into flesh as he groped wantonly at her waist.

Ladybug shuddered, Chat grinned, and her miraculous gave its third warning.

‘I swear I’ll find the mute button on these fucking things.’ Adrien cursed silently, brow furrowing as he felt the girl stiffen at the noise. The pair reluctantly parted, lips still hovering inches away from each other as if some magnetic heat threatened to draw them back into contact.

“What in the world was that for?” Ladybug repeated, Adrien’s stomach swooping at her gasping, gravelly tone.

He did that. He made her breathless.

“That was in case I can’t find you later in the crowd.” He replied in his best Chat Noir purr, running his thumb over her kiss swollen lips before finally meeting her gaze. Adrien almost lost all sense of bravado as he took in the desire that swirled behind the eyeholes of her mask, Ladybug looking all kinds of needy before her expression morphed in to one of disbelief.

“You’re…you’re at the concert too, aren’t you?”

“That’s right.” He said, pressing another heated kiss to her lips before tearing himself away. “Let’s see who finds each other first.”

At that, Chat made his exit, hearing the 4th beep of her miraculous ring out as he scampered back up the wall in search of a private place to release his transformation. All around him, debris disappeared, structures rebuilding themselves as a burst of healing light erased all signs of the Akuma. Adrien felt the dampness of his hair disappear, along with the dust that had settled on his costume after being thrown. What Ladybug’s healing charm didn’t erase however was the tingling in Adrien’s smirk-
twisted lips. That or the roiling feeling of desire poking at his insides as he ducked into an empty ticket kiosk.

Plagg tumbled out of his ring with a curse, blinking green eyes up at his charge as he settled in the palm of Adrien’s hand.

“You better be thankful I have incredible stamina Loverboy, I could have de-Chat-ifyed you at any moment.”

“And I am ever grateful for your assistance.”

“Yeah, yeah. Words are nice but cheese is better, I’m exhausted.”

“Then sleep it off.” Adrien said, stuffing the kwami back in his shirt. Apparently Plagg was too tired to object, tossing with a grumble before settling in. Adrien couldn’t help but feel a twinge of guilt at how long he made his friend hold the transformation. Something told him his powers weren’t really intended to be used in order to make a pass at his partner. That being said, Plagg was one hell of a wingman.

Examining his reflection in the window to the outside, Adrien found his appearance was more or less back to how it had been when he first reached the concert. Shirt pressed, hair brushed, everything perfectly put together. In fact the only evidence of his and Ladybug’s little dalliance was the slight flush of his lips, their color only increasing as he swiped his tongue out to try and catch the lingering taste of her.

Ladybug had been wearing lip-gloss.

Adrien slipped out of the kiosk, marveling as how utterly ordinary the venue looked, despite the chaos of a few minutes ago. The courtyard was beginning to fill once again, and a loud speaker announcement confirmed that the show would be back on within the next 20 minutes. Say what you want about the people of Paris, but they were nothing if not resilient, never ones to let a small inconvenience like a monster attack hamper their event. ‘Thanks to Ladybug anyway.’

Ladybug. She was still here somewhere, assuming she didn’t decide to leave.

Adrien wandered, telling himself he was looking for his friends but eyes scanning the ever increasing crowd for any signs of the girl he had just kissed nearly-senseless. Something inside him was so sure he’d be able to recognize her, mask or not, the moment he saw her. It almost felt like a game of tag. A pulse-spiking, stomach clenching game of tag that caused Adrien to jump nearly two feet in the air as a hand clapped down on his shoulder from behind.

“There you are,” Nino said, spinning his friend around with a smile before his face fell slightly. “Wait, where’s Marinette?” Alya frowned beside him, muttering as she tapped away at her phone.

“You means she’s not with you guys?” Adrien asked, brow furrowing. “I got cut off by a crowd of people but I could have sworn she was right beside you two…”

“She isn’t picking up her phone,” Alya began, a hint of worry ghosting across her features as she craned her neck to scan the area, “and she’s so tiny, it’ll be like finding a needle in a haystack with this crowd.”

“Well then we better get started then.”

Thankfully, it only took about 15 minutes of wandering before they met up with the girl, Marinette spouting some story about how she got turned around somehow and ended up locked in a port-a-
potty as she laughed off their concern.

“Why didn’t you answer any of my texts?” Alya clucked, hovering like a concerned mother. Marinette just stared pointedly at her friend’s chest, prompting Alya to flush as she dug the device out from between her cleavage. “Oh right, sorry.” She said a bit lamely, wiping the screen down before handing it back it’s owner.

“Damn, girl. What else you got in there?” Nino asked, looking a bit impressed at her storage capacity.

“Nothing for you.” Alya smirked, twining her arm with Marinette’s. “Now lets say we get back to the show? I paid too much for this concert to be derailed by a monster attack.”

There were no objections.

The rest of the festival passed in a blur for Adrien. Hoisting Marinette back on his shoulders once again as they reached the stage area, the teen found his gaze roaming the crowd around him, hoping to catch a peek of gleaming black pigtails or a familiar set of blue eyes. It was like was standing in a minefield. Adrien could feel Ladybug’s proximity like a physical presence, and the thought she could be anywhere made it hard to focus on the performance before him.

Well that, and the fact he had a set of very shapely, very feminine legs draping their way down his chest. More than once that night, Adrien had to resist the urge to run his hands up along Marinette’s shins, reminding himself harshly that she was a nice girl who didn’t deserve to be groped by hormonal teenage boys with so very little self-control. Even if the cuffs of her tiny shorts did ride up as she straddled his...

It made Adrien wonder what Ladybug was wearing tonight. Nino had told him beforehand that one of the best things about concerts were the cloths. Or more specifically, the lack there-of. Adrien had seen plenty of daring outfits that night (plunging necklines, ripped up pants, and exposed abdomens abounded) so it was more than likely that his Lady had also dressed for the affair. The thought caused Adrien to space out for a good 3 songs, mentally dressing and undressing Ladybug in every outfit in sight.

He pictured her hips tucked into the tight, white jeans of the blonde swaying a few rows in front of him.

He pictured her singing along to her favorite band in the sinfully short romper of the girl a few paces to his left.

He pictured her breast poking out of Alya’s low-cut crop top, almost groaning at the thought of her bare stomach gyrating as she danced around.

He pictured…

“Um… Adrien?”

The teen snapped from his reverie, shaking his head as he looked up at his friend. “Yeah,
Marinette?” He asked, noticing in her flustered expression.

“Your hands are…” she squeaked out, gesturing with a grimace to where his fingers had begun to unconsciously dig in about halfway up her inner thigh.

‘SHIT’

Adrien quickly released his grip, cheeks burning with embarrassment as he replaced his hands in their proper position on her knees. “Sorry, sorry!” He said, wanting to melt through the floor as Marinette avoided his gaze. “I must have spaced out…and it’s…I’m um? Sorry.”

‘What the fuck is wrong with you, Adrien?’

“Its fine...really.” Her voice came softly from behind his head, sending another jolt of embarrassment mixed with something else to tingle its way down his spine.

It wasn’t fine. He knew it wasn’t fine.

And what really wasn’t fine is the fact Adrien couldn’t help but picture Ladybug in a pair of tight blue shorts, sitting atop his shoulder as he let his hands trail up her inner thighs.

‘ Literally, what the fuck is wrong with you?’

Chapter End Notes

trust me when i say nobody is madder than me about the amount of dramatic irony in this chapter.
please lord someone help my children
Fanart for this chap
>>>http://bullysquadess.tumblr.com/post/137933387767/sexythewalkingcatfish-this-came-out-much
Chapter 15

Chapter Summary

In Which Mrs.Cheng Is All Of Our Moms

Chapter Notes

heres a short one that ive been itching to write
Also parts of this chapter are based off a true story, ill let you guess which parts
enjoy kiddos

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The sound was soft. A light twinkling of bells crescendoing into a melody that evoked feelings of peace and rightfulness, she had picked it for that exact reason. The tune lasted only about 10 seconds, the song fading out slightly before swinging back into another repetition.

So sweet, so melodious.

Marinette had the sudden urge to murder.

“Happy first day of school.” Tikki giggled sleepily, her own typical grumpiness forgotten as she took in the hilariously disgruntled expression on her charge’s face. It was 7 am on the dot, a time neither of them had been conscious enough to greet in quite some time.

The alarm had yet to quit.

Marinette’s hand groped angrily around the sheets, head still stuffed under her pillow in last ditch effort to somehow deny the existence of the early-morning brightness that filtered through her skylight. Finally finding her target, the girl blindly tapped at the screen until the infuriatingly happy tune shut off mid-twinkle.

Oh, how she had grown to despise the sound.

Silent fuming morphed into lazy mumbling, until finally settling on loud resignation as Marinette dragged her body out of the warm embrace of her comforter, nearly 20 minutes later. Her bitter thoughts followed her in a haze as she managed to dismount the loft. ‘Tardiness doesn’t count against you on the first day, right?’

Just weeks ago she had been itching for this day to come, ready to throw off the vestiges of her summer slump and return to a normal schedule. Of course now that she was here, wrenching her trapdoor open before sleep-walking to the bathroom, Marinette couldn’t seem to conjure up a single good reason as to why she should be up this early.
‘Leave it to Lycee to come barreling back in just as soon as my vacation got interesting…’ She thought, a smile ghosting its way across her lips as she continued to brush. Although “Interesting” wasn’t exactly the best way to describe her life right now.

“Interesting” didn’t even begin to cover the extent of her last two weeks. Discovering new or perhaps long-buried feelings for your partner of three years wasn’t interesting. Acting on those feelings despite the fact you aren’t entirely over your steadfast crush/tentative friend wasn’t interesting either.

And without a doubt, the least interesting event of the whole summer had to have been Friday’s concert. The one she snuck out to see. The one where Adrien let her sit on his shoulders. The one where Chat Noir kissed her near breathless. The one where Marinette truly felt, for the first time since hitting puberty, like an actual teenager, inhibited by the night and the music and the exhilaration of having secrets to keep.

Nope. Nothing interesting about that.


Indescribable.

Perfectly frustrating and utterly indescribable.

Of course that didn’t stop her from allowing a tiny flicker of pride at her own rebellion to flash its way across her face. The sensation simmered deliciously in the center of her body, making Marinette’s steps lighter as she treaded back towards her room. Reaching her vanity, the self-satisfied grin she wore only stretched wider. There on the table was her phone, Chat’s newest message displayed on the screen.

[ Good Morning Beautiful *kissy cat emoji* ]

Marinette clucked her tongue, despite the way her heart warmed at the text. ‘If that flatterer could see me now he’d turn tail and run.’ she thought slyly, glancing up at her bedraggled appearance reflected in the mirror before her. Heaving a sigh, she turned on some mindless pop music before going at her face and hair.

[ morning? yes. ]

[ beautiful? not quiet yet. ]

[ it takes time and effort to achieve my unique brand of mediocrity ]

She didn’t mean to sound so whiney. Nowadays it felt like there was a tiny Marinette on one
shoulder and a Ladybug on the other, each of her personas dictating exactly how she should feel about herself. More often than not, both of the tiny girls had their way, leading to a lot of conflicted emotions regarding her own self-image.

And her reply hinged on that thin line of self-depreciating humor and confident banter that she had been treading as of late.

‘Aint puberty just a real treat?’

[ slanderous talk! I know for a fact my lady wakes up looking like a literal angel! ]
[ oh yeah? you been peeking in my windows alley cat?? ]
[ I don’t need to spy in order to know with full certainty that you are the MOST divinely radiant being to ever grace this earth ]
[ now that’s a bit overkill I would think. besides, you’ve never seen me fresh out of bed before ]
[ and that’s an injustice I plan to fix one day ]
[ I bet you look great with bedhead ;) ]

Marinette’s fingers paused their braiding, head tilting pleasantly as she re-read his message. After a brief deliberation, she unraveled her progress, letting her wavy blue-black locks fall down freely around her chin.

‘You know, I think I’ll wear my hair down today.’

She wasn’t late. In fact, it was almost impossible to be late when you live just a block from school.

Alya greeted her with a tired but excited smile, the two falling back into their regular rhythm after the lull of summer break. As per usual, they loitered outside, catching up with friends and swapping stories before the bell drew them deeper into the building. Homeroom classes didn’t change from year to year, being the shortest period of all, so the girls where welcomed by a familiar sight as they slid into their seats behind Adrien and Nino.

Marinette noticed with no small amount of pride that she did not stutter as she returned Adrien’s greeting, instead managing to join her trio of friends in idle small talk before receiving copies of their new schedules. This year’s course load was packed, as to be expected in her second to last year of Lycee, but thankfully she wouldn’t be facing it alone.

Alya shared three afternoon classes with her, as well as one in the morning block. Meanwhile Nino was in almost all of her periods, giving her a huge thumbs up each time they stumbled into the same classroom. “Looks like I know who I’m walking to class with this year.” He said playfully, making a show of holding her books as the grinning pair went to their next shared period.

Marinette also noted with a mild surprise that she had significantly more classes with Adrien, seeing
him a total of 4 times throughout the day (not that she was counting.) She had expected their
schedules to be just as conflicting as they’d been last year, seeing as though he was enrolled in a
majority of higher level courses, whereas she…

Well let’s just say she was no whiz kid.

Each time she walked through the door, only to spot his blonde head give a friendly nod at her
appearance, Marinette felt herself wind up just a bit tighter.

‘You’re over him remember’ she reminded herself resolutely, somehow managing not to completely
boil over when he took the empty seat next to her in Advanced French (the only subject she really
seemed to excel at.) It was the single class she had without either Alya or Nino to temper out
Adrien’s presence, just the two of them sat smack in the middle of a room full of older, unfamiliar
students.

“Where you’re sitting will remain your assigned spots for the remainder of the year.” The teacher
announced, handing around the syllabus. “So I suggest you and you’re neighbor make friends
quickly.”

Marinette wanted to self-destruct.

‘This will be fine’ she thought dimly, digging her nails sharply into the palm of her hand. ‘I’ll get
through this year as long as I don’t think about his laugh, or his smile, or how broad and strong his
shoulder felt under me as he lifted me up and ran his calloused hands along my…’

“W-what?” she choked out, noticing for the first time the boy beside her had been trying to say
something to her for the past minute.

Adrien smiled, then laughed.

‘Well, there goes that plan.’

“I was just saying it’s good to have a friend in here.” He repeated, glancing around the room before
his green eyes settled back on her with a twinkle.

“Oh definitely!” She managed, flashing him a tight smile. Alya’s voice echoed in her head, repeating
the phrase “you’ve got a type’” over and over for the remainder of the class.

One period down, 200 or so more to go!

She was fucked.

Despite her tiny breakdown on day one, Marinette’s first week of school was predictably easy. In all
honesty, the most difficult part of her day was probably getting up each morning, and even the
grumpiness she felt at her early wake-up would be all but forgotten by the time she was settled in for
first period. It was nice to see those of her classmates she hadn’t been close enough with to hang out
over summer, and despite the fact she still mourned the loss of her free time, Marinette had to
concede that getting back into a regular routine did do wonders for her mental health.
It was a tradition in her household to go shopping on the first weekend after school began, just a nice bout of mother-daughter bonding time as the Cheng ladies “painted the town red” (an expression Marinette’s mother was fond of using.) So early-ish Saturday morning the pair set out, making the drive to the massive mega-mall near downtown with Marinette practically bouncing in her seat.

It wasn’t often that her family shopped there. Most of the stores where what you might call high-end. AKA expensive. AKA not really plausible on a baker’s salary. And while the Dupain-Cheng’s were by no means poor, Marinette had been instilled with a sense of thriftiness since a young age, a skill that came in handy when it came to her hobby as a seamstress. Never one to turn her nose up at a bargain, she had grown used to scouring second-hand stores, letting her hands run along the racks until she encountered a fabric that drew her in. It was a habit she took great pride in.

That being said, Marinette was obviously a bit confused when about half-way through their spree, her mother ushered her through the entrance of a store she recognized as a designer label. Mrs. Cheng just quieted her daughter’s objections with the wave of a hand.

“You worked hard this summer, besides everyone needs a little indulgence sometimes.” The woman explained, a twinkle in her eye as she led them towards the back wall. Marinette felt a warm excitement flood her veins at the thought of owning something designer, the emotion immediately turning icy as she noticed just what department her mother was steering her towards.

“Mama, no!” She hissed in embarrassment, trying to plant her heels against the shorter woman’s strength. It was no use. Mrs. Cheng just gave a knowing chuckle, prodding her daughter until they stood smack in middle of the lingerie section. “You cannot be serious.”

“Oh come on, it’s been years since I helped you pick out a bra. Probably since you first started wearing one.” Marinette’s mother grabbed a lime green pushup, draping it over her blushing daughter’s chest before replacing it with a shake of her head. “Not your color.” Marinette’s eyes scanned the area for an escape route. Perhaps an open window or a storage closet…

“But you certainly aren’t the same size as back when you were 12.” Mrs. Cheng continued in a chipper tone, oblivious (or possibly just ignoring) her daughters discomfort. “I’m not sure where you inherited those but it certainly wasn’t from my side of the family!” She laughed, gesturing to her own chest as Marinette gave another loud groan.

“I don’t even need another bra.” The teen whined half-heartedly, eyes roaming the rows extravagant silks and expensive lace trims that stretched before her. “And I definitely don’t have a need for one this fancy.” Despite her objections, Marinette couldn’t help but admire the selection, both with the practiced eye of a seamstress and the longing gaze of a teenage girl.

Maybe she didn’t need a sexy bra, but damn if she didn’t want one.

“Marinette, you’d be surprised at how far a nice set of matched underclothes will go in terms of confidence.” Oh great, her mom had found the panties. “It can really make you feel so much better about yourself, even if you’re the only one who knows you’ve got it on.” Here her mother turned, quirking an eyebrow up. “Unless there’s someone else who might get the chance to see it…?”

“What the-of course not!” Marinette sputtered, flushing at the insinuation.

“Because you know if you are having sex-“

“No. NOPE. I’m not! Noooo, we are NOT having this conversation right now!”

Her mother just laughed her off with a gentle smile. “Well ok then, but you know you can talk to me
about anything right?” An embarrassed nod. “Good! Now get to picking!”

Once she got over the initial mortification of the situation, Marinette felt her excitement come creeping back in. Together they scoured the racks, seeking out the perfect set among the throngs of unmentionables.

The first one she picked out was a predictable choice. Simple but girly, Marinette was instantly drawn to the lilac ensemble, the bra and panties lightly flower patterned with tiny pink bows adorning certain points.

Her next choice was at her mother’s urging, though she had to admit it was also quite stunning. As opposed to her first choice, this one had no padding whatsoever, instead embracing a triangle cupless design set in a soft, deep navy fabric. It looked incredibly comfy, especially with the matching boy shorts.

It was her last pick that surprised Marinette to most, it being completely out of her usual realm of taste. It wasn’t often she wore black, what with her hair the color it was, yet she was inexplicably drawn to the midnight bra. The front plunged low, the cups wrapping up the sides in order to meet with the sophisticated 3 strand strap. The construction was gorgeous, but what really caught her eye was the lacy trim feathering its way across. The swooping design was unlike anything Marinette had encountered in all her time spent skulking through fabric stores, prompting her to scoop up the bra and matching thong without a second thought.

“Do you think your father-“

“Whoops sorry can’t hear you I’m heading to the fitting room now bye!” Marinette ducked behind a heavy velvet curtain, thankful she managed to dodge that particularly cringe-worthy line of questioning.

The lighting in the stall was low and warm. A large framed mirror dominated the wall and the all-around richness of the space reminded Marinette she wasn’t at Target anymore. Letting herself enjoy the sumptuous environment, she stacked her choices on the tufted ottoman, quickly shedding her clothes before donning the first ensemble.

Minutes later, after she had tried on and fallen in love which each choice, Marinette found herself at an impasse. Obviously she couldn’t get them all, it was a stretch to afford even one set, never mind three, but it all came down to cute vs. comfortable vs. sexy.

The age old question.

Her mother wasn’t much help, maintaining she liked all of them equally as Marinette ducked back in with a frustrated huff. She needed someone more optioned to help guide the decision.

‘Someone like my loud-mouthed best friend perhaps.’ Marinette thought suddenly, hanging all three bras up on the rack before snapping a pic.

[ I can only afford one, so choose carefully. ]

She sent the text off quickly, changing back into her clothes as she awaited the verdict. Alya’s phone never left her hand, meaning Marinette didn’t have to wait long for her response. Within 30 seconds her phone gave a chime, the girl leaning down to unlock it.
‘Oh.’

Marinette read and re-read the text, eyes popping up to scan the little “C.N” at the top of the message thread, before dropping back down to the picture resting in the conversation window.

‘Oh’

She stilled, hands gripping the device as she stared absently at a speck on the carpet. After a few seconds, Marinette raised the screen to her forehead, blood rushing in her ears as a hiss escaped her clenched teeth.

‘Did I just accidentally just sext Chat Noir?’

Still moving in a haze, she brought her phone back down, examining it one more time before panic began to poke holes in her outwardly calm demeanor. Marinette’s eyes widened, body slumping down onto the ottoman. The fact she was in a crowded store was the only thing keeping her from screaming.

‘I most definitely did accidentally sext Chat Noir.’

Chapter End Notes

i have absolutely no excuse for my behavior anymore. (ﾉ°-°)ﾉ
Also, my spring semester at UCF starts this week so these updates might not be coming as frequently?? we shall see!
Chapter 16

Chapter Summary

In Which Adrien Fucking Dies (like seriously hes gone now goodbye my dear son)

Chapter Notes

Big ole’ shout out to @girl_chama for helping me brainstorm this chapter via tumblr this is all your FAULT

See the end of the chapter for more notes

WHAM.

Plagg looked up at the sound of a loud thud resounding from the other end of the room, glancing over just in time to see his chosen hit the floor. The teen was staring at his annoying little sound box again, the kwami noted with distaste, reluctantly moving from his comfortable position to see what it was this time that had his charge so worked up.

“Oh, do I even want to know?” the tiny cat muttered, hovering with arms crossed over the practically-frothing boy beneath him.

Adrien couldn’t hear. He was slumped over, legs crossed on the hardwood floor as all the blood in his body seemed to rush towards one of two places. Half of it filled the capillaries behind his ears, explaining the loud boom of his heartbeat as it echoed throughout his head. The other half was predictably occupied squarely between his legs, reminding him once again just how restricting denim could be on a semi.

[ I can only afford one, so chose carefully. ]

[ image ]

The text was innocent enough. In fact it seemed downright casual out of context.

Of course that context being the picture nestled right beneath said message.

‘The picture Ladybug sent me so I could help her pick out some lingerie...’ Adrien managed to process through the haze that surrounded his head. The first wicked whispers of lust made his cognition slow to a crawl as half-formed images of her lace wrapped body began to flood his every conscious thought.

Seeing the tiny ‘viewed just now’ alert pop up on his side of the screen, Adrien knew he needed to
respond quickly, lest she take his pause as a sign of reluctance. With an incredible strength of will, he somehow managed to string together a coherent sentence, eyes never leaving the image in question as numb fingers reached out to tap at the screen. ‘She wants me to decide what she wears. Choose what she puts on under her clothes…’

[ Perhaps my choice would be easier if I were to see them on my lady… ]

That was lie. Adrien knew nothing could make the decision easier.

Because he could picture so clearly in his practiced mind’s eye how each bra would look perched up under her breasts. How they’d looked trapped beneath his wandering hands or bunched up to the side as the fabric was shifted in favor of a lovelier sight. Of how they’d look slipping off her pale shoulders before being tossed at the foot of his bed. So the obvious answer was “get all three”.

Although apparently that wasn’t an option, and after what seemed like both a second and an eternity she replied, the messages rolling in like a flood that seemed to sweep Adrien up along with it.

[ oh im sure you can use your imagination… ]

[ though perhaps this would help in the decision making process?? ;) ]

[ image ]

Ladybug was strong. Like insanely strong. As Chat Noir, he had seen her scoop up civilians three times her size with ease, seen her tip busses and break down doors like they were nothing.

And in that moment, it felt like she had poured every ounce of her strength into a swift punch to his chest.

Adrien had to manually force the air back into his lungs, swallowing hard as he let his eyes rove over the image. ‘Any time now I’m going to wake up with soiled sheets and this will have all been a dream where-

She was on her knees.

Granted the tops of her knees were the only body parts visible in the entire picture, but the sight of them drove Adrien to near madness. Because up until this point, the only exposed bits of skin he had been able to glance off his lady were portions of her face and neck, the rest being covered by her damnable suit.

But this, this was his first real glimpse at new territory.

So drawn in by the folded appendages edging the frame, Adrien almost completely missed the rest of the picture. He hissed another sharp intake of breath as his eyes alighted on the 3 pairs of panties laid out gingerly on the ground before her kneeling form.

‘Boy am I gunna be pissed when my alarm goes off.’
They very obviously matched up to 3 bras she was deliberating over, and each sexy little number conjured new and even filthier images to flash across his mind.

The first pair was blue, in the same swirling pattern as the cup-less bra. They were cut wide, in an appealing boy short pattern he knew would stretch so nicely around her sinful hips.

The next pair was a bit frillier, and the idea that his rough and tumble Ladybug was a girly-girl at heart sent a rapid wave of tingles down Adrien’s spine as he shifted pleasantly on the floor. The lavender bikini had little sections of mesh running down the sides and the subtle floral pattern was off-set by two tiny pink bows pinned at each hip.

Of course the allure of both previous panties combined couldn’t stack up the sheer physical, visceral reaction Adrien experienced as he took in the final garment. Although perhaps describing it as such was a stretch; The so-called “garment” before him was little more than a triangle of lace-trimmed fabric with two miniscule straps hanging off the edge.

It was tiny. It was black. And it was everything his testosterone fueled mind could dream up and more.

“You maybe want me to leave the room for a few minutes there champ?” Plagg interjected, eyeing the way Adrien’s hands clenched up his sides with a knowing look. He had thousands of years of experience with hormonal teenage boys, and the kwami could tell by now when they needed their alone time.

Adrien just looked up distractedly, shaking his head as if to clear it before giving his friend a stiff nod. Plagg didn’t need to be told twice, zipping out the door to take a little stroll around the downstairs kitchen. ‘Maybe two or three strolls’ he snickered to himself, recalling his chosen’s flustered appearance ‘Boy is he going to kick himself when he finds out who she is…’

At his kwami’s departure, Adrien finally let slip the groan that had been sitting on the edge of his tongue since the beginning of his and Ladybug’s little exchange. Reluctantly, he peeled his eyes off his phone screen, but only long enough to stand, shut the door, and flop face down on his bed before letting his gaze snapped back to the task at hand. It had been nearly 3 minutes since she sent the last picture.

Adrien had only just began to formulate a appropriate response (one that didn’t include him expressing his desire to remove each pair of panties with his teeth) when he was interrupted by another blip.

[ you alive there kitty? ]

Now that was debatable.

[ more than you know… wow ladybug *heart eye cat emoji* ]

[ im guessing you approve of my choices? ]
[ to put it lightly ]
[ shit, honestly you’d look amazing in all of them ]
[ that’s not very helpful! ]
[ well then, which one is your favorite? ]
[ I like them all, that’s why I picked them ]
[ I want to know which one you think is the best… ]

There it was again. She was asking which one he wanted her to get, and the insinuation was doing things to Adrien. At this point his whole body was lit up like a livewire, and had his sole focus not been captured by the conversation before him…

Well lets just say his hand would be doing something far different from texting.

His answer was instantaneous.

[ I always thought you’d look great in black ;) ]

‘Especially in such a small amount of black… ’ He smirked down at his phone.

Her reply was swift, the contents of her message prompting Adrien let out an un-manly choking sound he would find the time to be embarrassed about later.

[ I need you here. Now. ]

Holy shit.

‘Theres no way-‘ Adrien’s brain shut off mid-thought, dazedly watching as an address quickly followed her text. ‘God, she’s serious!’

His pulse doubled, tripled. Wide eyes re-reading the message over and over. If he was turned on before, the sensation paled in comparison to the raw bite of arousal that socked him right in the pit of his abdomen. Adrien was now convinced he was not, in fact dreaming by the way his body reacted. Feeling real and intense and so, so ready.

[ shit shit wow ok ]

[ On my way! ]
He sprung up, actions guided solely by his down-stairs head as he fumbled on his shoes and made for the door.

She needed him.

She needed him now.

And God, did he need her too.

Adrien was far too gone to even consider her words could possibly have any meaning beyond the decidedly less-than-innocent insinuation his brain (dick) would have him believe.

In fact it wasn’t until Adrien had made it halfway down the hall that he began shake off his cloud of mind-addling lust to think of the logistics. His feet slowed, pausing in the corridor as he exhaled a short breath. ‘*How was this even going to work?’* He pulled out his phone once again, desperately attempting to ignore the pictures as he typed with jumping fingers.

[ wait, so do you want me to come in costume or??? ]

[ because we can definitely turn of the lights if you want our identities to remain a secret ]

[ or perhaps blindfolds if you prefer ;) ]

‘*Now that was a thought and a half....’*

Adrien groaned at the particular mental picture, envisioning a slip of cloth covering the area her mask usually occupied. The rest of her body would be left bare, miles of smooth pale skin for him to tease and-

[ ??? ]

{ ok I have no fucking clue what you’re talking about but obviously I need you to come in costume }

[ unless of course you have some other plan for taking out the akuma?? ]

Yikes.

Just…

*Yikes.*

Adrien felt the palpable thrum of his body fall silent, slumping against the wall as he visibly winced.

‘*Akuma. Of course she was talking about an akuma you jackass.*’ He felt his face flare up, the heat oh-so-different from the flames that had consumed him just minutes ago (although the same small,
The phone went to sleep with a finalized click, sitting heavily in his coat pocket. Adrien burrowed a knuckle into the side of his blushing forehead, grinding his teeth at his own one-track mindedness before skulking off in search of his kwami.

‘You’ve kissed the girl a total of what? Three times? And suddenly you expect her to just immediately invite you over for sex? Get a grip, Agreste…’

Adrien’s body felt tight, movements stiff as he made his way towards the kitchen. He was embarrassed of course. Embarrassed he had made such wild assumptions and mad at himself for the completely un-called for sense of disappointment he couldn’t quite stomp down.

As expected, the tiny black cat was near comatose in an empty container of cheese, still somehow managing a chuckle at Adrien’s flustered appearance. “Looks like someone’s still a bit wound up. Trouble in paradise Lover Boy?”

“Just get in the ring.”

Marinette jerked at the far-off sound of people screaming, her already rapidly beating heart seeming to click into a new rhythm. Her eyes rolled so far back into her head she swore she could see her own sinful thoughts fleeing at the realization that her little play time was over.

‘Right at the good part’ she thought petulantly, cheeks warming as she tried to stamp down the vestiges of her former flirtiness in order to focus on what she was 90% sure was an Akuma. With reluctant hands, she reached out to shift the focus of their conversation with a sigh. ‘Saving Paris is more important than teasing your boyf-’

No.

‘Saving Paris is more important than teasing your partner, Marinette’.

[ I need you here. Now. ]

“Honey, are you still in there?” Her mother’s worried voice carried through the curtain to the dressing room. “I think we should probably be getting out of here…”

Marinette jumped as another crash shook the floor beneath her, quickly forwarding Chat the address before she swooped out of the stall. “You’re right, better leave this mess to Ladybug.”
'Whenever I get the chance to transform that is.' she thought with a wince, silently strategizing ways to slip past her mother without arousing suspicion. The pair made their way hurriedly out of the store, getting swept up along with the crowd of people all rushing towards the elevator. Angling her head over the railing to her left, Marinette spotted the aproned akuma, as well as an alarming amount of white paper cups, stalking around the first floor of the shopping center.

The phone in her pocket hadn’t stopped buzzing for about the last minute solid, prompting Marinette the stop just short of their destination as she fished the device out. ‘Why in the world would he think I wanted him to come out of costume?’ Apparently the boy had yet to learn that the middle of an attack wasn’t exactly the best time to flirt.

“Get in here.” Mrs. Cheng said, gesturing for her daughter to join her in the rapidly filing elevator car. Marinette glanced up, mind skipping over whatever mindless drabble Chat was sending her just in time to see the metal doors begin to slide shut. ‘Oh, how convenient.’

“Ill meet up with you later Mama, Ive got to use the bathroom anyways!” She tried reassuringly, shooting a thumbs up as she watched her mom’s eyebrow draw together tightly just a second before the elevator closed completely.

Well, she would catch hell for that stunt later, but Marinette had bigger problems to deal with at the moment. Absent mindedly responding to Chat’s confusingly jumbled texts, the teen ducked into the nearest storefront, placing her phone in the clutch at her side while simultaneously rousing the sleepy kwami from her spot within.

“Lets go Tikki, spots on!”

A flash of warm light, a few bounding leaps, and one perfectly executed drop in later, Ladybug was in the thick of battle. The akumatized barista wasn’t much of a conversationalist, preferring instead to let her unending supply of coffee cups do the talking as she wreaked havoc around the main floor of the mall.

After about 15 minutes of skirmishing, Ladybug found herself one again buried under a mountain of white cardboard as the akuma continues its chaotic spree. Before she could tunnel herself out however, a black-gloved hand snuck its way into the pile, pulling her out by one delicate wrist.

Ladybug popped up, blinking hard as she found herself standing just inches away from Chat’s smugly grinning face. She quickly schooled her expression, putting on her best I-definitely-wasn’t-just-sending-you-racy-pics look before stepping around him primly. “Nice of you to show up, Chat.” She said casually, tossing the remark over her shoulder before bounding after the Akuma.

For the remainder of their fight, Marinette tried desperately to convince herself that her flushed face was as a result of physical exertion and had nothing to do with that fact Chat Noir’s eyes seemed to cling to her body with each move.

Every flick of her wrist, every pivot or roll or jump she made brought his gaze down heavily upon her. Just green, green, green, pressing and caressing her every curve. It wasn’t hard for her to imagine what exactly was running through his mind as Chat continued to mentally grope her.

’I always thought you’d look great in black’

He was uncharacteristically quiet during the fight, though not so much as to avoid letting slip a horrendous coffee-themed pun or two as the heroes beat back their adversary. By the time Ladybug conjured her lucky charm, she was sure there was something off about her partner, caught between being turned on by the intensity of his gaze and worried about his lack of banter. ‘Never thought I’d
see the day I actually wished Chat Noir was louder…’

But in the end, what mattered was stopping the akuma.

After her convoluted plan to somehow snag the barista’s nametag pulled through with a little help from her lucky charm, Marinette turned to destroy the cursed object only to find it has disappeared under the mountains of cups.

“What is it?” Chat yelled, still trying to distract the Akuma while she sifted through the mess.

“The artifact is somewhere under all this!”

“Can you find it?”

“Working on it!” Ladybug replied, panic starting to settle in as she heard the third beep of her miraculous. ’come on, come on…where the hell was it?’

Suddenly, the mass of cups were scattered into the air, flying across the mall at the forceful swipe Chat’s baton gave as he touched down next to her. “Need a paw?” he asked, shooting her a grin before lashing out with another powerful sweep.

In no time at all the floor was clear, allowing Ladybug to easily spot the discarded name tag before stomping down upon it.

“No more evildoing for you!” She announced, quickly cleansing the akuma and tossing her charm up to erase of signs of their confrontation. With a victorious grin, Ladybug turned around to give Chat a fist bump…

…immediately seizing up at the borderline feral way he regarded her. His clawed hands clenched and unclenched at his sides, eyes gliding up her body before boring in to her own.

Marinette swallowed hard, speaking with a bravado she didn’t know she possessed.

“Why aren’t you kissing me right now?”

Chat gave a shiver, tilting his head curiously before responding in a measured tone. “Because I don’t trust myself self to stop by the time your miraculous starts to wear off.”

‘Ah.’

“Well then, ugh, it’s a good thing we have a patrol planned tonight.” Ladybug said in a voice barely above a whisper, loving the way his lips twitched at the reminder. “So there will be plenty of time for you to not stop kissing me then.”

Marinette could help the way her stomach flipped as he brought her knuckles to press delicately against his lips in a gesture they had played out a hundred times before, reveling in the new-found heat it spark in light of their earlier conversation.

“I look forward to it as always My Lady.”

His eyes were dark. Not the kind of dark that hinted at anger or fear, but a sort of carnal expression that made Marinette wish she had the guts to drag him into the nearest changing room and let him dress her up in whatever he wanted, masked or otherwise.

In an effort to avoid any hormone-fueled follies on her part, Ladybug turned and fled, making sure he got a good view of her hips as she slipped into a deserted restroom.
Click.

The door closed with a sound of finality, Marinette sliding down the surface as her transformation melted around her. For a long minute, she sat in silence, allowing a pleasant heat to simmer low in her stomach as she tried to steady her breathing. When she did move, it was to retrieve her phone, navigating back to their last conversation as she re-read Chat’s messages with a much clearer head.

‘Something about the way he responded was off, like he-’

“Oh dear, you’ve really got it bad don’t you?” Tikki said, voice unreadable as the kwami gave her chosen a lopsided smile.

Marinette could only nod dazedly, thighs pressing together as she slowly came to realize exactly what the messages implied her partner had in mind when she had called out for him. She flushed from head to shoulder, recognizing how he could have gotten the impression her message was asking for more than just help with the akuma. ‘Chat had been more than ready to drop everything at a moment’s notice and just…”

She buried her head in her hands, groaning out at the events of the day and at her own clumsiness when it came to texting.

‘Although the blindfold idea was an interesting one…”

Chapter End Notes

AND HEY LOOK AT THIS SUPER COOL FANART THAT HEAVILY INSPIRED THIS LATEST SIN >>>
http://huffiestrikes.tumblr.com/post/137065927037/this-is-how-next-chapter-must-develop-to
Chapter 17

Chapter Summary

"Waiter, what is this fluff doing in my sin?"

Chapter Notes

Thank you for your patience in waiting for this chapter I somehow cobbled together between classes. One week down, 21 to go! (*crying*)

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

“This is the part where I make another crack about us not being able to keep our hands off each other isn’t it?”

Marinette gave Chat an indulgent smile, climbing the chimney until she was settled somewhat comfortably upon it. Despite his joking tone, she could see the slight concern in her partner’s eye. It had become an unspoken tradition between the two of them that she would only sit in her current position if they had important things to discuss. Things that shouldn’t be interrupted by posturing and stolen kisses.

He must have caught on to her conflicted demeanor, dropping his pretense of flirting to stand at the base of the structure with an honest expression. “Listen, if I did something to make you uncomfortable…”

Ladybug interrupted him with a shake of her head, silencing his question as she tried to formulate her approach. “No, nothing like that.” She began tentatively. “Actually, I think I’m the one who messed up this time.” Chat gave her a puzzled stare.

Marinette had been mulling it over all day. As she sat in her room scrolling through their little conversation, she could help but feel guilty at the fact their exciting exchange was technically an accident.

Don’t get her wrong, she didn’t regret it at all! In fact her heart still sped a bit as she recalled her own streak of flirtatious confidence, seeming to unravel Chat with just the smallest words and a hint of fabric. But at the same time it almost seemed like cheating that their first hot and heavy interaction was as a result of a mis-sent text.

By the time the hour of their patrol had rolled around, Marinette had resolved to fessing up to her partner. She suited up, maintaining a solid focus on her mission that fractured the second she had spotted his black-clad form slip up beside her.

‘Focus on the present.’

“Do you remember the first text I sent you today?” Marinette began slowly, shifting atop her perch as he regarded over her question.
“You mean the one where you asked me to help you pick out lingerie?” Chat said with a glint, his lip quirking up in amusement. “Yeah, I think I vaguely recall getting something like that.”

Seeing his fond reaction only stirred the sense of conflict she felt. ‘Maybe it’s better if I just keep rolling with it’ she deliberated ‘He seems so pleased, and it not like I didn’t enjoy I as well…’

No. He needed to know.

“Chat, I didn’t mean to send the message to you!” She blurted, getting the words out before she had the chance to change her mind.

The rooftop was quieter than it had been when she was alone.

His face immediately crumpled, Marinette’s stomach hitting the ground at about the same time Chat’s smile did. She watched with guilt as his shoulders drooped slightly before stiffening up once again, his entire posture shifting in to one of discomfort as he shook his head.

She tried to speak.

“Listen, I-“

“Who did you mean to send it to?”

Marinette blinked, swallowing hard at how drained he sounded.

They had been partners for long enough that she had seen the full spectrum of emotions from him. Cocky, Smitten, Victorious, Sad, Angry, Teasing, Sincere, Joyful, Free. That was what she had come to expect from Chat Noir, not this.

This was resignation, and it settled across him like an ill-fitted suit, twisting the image of her beloved partner into something Ladybug had never hoped to see from the lively young man.

“What?” she said, voice breathy as she continued to take in his utterly defeated stance with unease.

He looked up at her then, face blank as he ground out the words. “I know I said we didn’t have to label this as anything serious… but I didn’t think you would continue to see other people while we…” here he gestured non-committaly, letting his hands fall back to his sides. “I just…” Chat sighed, the sound hardly reaching her ears through the rush of her heartbeat.

‘He didn’t think…’

“I just didn’t think I had to share you…”

‘Oh my God, he thinks I’m seeing someone else.’

“What? NO!” Ladybug nearly yelled, slipping down onto the rooftop clumsily. “No, no, no Chat! Its nothing like that at all!” He looked at her guardedly, sending another white-hot jolt of guilt down her spine.
Ladybug padded over to him. “That message was meant for my best friend.” She said, putting emphasis on each word. “My very female, very platonic best friend.”

She saw Chat process her remark, his tension easing just a degree before he went on in a small voice.

“So you aren’t dating anyone?”

Marinette let out a breath, resisting the urge to pull him in for a tight hug and instead settling on a compassionate hand to the shoulder. Chat looked at her, really looked at her, with a silent plea that made her heart flutter strangely.

Her next words came easily, spilling from her mouth before she even considered their meaning.

“I thought I was dating you.”

…”Did I really just say that?”

All at once, it was like the clouds had lifted from over Chat’s head, the boy’s eyes growing comically wide as she felt him relax under her grip. Marinette was certain she had to be sporting a similar expression, feeling the weighty sincerity of her words settle over the pair as she tried to fight down a fit of anxious laughter. Chat had yet to close his gaping mouth, jaw working in wordless wonder as a positively awestruck expression brightened his handsome features.

Boy, could she pick ‘em.

“I, ugh…yeah!” He began, huffing out a breath as he urged the words through his broad smile. “We are definitely dating! This is… and I…” He snapped his mouth shut, cheeks puffing as he gave a low whistle. “Does this mean I get to call you my girlfriend now?”

Marinette let loose an overwhelmed giggle, laying her forehead against his chest to feel the rapidly fluttering pulse behind his suit. ‘What a dork.’

“I don’t think there’s that many people you can actually talk to about us.” She said, rolling her head up to face him. ‘Oh goodie, the smirk was back.’

“But…” Chat prompted, wrapping his arms comfortably around her waist as he gave an expectant eyebrow waggle.

“But I guess if we are dating, I could technically be considered your girlfriend.” She said with a dramatic sigh.

“Really laying it on thick with the romance there, Ladybug.”

“Don’t you push it Chat Noir.”

“Oh, I won’t, Girlfriend.”

“Well would you look at that, it’s time for our patrol to be over!”
Chat gave snort, arms tightening as she playfully tried to break away. “I don’t think so, my lady. We still have a solid hour left by my count and I won’t be letting you get away that easy.”

“Well then what do you propose we do then?” Marinette responded, allowing a hint of flirtation to enter her tone as she drummed her fingers against his collarbone.

“You just admitted to dating Chat Noir.’

Her head spun lightly, but not unpleasantly.

He made a show of considering his options, tilting his head in mock-concentration before a wicked grin split the bottom half of his face. “Up for a game of 20 questions?”

“Oh hell no!” Marinette drawled, pushing away from him for real before crossing her arms. “I’ve had enough straight, white boys come at me with that very same tactic and I will not have it from you!”

“What tactic?”

“You know how these things go. One minute it’s ‘What’s your favorite color?’ and the next it’s ‘What cup size are you?’.”

“C’mon,” Chat coaxed, stretching his hands out imploringly “No tricks, and I’ll even bump it down to 10 questions.” He leaned in with just a bit of a smirk. “Besides, I already know what cup size you wear.”

“Well he’s got you there.’

Marinette narrowed her eyes at him, “Five questions and I get to veto any that I don’t like.”

“Deal!” Chat said with a grin, plopping down behind a low eave of the rooftop before patting the space beside him. Marinette settled next to him, crossing her legs with a guarded expression that didn’t quite cover her smile.

In the past, she had been adamantly against them exchanging any sort of personal information, thinking that the details of their civilian lives would only stand to hinder their business as partners. ‘But you aren’t just partners anymore…’ she thought to herself with a pleasant hum, looking over to admire his handsome green eyes and wily blonde hair ‘In fact you basically just declared him your boyfriend and you don’t even know anything about him.’

The realization struck a strange chord in Marinette, causing a tiny twist of doubt to course through her chest. When she had imagined what it would be like to finally date someone, she had never seen it turning out like this.

It was never supposed to be Chat Noir, the boy she’d been partners with for years and now the young man she didn’t even have a name for.

‘Shit.’

The sheer absurdity of her life seemed to shift in to focus, causing Marinette to give a bark of laughter that made the figure beside her jump. He gave her a puzzled look. “You ok there Ladybug?”

“Oh yeah, I’m fine!” she began, still feeling numb and happy and maybe a bit scared too as she leaned back to brace her hands on the shingles behind her. “I’ve just come to the confusing realization that I do not, in fact, know my own partner in crime-fighting/boyfriend’s name and
somehow it doesn’t bother me nearly as much as it should!”

It was at that point she dissolved into a round of hysterical giggling.

Chat looked at her with concern, the expression eventually morphing into something else entirely as he began laughing alongside her. For a solid minute, the two heroes just utterly fell apart, letting out all the pent up tension and worry that had been building since the beginning of summer (or even possibly before that).

Eventually they came down from their high though, Marinette wiping tears of hilarity from the corner of her eyes before turning to Chat.

“Alright,” she said, sucking in lung-fulls of air before arranging her face into some semblance of sanity, “Let’s get on with this game of five questions, shall we?”

“With pleasure.” He responded, scooting so he facing her head-on as his legs splayed wildly beside her primly folded ones. “What’s your favorite color?”

“Alright smartass.” Ladybug muttered, rolling her eyes at his playful grin. “Pink. And yours?”

“Blue.” He answered without hesitation, seemingly content with her answer. “Ok, now you get to ask one.”

“How old are you?”

It was a question that had been nagging at her for a while, ever since she found out he had attended the same 18 and up concert she had, just weeks ago. Chat had always seemed to be around her same age, so Marinette just convinced herself that he too must have snuck in, not wanting to consider the fact it was entirely possible she had been kissing someone years older than her.

But she needn’t have worried, as his answer confirmed her suspicions.

“I’m sixteen.” Chat said with a grin. “But I’ve been told I can pass for nineteen, easy.”

“Really now, and here I was thinking you were twelve!”

“That’d be pretty awkward if a twelve year old was taller than you…” He murmured, earning him a rap on the shin. “So how old are you?”

“I’ll be seventeen soon.” Marinette replied, noticing for the first time how fast her birthday was approaching. ‘Was it seriously September already?’

Chat didn’t miss that extra bit of information.

“How soon we talking here?” He questioned. “Because I’ll need some time to get my Lady a proper gift.”

“No birthdays.” Marinette warned, not liking the gears she saw turning in his head. “Next question.”

“Very well then,” Chat said, his trademark shit-eating grin making it was across his face as he leaned towards her. ”What zodiac sign are you?”

“Oh aren’t you clever?” She scoffed, deciding to humor him. “You’re lucky I’m an astrology fan and my need to know your sign outweighs my annoyance. I’m a Virgo/Libra cusp. And it’s my guess you are either a Leo or a Taurus, so which is it kitty?” Marinette leaned back smugly.
“She was met with a laugh.

“Sorry, but your star sense seems to be a bit off there.” He said, pressing a palm to the center of his chest. “What you see before you is a Pisces man, through and through. A sign which, as I’m sure you know, goes quite well with Virgo ladies such as yourself.”

“Damn! Of course you’re a Pisces! All the incessant flirting should have been a dead giveaway...” She grumbled.

“Don’t forget my generosity and raw animal magnetism.”

“Funny.” Marinette noticed for the first time that at some point in their conversation she had uncrossed her legs, and that they were now draped casually across his own. She gave a smile at the comfortable contact, tucking her toes in right above the outside of Chat’s knees as she pondered her next question.

She wanted to know so much about him, but the fact she also had to answer any question she posed held her back. She couldn’t expect Chat to bare his entire identity while she herself kept him in the dark.

And she sure wasn’t ready to let him see Marinette.

‘Not yet anyways.’

“What do you want to be when you grow up?”

The question seemed to take him by surprise. Chat gave a considerate huff, tilting his head as if the notion had never occurred to him that he would one day, in fact, have to get a job beyond running around in a black cat suit. Marinette watched him consider, giving him time before he finally opened his mouth.

“I guess I’ve never really given it much thought. I mean I already have a job, so I’ve always just assumed I’d keep doing that but…” he trailed off, an unreadable look momentarily passing over his face before he manually replaced it with one of bravado. “Of course if that falls through, I’m handsome enough to be one hell of a trophy husband!” Chat said with a wink.

Marinette let out a laugh. “Oh I could just see it now! Chat Noir: Housewife Extraordinaire.”

“I was thinking more along the line of stay-at-home-dad.” Chat replied a little wistfully, shaking his head with a wild grin. “But tell me, what do you want to be when you grow up?”

“I want to go in to fashion.” She replied immediately, hoping her answer was focused enough to sate his curiosity but vague enough not to give anything away.

“Fashion...huh.” She watched Chat regard her answer, flashing her an ironic smile before nodding.

There was a beat of silence, one Marinette didn’t feel the need to break as she just allowed herself to enjoy the night.

‘This is nice’ she thought, shifting comfortably next to Chat as he thought up his last question, ‘Sitting under the moon, engaging in a little idle chatter. No fighting, no akuma, just me and—’
“So if that first text was an accident, what does that make the other messages you sent me afterwards?”

Marinette snapped from her reverie, unable to help the hint of blush that she felt cropping up on her cheeks. Chat didn’t miss her reaction it would seem, as he let a slow smile creep across his face while claw-tipped hands began to absently toy with her ankles. “You could have told me the truth in the beginning.” He said softly.

“I know.”

“I would have understood, wouldn’t have been upset.”

“I know.”

“So…why did you keep it up?”

Marinette stood suddenly, needing to be on her feet or maybe needing to stop the very distracting circles he had begun to rub up her shins, but either way feeling much better as she towered over the still-seated Chat Noir.

“Two eyes are better than one?” She tried casually, knowing instantly that he didn’t buy it. The boy pushed himself up, giving a smiling shake of his head.

“Try again.”

Marinette’s mouth quirked up, arms crossing her chest as he began circling her again. “I needed your expert Pisces opinion?”

“Not buying it!” He crooned, leaning an arm on her shoulder. “Just tell me what that was and the game will be over.”

“No fair, you asked three questions and I only got two!”

“Alright, you answer this question, and I’ll let you ask another.”

Marinette deliberated, tilting her head before giving a satisfied nod. “Alright.” She said, turning to glance up at his eager face. “You want to know what that was?”

“I do.” He said, licking his lips and leaning down invitingly.

‘You want to play ball? Oh, I can play ball.’

Marinette took his invitation, laying a hand on the side of his jaw before meeting him in a short but scorching kiss. After a few seconds, she pulled back slightly, just enough to give him a good view of her smirk before she whispered into the space between their lips.

“That was playtime…”

She gave a laugh at the way he visibly swallowed, feeling that now-familiar thrill in the pit of her stomach flare up again as she turned to saunter away. He seemed to have other idea however, because with a quick grab at her hand Chat had her pinned against him, his thumb rubbing aching circles into the sensitive inside of her wrist as he peered down at her.
“Oh yeah?” He began, voice taking on that low pitch that made her heart speed up deliciously. “Then you should know I’m always available whenever you’d like to play again.”

This time it was Marinette’s turn to gulp, barely having the time to notice his glowing green eyes had turned to slits before he was on her.

The kiss was dizzying, Chat turning his head occasionally to go at her from all angles. The want was there in full force, permeating each twitch and pulse of their lips as the two slid heatedly together. Ladybug returned his affection with equal fervor, holding in a moan as his fingers never ceased their motion along her wrists. ‘Never knew I had a sweet spot there.’ She thought absently, loving the way she could feel his hypnotic strokes even through the fabric of her suit.

It was great, obviously. All of their kisses had been great by her standards, by Marinette ached for something more, something deeper and more intense and-

Practically unaware of her own actions, she let her mouth part with a sigh, tongue flicking out to dance along the seam of his lips. Chat jumped as if she’d shocked him, jaw dropping more out of surprise than anything else as Marinette slowly probed further.

_That. That’s what she wanted._

His hands slowed their ministrations, eventually dropping hers completely as his arms fell dead between them. She noticed with no small amount of disappointment that his lips had all but ceased their movement, the boy standing still as she tried to will him back in to the rhythm of their embrace with a tiny nip to the corner of his mouth.

That was what seemed to break him.

Chat pulled back stiffly, eyes blown wide and mouth slightly ajar as he looked down at her. Any irritation she felt fled instantly at his deer-in-the-headlights expression, and suddenly Marinette feared that perhaps she had overstepped his boundaries.

“I’m sorry!” She blurted, hands fluttering lamely. “Sorry if that was too much or I pushed you too far. I didn’t mean to make you feel uncomfortable or anything but you just felt so good and-oh gosh I really shouldn’t have done that…”

Marinette buried her face in her hands, wanting to take a quick trip to the bottom of the ocean so she could maybe cool off for a few decades.

"Jesus, Mari. Not everything had to be so goddamn intense. Cant you just enjoy a nice kiss without trying to molest his mouth, you horny-’

“What? No!” Chat squawked, removing her hands so he could catch her gaze.

He looked terrified, face flushed and eyes panicked as the words flew from his mouth. “No, no, no, no, no! That was…that was incredible Ladybug! I’m not…I mean you. Listen, I have literally no physical boundaries for you to overstep! I’m just a loser who doesn’t know how to kiss pretty girls but oh God I really liked that a lot and you shouldn’t feel sorry, h-holy shit.”

Chat pushed a hand roughly through his hair, making the blonde locks stand up impossible wilder as he stared dazedly towards her. “Sorry if I’m a bit…new to all of this. You are…and I’m just?” he gestured lostly, trying to formulate the words. “You’re my first and I really don’t want my bad luck to mess this up too.” He ended with a wince, looking into her eyes sheepishly.

“You…seriously?” Marinette said incredulously. He nodded. “Never kissed anyone else?”
“Pretty lame right?” Chat said with an embarrassed shrug.

‘With all his flirting and fawning I would have sworn…’

“It…no, not at all!” She rushed to assure him, heart beating ridiculously at the thought that her suave Chat Noir was just as woefully inexperienced as she was when it came to these sorts of things. “I mean, you were my first as well.”

“Wait, so on Notre Dame?” He questioned, looking at her with more than a touch of awe. Marinette tilted her head, considering.

“Not exactly…” she began, a hint of playfulness creeping its way back in as she placed her hands atop her hip. “That wasn’t our first kiss, Chaton. But I doubt you remember that one.”

Chat’s eyes widened before being overtaken with a smirk. “I think I would have remembered if my Lady had granted me one of her sweet kisses.” He purred, bending to peck at her newly captured hand. At the last second however, he flipped it in his grasp, instead pressing his lips to the inside of her wrist in a gesture that made Marinette squirm with pleasure.

‘Quite the fast learner this one is.’ She thought, allowing herself to enjoy the sensation for just a brief moment pulling away. “Then I’m sure you remember what happened the Valentine’s day before last?”

She continued before he could even respond. “How you were hit by that Dark Cupid’s arrow and the only way for me to snap you out of it was with a kiss? Remember that?”

Of course he didn’t, she knew that for a fact, which only made his disbelief all the more sweet. Chat furrowed his brow, trying to reassemble his memories of the day before slotting them in with what she had just told him. In a moment, the pieces seemed to click for him, Chat smacking is forehead with a groan.

Marinette just grinned.

“Oh you’re kidding me!” He caterwauled, stomping like a child as his head rolled back onto his neck. “You first kissed me two years ago and I couldn’t even remember it happening??? I’ve missed out on so many opportunities to tease you!”

“And for that, I’m grateful!”

“Oh the wasted years…”

“Now you’re just being dramatic.” She chided playfully, walking absently along the edge of the rooftop as she toyed with her yo-yo. Chat must have noticed the glint in her eye, as he suddenly lunged forward, looping an arm around her waist to prevent her from swinging off.

“Oh no you don’t!” He lectured, pulling the giggling Ladybug into his side with a shake of his claw. “No rooftop chases across Paris tonight, Mi Amore! I remember you distinctly saying, and I quote, ‘There will be plenty of time for you to not stop kissing me on patrol.’ So pucker up…”

“You sure you’re comfortable with that?” Marinette confirmed, stomping down her own flood of anticipation so look him dead in the eye. She didn’t want to run the risk of spooking him again. Chat just gave an enthusiastic nod, letting his hot gaze trail down to her lips before looking back up with a smirk.

“Absolutely. I may have a lack of experience, but plenty of drive to make up for it.” he finished with
a wink, tightening his grip on her waist. Marinette bit her lip, drawing his attention once more before leaning in with a sultry rasp.

“Well then, we’d better get to practicing...”

He couldn’t agree more.

Chapter End Notes

I am a slut for astrology and I will physically fight anyone who tells me Marinette isn’t a Virgo/libra cusp and Adrien isn’t a full on Pisces. Go on, try it.

anyways...

I KNOW YOU'RE DYING FOR THE SIN, I AM TOO.

but this is first and foremost an awkward puberty fic and lets be honest, who was good at french kissing the first time they tried?

MORE ALYA AND NINO NEXT CHAPTER
Chapter 18

Chapter Summary

In Which Things Get Progressively Harder For Adrien
(spoiler alert: it's his dick)

Chapter Notes

So with the last chapter we hit two major milestones: 1,000 kudos and 50,000 words! This is honestly such a tremendous and unexpected reaction for my first ever fan fic, but im so glad you all seem to like this much! So thanks to everyone who reads and comments, you make my day <3
Also, hang in there. I dont yet have an end in sight for this fic and things will probably (definitely) be getting wilder with each chapter!
Enjoy sinners...

See the end of the chapter for more notes

As Ladybug’s lips tilted up to meet his for the fifth…

…or was it the sixth?

As Ladybug’s lips tilted up to meet his for the however-many-th time tonight, Adrien finally allowed himself to believe this was truly happening.

‘What a wonderful thing to lose count of.’ He thought, the idea floating up from his sub-conscious to bob across the warm haze wrapping him from head to toe. Everything was light and heat and happiness, making it difficult for Adrien not to smile into their kiss as he reigned in another giddy laugh.

It was all her doing. He knew it was.

For years Ladybug had been his main source of joy. The shining beacon that pulled him back when he felt himself toe the edge into darkness. Everything else, his father, his job, his empty bedroom and lonely meals, seemed to drive him closer and closer to her, making him revel in whatever small (if oh-so poignant) bit of attention she threw his way. Any look, any laugh or smile or smirk or snort his Lady made was a carefully treasured gift, filed away for him to call upon when things got particularly tough.

But this?

Oh God was this so much more.

More than he could hope for, more than he would ever dare to hope for. Because misfortune was not a magnet for good luck. Rainclouds didn’t draw the sun, broken mirror didn’t spell out favorable odds, and black cats didn’t attract ladybugs.
Yet here she was all the same. Perfect and panting and…

‘Mine’ Adrien thought forcefully, wonderfully. ‘Utterly and totally mine.’ He repeated the word over and over in his mind, trying to spell it out with his tongue as he wrote his declaration along the roof of her mouth.

At some point he must have vocalized it, the word slipping out between haggard breaths as they parted to replenish their supply of oxygen. Ladybug looked up at him, eyes half-lidded and sparkling despite the cover of night, before she let the title roll off her own tongue to mingle in the space between their lips.

“Mine.”

It was single syllable that held a world’s worth of opportunity. For him. For her. For them (as there was most definitely a them now). It was an offering, one that Adrien wasted no time in accepting.

“You’re mine.” He said, halfway between a plea and a command as he crashed down upon her for the however-many-th-plus-one time. Ladybug let out a groan, the sound only spurring Adrien to press impossibly closer to her as his back dug into the wall behind him.

At his lady’s urging, the two had managed to move to a more secluded area of the roof, now completely cut off from view from the street as Chat’s hand pressed firmly into Ladybug’s back, occasionally sliding down and around to settle back atop her hips. He couldn’t decide which position he liked better, so the obvious solution was both.

Adrien had always prided himself on being a quick learner. It was a trait Mr. Agreste seemed to appreciate as well, looking on approvingly as his son excelled at nearly every talent thrust upon him.

When he was 7, it was smiling for the camera.

When he was 12, it was fencing.

And now at 16, he had finally picked up on the art of French kissing (though something told him this was one skill his father hadn’t really intended to be a part of his repertoire.)

“This is okay?” Adrien asked once again, breaking away for a brief moment to give his girlfriend (his girlfriend!) a questioning look.

“More than okay.” She replied, a bit breathless as she licked at her lips. “You sure you’ve never done this before kitty?”

“Paw-sitive, my Lady.” He teased back. ‘God, she looked so great like this.’, “You must just be an excellent teacher.”

“You act as if I have any clue what I’m doing.”

“Maybe you don’t. But whatever it is, it’s really working for me.”

“Glad to hear it.” Ladybug said, drawing her fingers along his jaw before poking his chin. Adrien tilted his head down to playfully nip at her hand, laughing as she withdrew it with a chastising noise. “No biting, now!”

“Does that mean I can bite later?”

“Not my fingers you don’t.” She replied cryptically, sending a rush down his spine. “And honestly,
the curiosity on your face is a bit worrying. What’s on your mind alley cat?”

‘A whole slew of things I would probably get slapped for if I told you.’

He decided to give her the abridged version, gathering up his Chat-granted bravado before continuing on in a purr. “I’m just wondering which set of lingerie you decided on.” Adrien let his eyes flicker down her body, appreciative but quick before snapping back up take in the loveliness of her face. Ladybug’s eyes widened in a response Adrien briefly mistook for desire. Of course that was before he saw her brow furrow into a decidedly less-than-pleased expression, worry creeping its way from behind his ribs as he readied himself to apologize.

He didn't get the chance.

“Shit!” Ladybug cursed, mouth twisting in to a pout as she brought a hand up to slap against her forehead. “With all the commotion with the akuma, I forgot to go back for the damn thing!”

Adrien was caught between laughing and crying, settling on a choked chuckle as he watched her bemoan the loss of her coveted purchase. “Hey, c’mon…” he said, rubbing her upper arms comfortably. “You can pick it up next time you’re there!” Ladybug sighed.

“Psh, not likely. I doubt my mom would still pay a designer price after I all but ditched her in the middle of an emergency. She didn’t stop lecturing me the entire car ride home!”

“Well, that answers my second question then.” He responded absently, not quite sure how to cheer her up.

“Yeah? And what was that?” Ladybug said, shaking her head as if the clear it before slipping back into her previously flirtatious tone. He just gave her his best Chat Noir grin before whispering low in her ear.

“I was going to ask if you were wearing it.” Adrien drew back with a wink, oblivious to the look of confusion curling at her features.

...

“You mean like... on top of my costume?” Ladybug asked, not seeming to properly process his question.

“No, I was talking about under the suit…” Loving the little huff she gave at his answer, Adrien leaned in to press a kiss against the section of Ladybug’s jaw she seemed to like, seizing up at her next words flew right by his ear.

“But I don’t wear anything under the suit…?”

He pulled back with a gulp, body flooding with the familiar warmth as her words wormed their way beneath his skin. Though her response was phrased as a question, the impact of the statement hit him solidly in the gut, and Adrien suddenly having trouble producing words. ‘C’mon Agreste, use your big boy sentences…’

“You-ughnfg. Mmm! Nuh...nothing??”

‘Nailed it.’

“Well yeah,” Ladybug said, the blush creeping along her cheeks only managing to somehow further arouse him. “I mean my clothes disappear when I transform so…”
In hindsight, it made a lot of sense. Adrien was vaguely aware of his own underthings melting away once he turned in to Chat Noir, so it was perfectly logical to conclude that the same thing must happen for Ladybug. Yet somehow that juicy little detail had somehow managed to slip his mind throughout his years of fantasizing.

‘Well, that’s a dangerous piece of information to have.’ He thought dazedly. ‘Goodbye sleep.’

“Chat?” Ladybug questioned, waving her gloved hand before his empty stare. “You good there?”

‘Define good.’

“I-yeah!” He chirped out, eyes still unfocused as he tried to slow his breathing. "Yeah, I’m cool. Cool. Cool. Cool. Cool…”

She quirked a brow “You aren’t cool are you?”

“Nope!” Ladybug laughed at his frazzled appearance, wrapping her arms around his neck with a coy (if blushing) expression before initiating another brief kiss. She broke away, pressing a peck to his chin, then his jaw, then...

“Well I happen to like you hot.” She emphasized her last word with a warm huff of air against his throat, causing Adrien to shudder.

‘This girl might possibly be trying to kill me.’

It wasn’t long before they were back to their previous level of intensity, this kiss somehow impossibly more charged than the last. Ladybug tugged at the hair brushing his neck, prompting his jaw to drop further. She took the opportunity to continue mapping every corner of his mouth, letting her deft tongue and impossibly skilled lips draw every fragment of desire from him as she explored to her heart’s content.

Meanwhile, Adrien was on fire.

Lust coursed through his body like a virus, supercharged by adrenaline to begin working its way into his deepest muscles. Her words and his subsequent thoughts mingled into a reactive cocktail that seemed to bring his very blood to a boil. It was too good. Too much. Too hot. Too fast. Too…

Hard.

Adrien’s eyes widened in panic as he felt the flesh below his belt firm up, bulging out just inches from where Ladybug stood. He groaned, half frustration and half arousal as he tried to angle his hips farther back. Thankfully, she seemed too enthralled in their kiss to notice his very physical reaction, returning his moan with one of her softer ones as she continued to creep closer.

Meanwhile, Adrien was on the verge of a complete and utter meltdown.

‘Fuck! You cannot do this right now goddamit!’ He silently screamed at himself, unsuccessfully willing the blood away from his erection as he tried to think of ways to calm down.

‘Here,’ his mind answered politely, conjuring the image of a grinning Ladybug peeling her naked body out from behind her suit, ‘does this help?’

Needless to say, it didn’t.
“WELL!” Adrien choked out, breaking their kiss suddenly before crossing his legs in what he hoped would look like a relaxed stance. “This was super great but I think my miraculous is wearing off!” His voice grew embarrassingly pitchy on the last few words, causing him to wince before sending Ladybug a forced smile. Seeing her stand before him, bangs ruffled, chest heaving, and lips swollen from use, Adrien could barely compose his next sentence. He twitched uncomfortably under the restrictive material of his suit, trying to remain casual before mentally saying ‘fuck it!’ and scrambling his way up the steep rooftop to their left.

“Chat, are yo-"

“YOU’RE SUPER HOT I HAD AN AWESOME TIME TEXT YOU LATER BYE!”

Chat Noir ran. He ran faster than perhaps he ever had in all his time as a superhero. And he didn’t stop until he made it back home.

That night, Adrien learned two things:

That he can, in fact, cum three times in the span of 45 minutes.

And online orders of $100 or more qualified him for free shipping.

“I know I’m going to regret asking this… but I really need some advice.”

Nino looked up from his tablet, sliding his headphones down to string around his neck before turning to face his newly arrived friend.

The third week of the new school year was drawing to a close, meaning classes where back into full swing as students settled back into their academic responsibilities. The crisp, late-September weather only seemed to highlight the fact summer was over, that it was time to begin looking towards fall. Towards lesson and holidays and all the changes that came the autumn shift.

Though Adrien didn’t know how much more he could take in terms of changes.

Life right now was somehow more incredible, as well as more hectic, than it had ever been up until this point. He was in a far different place than he had been 6 months ago, that’s for damn sure.

Before leaving for his summer tour, Adrien had been a single, pre-pubescent loner, spending his days shuffling between school and lessons and shoots, all the while counting down the minutes until he could become Chat Noir again.

Of course he still more or less did the same thing now, only everything had grown far crazier since his homecoming. Classes where more challenging, prompting him to sign up for tutoring to maintain
his sparkling gpa. His extra-curricular lessons also seemed to spike in intensity, pushing him to new mental and physical breaking points before Adrien begged them off under the guise of wanting to focus more on his fashion career. Mr. Agreste begrudgingly allowed it.

Modeling contracts were dropped on him in droves, the shots becoming progressively racier due to his newly matured appearance. Oh his father was adamant that Adrien not appear shirtless until he was of a more proper age, but that didn’t stop photographers from baring as much of him as they could, willing the model into increasingly suggestive poses with women years older than he was.

Days were long, shifts where tough, and Adrien was busier than he’d ever been

That being said, there were two bright spots in his life

The first was the friends he’d made at school. Adrien lived for the idle conversations and occasional hangouts with his classmates, reveling in the feeling of having some semblance of a social life after living so shut off for so long.

And with his age came some small measure of freedom it would seem. Adrien found it was much easier now to get approval for small outings like movie trips or days playing soccer at the park, most often meeting up with Nino, Alya, and Marinette (an increasingly occasional tag-along to their group adventures.) He was growing closer to the people around, and it made all the difference.

Of course his life still revolved around being Chat Noir, as with his alter ego came the brightest spot of all.

‘Actually, make that brightest spots of all’ Adrien amended with a smile.

He had to continually assure himself it wasn’t all an elaborate dream, walking around in a perpetual state of giddiness as he reminded himself over and over, ‘Ladybug has feelings for you. Ladybug is your girlfriend and you are Ladybug’s boyfriend.’

It was like he was an amnesiac, repeating the facts as if they could slip away at any given point.

‘Ladybug likes you.’

‘Ladybug wants to kiss you.’

‘Maybe Ladybug more than likes you’

‘Maybe Ladybug want to do more than kiss you…’

And that’s were things got dicey. Because for someone one who made everything feel so miraculous, Ladybug was also solely responsible for making Adrien’s life incredibly tougher.

Actually, scratch that.

She made his life incredibly harder. In the most literal, vulgar sense of the world.

Adrien felt like he was 14 again. Like he was some untested pre-teen who had just discovered porn for the first time. Except now everything was much more tangible. And now that he didn’t have to guess what Ladybug’s lips felt like, didn’t have to imagine how she’d feel pressed against his chest or sighing against his collarbone, Adrien’s subconscious had no problem supplying him with new
(and now much more plausible) fantasies involving his polka-dotted kryptonite.

Nearly every morning Adrien woke up shuddering, underwear plastered uncomfortably between his thighs and in need of a good shower. Perhaps a bible as well.

Plus it only got worse when he was around Ladybug, Adrien’s body over-reacting to even the simplest of movement on her part. It was a more than a little pathetic actually, how much he wanted her.

A friendly arm wrapped around his shoulder as they posed for pictures?
Boner

A chaste kiss on the lips?
Boner.

Her greedily devouring the chocolate he had begun bringing her regardless of what time of the month it was?

Oh forget it, he was a goner.

In fact, he’d once gotten aroused by watching her round-house kick an Akumatized construction worker (a worrying reaction he decided to re-evaluate at a later date.)

Needless to say, he was at his wits end.

If he were smarter, Adrien would have known better than to bring up such personal afflictions to his best friend (especially after their infamous “period talk”) but he was at his limit, and had reached the point that any embarrassment on his part was worth it if there was a chance he could gain a little insight into controlling his own behavior.

So here he stood.

“What kind of advice we talking here?” Nino said, standing up from the bench outside the school entrance and flashing his friend an easy smile. “Grades, looks, or girls?”

Adrien gave a deep breath. “The last one, I guess…”

‘Bad idea.’

His friend’s face immediately lit up in the worst possible way and Adrien felt his eye twitch, already feeling that first hint of regret but too far in to back out without arousing suspicion.

“Holy fuck, it’s happening!” Nino said wondrously, head swiveling to scan the courtyard around them. “Where in the world is your mother?”

“Beats me.” Adrien deadpanned, allowing himself to be dragged further towards the school.

“ALYA!” Nino bellowed, pulling his sighing friend alongside him as he searched for his partner-in-mischief. “Alya its happening!” What few students who had stuck around for lunch hour watched the commotion with idle fascination, returning to their previous activities when they realized it was
just Nino being Nino.

‘Bad, bad idea.’ Adrien thought miserably ‘Almost as bad as googling for answers…’

“ALYA!”

They found the girl resting under a stairwell, phone held out before her as she video-chatted amicably with whoever was on the other side of the screen. She jerked up at the sound of Nino’s yells, eyes narrowing at the two boys standing over her before she returned to her call with a sigh. “Give me a second Mari, I have a feeling something mad dumb is about to happen.”

“Its happeniiiiiiinnnnnggggg….” Nino all but hissed, shoving an already-blushing Adrien forward. “What are you-“

“Our son is finally ready to learn about the birds and the bees!”

Alya’s eyes lit up with interest, spelling trouble for the blonde boy before her. She scrambled off the ground, bringing her phone up once more to address Marinette gleefully. “Sorry girl, I’ll have to call you back! Gotta go give Adrien the sex talk real quick. Bye!” From the other end of the call came a sort of sputtering squeak, cut off abruptly as the girl pressed ‘end’.

“That is not what I asked for!” Adrien rushed to say, giving Nino a hostile look as Alya descended on him. He didn’t like the malicious glint in her eye as she steered him under the stairwell. ‘Bad, bad, bad idea.’

“Tell me what’s on your mind.”

“I said I needed girl advice and this Jackass-“

“Don’t talk about your father like that.” Alya faux-lectured, twining her arm with an equally-smirking Nino as the two regarded him like doting parents. “And you should know there’s no shame in wanting to learn more about sex. It’s natural for a boy your age to start feeling urges…”

Adrien clapped his hands over his ears, giving a violent shake of his head as he made a show of not listening. His friends just dissolved into laughter.

“Oh, aren’t you guys are just hilarious. You know, if you won’t listen to my questions I’ll find someone who will!”

He watched them slowly collect themselves, allowing his hand to drop back to his sides as Alya stepped forward.

“Alright,” she began, softening her expression as she laid a steadying hand on his shoulder “you just tell us what you want to know, son…and we’ll do our best to enlighten you.” Adrien shot Nino a desperate glance, deflating as his friend just gave a shrug. This wasn’t exactly something he wanted to discuss around Alya…

‘You got yourself into this mess, Agreste. Might as well just get on with it.’ Adrien stepped back, leaning against the stairwell in a cross-armed pout as he muttered into his collarbone.

“I didn’t quiet catch that bro, you wanna maybe speak up there?” Nino said, planting himself beside Alya as the two leaned in curiously.

“I said…” Adrien ground out with a wince, body tensing in preparation for the inevitable roast he
was about to receive from his so called ‘parents’, “…how to you hide an erection when you’re making out with a girl?”

...

Surprisingly they didn’t laugh.

There was pause as both of his friends tilted their heads in consideration. Alya’s eyes narrowed, turning towards Nino as they engaged in a silent deliberation. After just enough time had passed for Adrien to work up one hell of a blush, they both spoke out in unison, the words plain and simple.

“You don’t.”

“You…don’t?” Adrien repeated, brow furrowing confusion.

“Yeah, I mean its kinnda just there. I guess you could try to think about wrinkly old people or covalent bonds, but more often than not you’ve got to roll with it bro.” Nino said with a shrug, turning to his partner for confirmation.

Alya gave a nod. “It’s a pretty natural response, especially if the girl is good…” she trailed off, flashing Adrien a smug look, “which I’m guessing she was if you felt the need to ask us this question.”

He gulped. ‘Good is a bit of an understatement here…’

“Hey, yeah!” Nino said, gears turning behind his skull. “Have you been holding out on me dude? Because you can totally tell me if you’ve started seeing someone…”

“I’m not!” Adrien said, perhaps a bit too quickly if their identically quirked eyebrows were any indicator. He tried to seem aloof, continuing on in a casual tone. “Let’s just say this is all a hypothetical at this point.” Two gazes narrowed. “I’m serious!”

Ignoring their skeptical gaze, Adrien soldiered on, still a bit confused.

“So, are you sure there’s nothing to stop it? I mean…” he had the decency to look embarrassed as he gestured vaguely below his waist, “…what am I supposed to do with it??”

“You’re asking us what to do…with a boner?” Alya asked incredulously, “You sure you’re not here for the sex talk?”

“No!” Adrien huffed exasperatedly, grinding his hands into his eye sockets at the sheer mortification of his position. “I just want to know what I’m supposed to do if I get a hard-on while making out!”

Another short pause.

“Well, that’s when you push it into her hips.”

‘Wait, what now?’
Adrien removed his hands from his face slowly, gaze bearing down on a shrugging Nino. Alya seemed to be a bit stunned as well, eyes widening a fraction as she gave him a measured glance.

“I mean, obviously make sure she’s into it first and pull back if she seems uncomfortable!” The boy rushed to amend, raising his hands in placating gesture. “But yeah, that seems to be the usual course of action.”

Adrien wasn’t quite sure how to respond to that. Luckily for him, Alya seemed like she did.

“He’s right actually,” she said, crossing her arms as the boys turned to stare. Adrien wasn’t sure what was more surprising. Her genuine praise, or the considerate way she regarded Nino before continuing on in a conversational tone.

“It’s the truth! Boners are what lets us ladies know we’re doing a good job, and who doesn’t like to get rewarded for their efforts?” Alya said, lips curling slightly. “So yeah, grind that shit out as long as you’re both on board. Kinky and consensual is the way to go.”

Nino, for his part, did a good job off not buckling under her heated gaze, even managing to keep his voice steady as he responded with a smirk of his own. “You got that right, sister.”

“Ahem.”

Adrien cleared his throat loudly, pressing his lips together as he shot them a quick wave. The two stepped apart tentatively as their friend just rolled his eyes. ‘Down, kids.’

“So, ugh…” Nino began, forcing his attention back to the blonde teen before him “You have any more questions there Sport?”

“No, no.” Adrien said, tossing their words around his head in consideration.

‘Is it really that simple? Would Ladybug even go for it?’ Recollecting the way she had nearly mounted him each time they’d seen each other in the two weeks since becoming a couple, he couldn’t help but hope. A slew of filthy possibilities began dancing through his thoughts, each insinuation bolder than the last as Adrien repressed a shudder.

Those long legs wrapped around his waist, thighs squeezing his sides as their hips rolled into each other.

Her nails dragging across his shoulders, whimpers working their way between her parted lips as he drove her upward with an aching thrust.

The wicked smile she would give him as she flipped them over, moving to straddle…

‘BAD. NO. PUBLIC. STOP.’

With a rush of blood downward came the swift reminder to cool his ardor before this conversation got impossibly more awkward. Maybe the next question he should ask is how to hide a boner in front of his friends.

Adrien brought his fantasies to a screeching halt. Desperately willing the mental picture of his girlfriend grinding her hips down on his hard-on away, he tried to arrange his face into a semblance of casualty. “No more questions, but thanks!” he forced out, conjuring a pleasant smile while his body screamed at him to find privacy…and fast. ‘Self-control, Adrien! You have it, now use it!’

If they noticed something off, they had the decency not to mention it.
“Well alright!” Alya said, tucking her laptop under one arm as she prepared to go. “Use your newfound power wisely and let me know if there’s anything else you need advice about.” She gave him a knowing smile and a loving punch to the shoulder before heading into the courtyard, turning at the last second to give his best friend an over-the-shoulder glance. “Oh, and Nino?”

“Yes?”

“Text me sometime.”

Chapter End Notes

*shakes my fist in the air* how in the world did this d.j.wifi work its way its way in here???
aayyyyy we have art
Chapter 19

Chapter Summary

Wherein The Author Has Officially Went Off The Deep End

Chapter Notes

you guys left me almost 90 comments on the last chapter alone like holy shit go you!
so in thanks, heres your extra long, extra sinful chapter
enjoy you animals

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Marinette couldn’t tell if she was hungry, horny or just plain dying.

It very well might have been all three, wrapped up in the neat little guise of PMS.

In her now nearly 2 years of womanhood, Marinette had long since stopped trying to guess what
mother nature would throw at her each month, instead hoping for the best while prepping for the
worst.

And by worst, she meant the feeling she was experiencing at this very moment.

“I don’t get it!” The teen yelled, curled up in the fetal position on the living room couch. “I’m not
even on my period and my body is trying to kill me…” She trailed off pitifully, accepting the hot pad
that was passed over the sofa and pressing it to her abdomen with a sniffle.

“I remember feeling the same way when I was your age.” Mrs.Cheng settled on the couch, shifting
her daughter’s head until it sat comfortably on her lap. She gave a sigh, running her fingers through
the blue-black strands that so closely resembled her own as she peered down at her miserable child.
“A lot of my symptoms used to happen during ovulation, too. Cramps, bloating, hunger, not to
mention those irrational bouts of anger! Unfortunately it seems like you take after your mother once
again, ma petit.”

Marinette just moaned, screwing her eyes shut as another painful spasm shot through her abdomen.
Her mom tutted over her, leaning down to press a kiss against her forehead. “How in the world did
you get through it?” She asked through clenched teeth, finally relaxing as her cramp let up.

“Mostly the same way you deal with it. Tea, hot baths, lots of rest and even more motherly kisses.”
She emphasized her point by planting tiny pecks all over Marinette’s flushed cheeks, not letting up
until the girl let out a giggle. “Although of course,” Sabine continued, sitting back up with a laugh of
her own, “things did get a lot better when I eventually went on birth control…”

Marinette shifted uncomfortably, her internal ‘awkward mom talk’ alarm going off immediately.
‘This wasn’t going to be good…’
“It was right around the time I met your father-“

“Mom!”

“-we knew we weren’t ready to have a little Marinette just quiet yet-“

“YOU DON’T HAVE TO TELL ME THIS!”

“-but it was absolutely incredible-“

“NOOOOOO.”

“-how quickly my PMS vanished!“

“I DON’T-“ Marinette cut herself off, glancing up sharply at her mother. “Vanished, you say?”

“Oh yes!” Mrs. Cheng laughed “About a month later I was practically symptoms free, and I can count on one hand the number of times I had cramps since then.” There was a pause as the younger Cheng girl gave a small hum. “You’re scheming, Marinette. I can sense it.”

“I’m thinking Mama, there’s a difference.”

But she was scheming.

Oh Lord was she scheming.

Marinette mentally weighed whether or not the embarrassment and possible backlash of her next question would be worth the rewards. She tossed the idea around for a few seconds before another powerful cramp made the decision for her. Steeling herself for one hell of a conversation, Marinette opened her mouth only to be cut off by her mother’s next words.

“If you’d like to go on the pill, just let me know.”

The teen shifted again, shaking her head incredulously at the woman’s casual tone. “Are you…I mean, really? You’re ok with that?” Her mother just laughed.

“And of course. You know I don’t like seeing you so uncomfortable. Honestly, I’m a little ashamed I didn’t think of it sooner.” She soothed her fingers over her daughter’s brow once again. “We can set up an appointment to get you a prescription sometime this week if you’d like.”

“Yes please oh gosh yes thank you!”

And so they did.

One doctor’s visit, a slew of embarrassing questions and a trip to the pharmacy later, Marinette finally got her hands on a tiny compact of blue and tan pills.

“Is it weird?” Alya asked, her voice drifting through the phone propped up against one of Marinette’s pillows.

“I mean, I don’t feel any different yet. My mom says things will start changing in about a month.”
“Well that’s good at least. I swear I’ll never complain about my pms again after seeing what you have to go through.” Alya’s face gave a compassionate look that warmed Marinette even through the screen. “Do you think you’ll make it back for the afternoon block?”

The teen heaved a sigh, rolling over to check the clock. She had gone straight home as soon as her lunch hour started, hoping a quick bath and another dose of Pamprin would help ease her discomfort. Call it one of the perks of living just steps from your school.

“Probably not,” she said sullenly, feeling no better than she had an hour ago. “I think I’ll just-“ There was a loud yell on the other end of the receiver, followed by a heavy sigh.

“Give me a second Mari, I have a feeling something mad dumb is about to happen.” There was a half-minute of mumbled chatter before Alya’s face once again filled the screen. “Sorry girl, I’ll have to call you back! Gotta go give Adrien the sex talk real quick. Bye!”

Marinette let out a choke, scrambling for some reply before the call cut out suddenly. She stared at the blank screen, eyebrows raised until finally she just shook her head, replacing the device by her pillow as she settled in to get some studying done. She had grown used to Alya and Nino’s parenting antics long ago, having more than once been on the receiving end of one of their legendary lectures. Her heart went out to Adrien, hoping he could handle whatever divine wisdom he was about to receive. She gave a slight grin, flushing at the thought of him being curious about sex. ‘With a body like that, the boy should have more than enough experience...’

Marinette pushed the traitorous ideas away, taking a few deep breaths to ward off the un-solicited whisper of desire that trailed its way down her abdomen. She wrote it off as her period’s doing, not lingering on the thought as she cracked open her history book.

Adrien was her friend.

Her sweet, genuine, insanely hot supermodel of a friend, but a platonic one none-the-less.

Plus she was not the same love-struck, slack-jawed, foot in mouth weirdo she had been when they first met. She had proven she could keep her cool, could interact like a normal human person, and they had grown closer for it.

In fact Marinette was grateful for his friendship. Or perhaps she was just grateful she no longer had to plan her life around their interactions. It had honestly become a bit exhausting, pining after him so long, and she was glad their conversations came easily now that she had let her obsession go.

Turns out, her crush was just a regular (if exceedingly handsome) teenager. One who dropped pencils, stumbled over words, and occasionally even made lame jokes, just like the rest of the student body.

‘Besides,’ Marinette thought as a familiar chime drew her eyes to the little ‘C.N’ that popped up on her lock screen. ‘I have enough blonde boys to keep me busy right now...’

She spent the rest of her day in bed, working through homework and personal projects alike while maintaining a running commentary with Chat. They texted nearly every day, surprising considering the fact they couldn’t really bring up personal topics. Yet somehow they managed to go on for hours about the most random things, their silly small talk never failing to bring a twinkle to Marinette’s eye as they went about their daily lives.

But of course she had to cut him off once her clock read ten. ‘Boy, not leaving my bed all day sure is exhausting.’
[ alright kitty, we both need to get to bed ]

[ of course, I wouldn’t want to keep you from your sweet dreams ]

[ as long as they all feature me of course ;) ]

Marinette shuddered a bit at the truth of his statement, letting out a huff of air as she stomped down her flicker of arousal. Tonight was for sleep, and she wasn’t going to let her hormones ruin that for her!

[ HA im too tired to dream, about you or otherwise! ]

[ well in that case I wont keep you up ]

[ goodnight my lady <3 ]

[ goodnight chat ]

Marinette blinked at the screen, chest warming at the sight. It was the same send-off they gave each other nearly every evening, but something about it really seemed to strike her this time. It probably had something to do with her tumultuous emotional state as of late, but she was suddenly quite enamored with his signature heart emoticon. She chewed at her lip as it curled into a contented grin, reaching out to type on a whim before locking her phone up for the night.

[ sleep well <3 ]

Marinette made her way to the bathroom, humming happily as she commenced her evening hygiene ritual. Teeth brushed, face washed and moisturized, clothes off, hair up and lights out. The very last thing she did before climbing back up into her loft was to fish the birth control compact from her purse, working the little capsule marked “Friday” out of its foil before grabbing her nightly water bottle.

‘With a little luck, I'll be back to my old self in no time.’ she thought, popping her final pill of the first week before tucking herself back in for the night. ‘No more debilitating cramps or crazy emotions or…’

Jealousy.

Pure, white-hot jealousy.

Stomach curdling, mouth twisting, hand clenching jealousy that burned across every square inch of her polka dotted body.
She tried to remain amicable, she really did. What with the crowd of reporters swarmed around her, nearly a dozen cameras poised on her face as she gave a recounting of the day’s attack, Marinette wasn’t exactly in an ideal place to be simmering the way she was. And yet that didn’t stop her possessive gaze from wandering over time and time again to where her partner (HER BOYFRIEND!) stood, preening in front of his screaming mass of fans.

She watched with distaste as one of the scheming little harpies leaned into Chat, nearly mashing their faces together as she snapped a selfie. This, of course, inspired the rest of them to begin pulling out their phones for pictures of their own. ‘Was it really necessary to loop an arm around his shoulder you little-’

“Ladybug?” Marinette drew her attention back to the press, forcing another pleasant smile.

“Ugh yes, one last question before I have to go.” All around her hands flew up and Ladybug forced herself to tune out the squeals that followed Chat’s ridiculous flexing. She knew it was all for show, but it still left a sour taste in the back of her mouth, especially with how strangely he’d been acting towards her lately.

Whether it be a post-patrol make out session or just a run-of-the-mill akuma attack, Chat always seemed to be making a speedy exit, barely sparing her a kiss on the hand before bounding out of sight. It worried her, and frustrated her even more so. How many times had he declared his undying love for Ladybug in the past few years? And yet her boyfriend still insisted on slipping away, on pulling back when all she wanted was more.

The most confusing part was that he seemed so willing to give it, right up until he made his hasty retreat. Marinette knew she shouldn’t push, shouldn’t expect too much too fast, but goddamit if she didn’t have feelings too.

A small part of her whispered that he regretted dating her, that she didn’t live up to the hype he had built up after 2 years of pining away. Chat used to look at her like she was a goddess, now his eyes always seemed to be dancing away. He used to beg and bade for her to stay just one minute more, but now he was the one always running off with some half-formed excuse.

And in this moment, seeing the horde of fangirls (some of them quite a bit prettier than she was) fawning their way around him, Marinette couldn’t help but feel the cold fingers of inadequacy dig their way beneath her skin. Thankfully, the supernatural sense of confidence that came with her transformation warded off any outward signs of her internal moping, and she turned to the gathered people with a tight smile.

“Yes, you!” Ladybug called out, pointing to a familiar red headed girl who had elbowed her way to the front of the crowd.

“Hi! I’m not sure if you remember me, but my name is Alya. From the Ladyblog?” Marinette gave a distracted nod, still half-focused on the shameless display going on across the square. “My readers are dying to know if you and Chat Noir are planning on making an appearance at the Annual Pumpkin Lighting in October. Can you confirm?”

“Oh, ugh, yes!” Ladybug said, trying to look directly into Alya’s camera lens as she went on in an official tone. “I can affirm that my partner and I have received the mayor’s invitation and will most likely be attending.”

“Awesome, awesome. So do you-“

Marinette’s attention snapped from Alya at the sound of an all-too-familiar giggle floating its way
across the crowd. “Chatty-kins!” The falsetto rang out, instantly setting Marinette’s blood to a boil as she watched Chloe Bourgeois lay a hand on her partner’s chest. “When do I get my picture?”

Ladybug dug her fingernails into the palm of her hand, taking a few deep breaths as she prepared herself to return to her interview. ‘Chat’s a big boy, he can handle himself around grabby upstarts like Chloe.’

Of course that plan (along with her last fuck) flew out the window as her classmate planted a kiss on her stunned boyfriend’s cheek.

*Kill-Bill Sirens* [x]

Marinette didn’t even register herself plowing through the line of reporters until half of them lay on the sidewalk behind her.

In fact the only thing she could register through the blinding streak of jealousy was the word “MINE” as it blazed a path through her lungs, out of her throat and finally across the clearing in a feral yell.

Chloe turned just in time to stumble out of the heroine’s way, eyes widening as Ladybug descended upon the newly freed Chat Noir with an almost animalistic fervor. She grabbed at his collar, wrenching the bell towards her as she crashed their lips together.

But Ladybug didn’t relax into the kiss this time, oh no. Quite the opposite actually.

With an audible parting of her mouth, Marinette turned to stare Chloe down, never breaking eye contact as she very visibly shoved her tongue into Chat’s mouth. The boy startled for just a second before easing up alongside her with a small groan. It was a clear message, one that even the entitled diva seemed to get if her wide-eyed gulp was any indication.

‘Stay back’ it said. ‘This one’s mine.’

In fact Marinette was so dead set on making her declaration known (to Chloe and to all of the other equally stunned fangirls behind her) that she never really stopped to ponder the true extent of her audience. Driven by lust, and fury, and maybe just a bit of sadness too, she poured every bit of her confliction into the kiss…

That is until her eyes caught on a tiny ladybug phone charm, dangling just inches from an illuminated camera lens.

All at once the world came back into focus. Marinette separated from Chat as a slew of questions came flying their way. The teen balked, seizing up at the realization of her actions as cold dread made its way through her veins. She stood frozen, overwhelmed by the flashes of light and loud voices that assaulted her from all angles.

‘Bad, bad idea…’

Luckily, Chat managed to recover before her, shaking his head in wonder before flipping the girl up over his shoulder. He secured her wiggling form with a firm hand to her lower back, swiveling to
address the crowd grandly.

“I hate to cut the show short, but my Lady and I have other business to attend to!” He sent Alya’s camera a suggestive wink before bounding out of sight, running until they were no longer within earshot of the masses.

Marinette felt numb, bumping along on his shoulder before Chat slid her down into a secluded alley way. Almost immediately she turned to lay her head against the wall, screwing her eyes shut as she focused on bringing her heart rate down to a more humanly sustainable pace.

‘Do you ever think? Ever use your brain for anything other than keeping your body alive? Because I’m pretty sure that was just about the dumbest—’

“Alright, so I gotta ask.” Chat’s voice cut through her self-depreciating thoughts, prompting Marinette’s head to swivel towards him. “What in the world was that?” He was a few paces away, leaning back against the brick with one leg propped up on the wall behind him. Maybe it was his distance or perhaps his cocky grin, but suddenly Marinette felt all her emotions congeal into one solid mass.

A mass she aimed directly at him.

“No Chat Noir, I’ve gotta ask! What in the world was that?” He blinked at her a few times, his grin only widening in the most infuriating way.

“My lady, do detect a hint of jealousy?”

“You’re about to detect me walking away unless you answer my question!”

“Well it looked like you very nearly running over a few civilians before jamming your tongues down my throat…” Marinette balled up her fists, cold fury and aching inadequacy making her chest wind tighter with each short breath she took. ‘Does he ever stop teasing for one minute?’

She wanted to scream at him, wanted to yell and curse and make him feel as bad as she felt.

But she didn’t do any of that, because she cared for him too much. (Hell, she might even love him for all she knew!) And even though a big part of her wanted to make him hurt, a much larger part of her couldn’t stand the idea of causing him pain.

So she did none of that.

She didn’t scream or yell or curse. She didn’t tear him down, didn’t chew him out. Instead she let her shoulders slump, curling in on herself in way she’d never done as Ladybug before. Marinette drew in a shaky breath, hating the irrational tears she felt prickling behind her eyes as she addressed the alley in a small voice.

“Do you regret this?”

From the corner of her eye she saw Chat stiffen, the grin sliding right of his face as turned to her. “What did you just say?” He didn’t sound pleased.

“I asked if you regretted this. Us.” Marinette repeated, voice growing stronger despite the nervous energy that swirled in the pit of her stomach.

“I don’t…what are you even talking about Ladybug?” She watched his mouth open and close a few times, mask pinched together in confusion. He looked as if he were about to speak again, but she
didn’t allow him the chance, now unable to stop the words as they tumbled between her lips to shatter the silence surrounding them with each gut-wrenching syllable.

“Am I not what you expected? Not what you imagined I’d be? Are you disappointed now because the girl you’re dating hasn’t lived up to the expectations you had for me? For Ladybug? Whoever!”

“My lady-“ She silenced him with a flash of her eyes to his.

“For two weeks now you’ve ran off anytime I so much as kiss your cheek! I told you we can slow down if you’re uncomfortable but lately I can’t even put an arm around you without driving you off! So what is it Chat? What did I do to make you so off-put by me?” She crossed the alley then, seething and shaking as she planted herself right in front of Chat. “If you don’t want me-“

The words died on her tongue as gloved hands whipped around her waist. Marinette made a small sound of surprise as Chat whirled her around, switching their positions so her back was pressed firmly against the brick building as he latched on to her throat with an open-mouthed kiss. She shivered, body immediately flooding with heat as his tongue and teeth went to work at the juncture of her jaw.

“How could you…possibly think…I don’t want you?” He paused every few seconds to press his lips against her again and again, emphasizing each phrase in a way that chipped off every vestige of sadness or anger Marinette felt until she was raw under his touch.

“Then why did you- ahhhhuh” She tried to will herself to speak, but the way he drew his claws along the small of her back, mouth never ceasing its erotic dance across her pulse point, made it impossible for her to do more than whine out her pleasure as she melted under his attention. Chat pulled back, drawing in a breath as his tongue ran along the front of his teeth. He seemed to be considering, and Marinette was about to pull him back to her when he made his next move, cupping the back of her neck with one hand as the other splayed out against the wall beside her.

“I’m going to do something,” he began in a low voice, his words stirring a delicious sense of anticipation low in the pit of her stomach. “and you need to tell me if it makes you uncomfortable.”

‘That’s not likely’ Marinette thought with a shiver, nodding none-the-less as Chat’s eyes gleamed darker.

Slowly, almost tentatively, he moved closer, laying his forehead against hers before continuing on in a quiet growl. “I don’t ever want you to question whether or not I want you…” He kissed her on the lips then, fully and passionately in a way that left no room of objection. Then came the familiar press of his body against hers…only now with an entirely new ridge of flesh that pressed firmly against her hips.

‘Was that?’

“…because I really fucking want you.”

It was.

Marinette’s eyes widened, an overwhelming surge of heat rolling over her body as she bucked on pure instinct alone. The motion brought her tighter against the tantalizing hardness trapped between them, eliciting twin moans from the teenagers as Chat’s hand tightened its grip on the back of her neck. He looked about as debauched as she felt, hissing between his teeth as he peeled himself away from her.

Before she knew what she was doing, Marinette snaked a hand out, her finger hooking around his
belt in order to press him back tightly against her. This time his groan was louder, slitted eyes bearing down on her heatedly as Chat brought his other hand to grip at her waist.

“I really fucking want you too.” Marinette heard herself say, not quite knowing how the words had formed, but grateful none-the-less that she was even able to speak through the dizzying sense of arousal that seemed to permeate her every sense. Her response was met with another growl from the boy, and (even more excitingly) another twitch of his hips as they rolled forward to grind into her own.

“Ladybug…” He let his mouth return to hers, parting immediately with a wet pop as their tongues imitated the jerking motion going on below. Marinette’s breath came in quick huffs, senses overloaded by the intoxicating vulgarity of it all, Chat rutting up against her in their secluded little nook as she focused on not biting down in her ecstasy.

‘He wasn’t running away because he didn’t want me’ she thought wondrously, head falling back as Chat returned his attention to her neck. ‘He’s been running because I get him hard.’

That thought, coupled with the now unbearably pleasurable sensation of his cock grinding against the v of her hips, lit a flame beneath her very core, ripping a cry from Marinette’s throat as Chat swooped up to smother it with his lips. “I have to stop if we get caught.” He warned, voice low as it murmured across her skin. He emphasize his point with another slow but scorching thrust, and this time she had to bite down on her lip to avoid making another sound.

They could have been there for hours, as far as Marinette could tell you. Though perhaps that fact that their suits (their goddamn suits that kept her from fully experiencing the skin-to-skin contact she so desperately craved) had yet to melt away indicated it wasn’t more than a few minutes they spent rocking against each other. There came a point where the atmosphere shifted, the intensity of their passion reaching a fever pitch that both teens noticed between the whispered gasps and aching moans.

Though neither of them vocalized it, it was obvious that they had reached a tipping point, and now a decision had to be made. Do they pull back now, content in their exploration beyond their previously unspoken borders? Or do they dare push forward, further into the sinful territory upon which they now tread?

Their decision was made for them by the electronic beep that echoed through the alley.

They parted with synchronized groans, hips stilling against each other as the intensity of the moment hung heavy in the space between them. Finally, Chat shifted away slowly, as if the movement pained him. Marinette had to swallow a plea at the departure of his warmth, instead reaching up to grab at the wrist situated above her shoulder in an attempt not to slide to the ground. Chat’s breathing was ragged, the only sound in the otherwise silent alleyway until a small voice rang out.

“Let me get this straight…” Marinette said, tongue heavy with the lingering weight of her desire “You’ve been running off on me for the past two weeks because you…” She didn’t know how to finish the question, instead allowing her eyes to flicker back to the bulge her boyfriend was sporting. Despite the fact she’d just had that very same mass pressed against her only moments before, Marinette couldn’t fight down the blush that spread across her cheeks at the sight. ‘You did that to him’ a small voice whispered triumphantly, and thought made her shiver.

She sensed more than saw Chat gulp under her gaze, shifting just slightly before clearing his throat. Marinette gave a squeak, flushing further as she realized she was ogling him in the rudest of ways. Despite the fact she’d just had that very same mass pressed against her only moments before, Marinette couldn’t fight down the blush that spread across her cheeks at the sight. ‘You did that to him’ a small voice whispered triumphantly, and thought made her shiver.

She fixed her eyes straight ahead, trying not to think about the fact that her very obviously aroused
boyfriend was still just inches away.

“Uh, yeah.” He began, voice still gravelly in a way that tied Marinette’s guts up into knots at the sound. “I didn’t really know how you’d feel about…but I guess if…” Chat shook his head with a huff, the beginnings of a smirk worming its way across his features as he caught her eye once again. “Well, if I knew that would be your reaction… I would have started pinning you against walls a long time ago.”

This earned him a snort. “Glad to see you’re recovered enough to wise-crack.” Marinette muttered, unable to keep the redness from her cheeks as she gnawed at her lip. Another small beep sounded from the corner of her ear, reminding the heroes that their time was drawing to a close.

Chat’s smirk soured into a sulk. He reached out tap at the triple-spotted studs with distaste. “You know, I really hate these things sometimes.”

“Me too.” Marinette admitted, flashing a pout of her own. She wanted nothing more than to stay in that alley, to test just how far they were willing to push their ever shifting boundaries, but her own infuriating sensibility won out as she slid out from under his arm.

Ladybug put a few paces between them, hoping that distance would help ease temptation.

It didn’t.

“You don’t have to go…” Chat tried hopefully.

“I don’t have to, but I need to. And so do you.” She sighed, unlatching her yoyo absently as she let her eyes skim his form once again in an indulgent look that didn’t go unnoticed by the object of her affections. “Besides…” Marinette drawled, feeling empowered by the hungry way he still gazed at her, “something tells me you have other business to attend to.” This time she very obviously let her eyes snap to his erection, a thrill going up her spine before she trailed her way back up to his face.

To say Chat looked bothered would be an understatement, and she might have felt smug if not for the pool of moisture she alone could feel gathering between her legs. But again her miraculous rung out, dragging her mind out of the gutter and away from thought of just how he might relieve himself once she was out of sight.

Ladybug didn’t wait for Chat to snap from his stupor, fearing the next words out of his mouth might just be enough to convince her very needy self to stay. Instead, she reeled herself up out of the alley, landing solidly on the roof despite her shaking legs. Marinette leaned over the edge, regarding the heavily breathing boy staring up at her before allowing herself one more but of fun.

‘What was it he said?’ she thought desperately, recalling the first night Chat Noir had made a speedy exit. ‘The first time he popped a boner around you...’

Ah yes.

“YOU’RE SUPER HOT I HAD AN AWESOME TIME TEXT YOU LATER BYE!” She called down, taking great delight at the way he shook a joking fist up at her before gnashing his teeth together in protest.

“Don’t make me come up there Ladybug I swear to-“ Thats as far as she let him get, turning on her heel with a loud laugh as she zipped her way back home.

Of course her bravado was short-lived, as evidenced by the guttural groan she gave as soon as she
slid down through her trap door just minutes later. Her transformation broke down around her, leaving Marinette a hormonal mass against the pliant bed beneath. In fact, Tikki gave her only a second’s glance before she tittered off something about looking for cookies, the kwami making herself scarce with a knowing smile.

Marinette couldn’t find it in herself to be embarrassed, instead trying to ward off the memory of his hardness pressed between her thighs as she grabbed her towel on the way to the bathroom. For the first time since Chat’s return for the summer, Marinette had to admit to herself that perhaps this was something beyond just her period talking, the aching need for him, and him specifically, outweighing anything she could ever recall feeling before.

‘And boy do I’ve got it bad…’

It took a warm bath, followed by a cold shower, two episodes of How Its Made and no less than six water bottles, but Marinette finally wound down enough to consider going to sleep. She had been very pointedly ignoring her phone up until this point, but she finally allowed herself to switch it back on as she burrowed in to her covers.

There was a single message from Chat, and Marinette felt a flip of her stomach as she went to open it.

[ it was very HARD watching you go today ]

Ahh, puns. The ultimate mood-killer.

Marinette couldn’t help but laugh, the remaining tension of the day easing up as she typed.

[ don’t ]

His response was curiously quick.

[ im sorry, did that GRIND on your nerves? ;) ]

[ you should know ive never been more turned off than I am right now ]

[ c’mon Ladybug, no need to SHAFT me! ]

That’s it.

Marinette cracked her knuckles, dead set on besting him at his own game, once and for all.
[ you got a BONE to pick with me? ]

[ ... ]

[ well well well...way to RISE to the occasion ]

[ no need to be such a JERK OFF ]

[ and to think...I used to THRUST you ]

If this was war, she was bound to win.

[ oh ur GOING DOWN ]

[ not likely, I can KEEP THIS UP all night ]

[ fine, but I should warn you... ]

[ I always COME OUT ON TOP ;) ]

He stopped typing after that one, and Marinette basked in her apparent victory.

[ PENIS ]

[ VAGINA ]

[ no fair! that was my next idea! ]

[ nice try... tell me I won :) ]

[ alright, you've truly bested me at my own game ]

[ at least until round two... ]

[ oh yeah? And when is that? ]

[ next time I get my hands on you ;) ]

Marinette could help but squirm at the words, mouth curling in to a coy smile at the promise his text held. ‘We’ll see about that kitty cat...’

[ ...goodnight chat ]

[ sweet dreams my lady <3 ]
the amount of dick jokes in this fic should be illegal but whatever im kinkshaming myself
Fanart is here >>> http://bullysquadess.tumblr.com/post/138801773372/spearare-a-thing-from-ch-19-of-the-ladybugs-and
>>> http://bullysquadess.tumblr.com/post/138287192987/thepandafag-so-this-was-heavily-based-off-of-a
Chapter 20

Chapter Summary

In Which I Take You All To Church
(cuz boy do we need it)

Chapter Notes

Hey good news I got a beta reader!
Shoutout to @mirthalia for sparing ya'll another typo-filled chapter!
Enjoy, you sinners.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“GET DUNKED ON!”

Every head in the class turned towards the door at the loud entrance.

“Miss Césaire, I would prefer it if you didn't yell in my classroom.”

“Sorry Mrs. Duchamp.” Alya flashed a sheepish smile before her face was once again overtaken by visceral glee, turning to slam her hands down on the desk in front of Nino before continuing on in a slightly softer yell, “Get fucking dunked on, you owe me twenty bucks! In fact…” She turned to address the rest of her classmates, crossing her arms triumphantly “…Half of you guys owe me twenty bucks!”

The room broke out in a chorus of groans, nearly a dozen teens reaching into pockets and wallets while the rest just smirked. Adrien was in the second group, leaning back with a grin as he watched Nino shove a crumpled wad of cash into Alya’s waiting hand.

The bet had been running for about a year now. After a class-wide tangent about the nature of Ladybug and Chat Noir’s relationship had nearly come to blows, the school’s resident superhero expert organized a betting pool in which people could cast their votes. The ante had been twenty bucks and nearly everyone in the school was in on it, half swearing up and down that the heroes were a couple, and half maintaining that their partnership was strictly platonic. If, by the time their class graduated, Ladybug and Chat Noir were still unconfirmed, those opposed would win. But if the news were to break that they were in fact an item…

“And don’t think I forgot about you, Mari!” Alya said, elbowing the groaning girl beside her. “In fact I recall there being some mention of double or nothing?? Hhhmmmmmm??”

Adrien cocked an eyebrow at that.

“You were confident enough to double-bet that Chat Noir and Ladybug would never get together?” he asked, watching Marinette give a weighty sigh as she dug around in her coin-purse. “Harsh…”
“Well it’s not like they ever showed any interest in each other before now,” she replied, an expression somewhere between a pout and a smile settling across her lovely features. “At least Ladybug didn’t, anyhow…”

“Maybe Chat Noir won her over with his charm and good looks?” Adrien suggested with a grin, the words immediately drawing a laugh from the girl.

“Somehow I don’t think so. Besides, I’m still not fully convinced the kiss was romantic. Maybe they’re just... really close partners?”

“Oh fat chance!” Alya broke in, tapping away at her phone before gathering their group around it. “You just try and tell me this wasn’t romantic…”

Adrien’s eyes landed on a familiar video, his grin widening as he watched Ladybug plow through the line of reporters. He had spent all of last night scouring the internet, tracking down every cell phone shot, news segment, or home video depicting the scene, and saving them to his computer. ‘Nothing like watching your girlfriend make out with you from dozens of different angles.’

“Damn, Ladybug’s a freak!” Nino chuckled as the four of them watched the superheroine slide her tongue into Chat Noir’s mouth.

“Yeah she is…” Adrien agreed, never peeling his eyes from the screen as he and his best friend blindly bumped fists.

“ALL RIGHT THAT’S ENOUGH.” A hand snatched at the phone, stopping the video as the two boys groaned in protest. Marinette stuffed the device back down the front of Alya’s shirt with a huff, her face a brilliant shade of red as she ground her teeth. “Yeah, maybe that could be considered romantic I guess…” she muttered, handing her friend the money with a pout before stomping to her assigned spot.

“Man, you really seem torn up about this, Mari,” Adrien couldn’t help but note, swiveling in his seat as she settled behind him. Marinette looked at him with candor, bringing a single knuckle up to rub against her temple.

“Let’s just say nobody’s more… surprised about this than me…”

‘Wanna bet?’ Adrien thought with a gleam, catching the words before they rolled off his tongue in a languid purr. Instead he just gave a shrug, tweaking an eyebrow up in a movement mimicked by the girl before him. Not for the first time this year, Adrien silently gave thanks that she had somewhat gotten over her shyness towards him. It turned out Marinette was a blast to be around once she stopped tripping over her words or...

Well, just tripping in general.

She was imaginative, sweet, and even downright funny sometimes (though he had yet to get her to laugh at one of his jokes). Plus French class was a lot more bearable with her company.

“Oh, hey wait!” Adrien said suddenly, seeming to startle her from their eye contact. “Isn’t today your birthday?” Marinette blinked a few times, a pleased blush spreading across her cheeks.

“Um, yeah. It is!” she said a little incredulously. “You…remembered?”

“I make it a point of remembering my friends’ birthdays.” He said kindly, a bubble of happiness bursting in his belly at her awe-struck appearance. ‘She looks so much brighter when she smiles.’
“Hey, yeah! Happy birthday Marinette!” Nino said, leaning over to give her an excited thumbs-up. “We still on for pizza and pinball after school?” Marinette nodded

“Sorry again that I can’t make it,” Adrien said, dejected. “I tried shuffling things around but I just couldn’t free up this afternoon. Of course I can still—“

He smacked a hand to his forehead suddenly, startling Marinette.

“Oh my god I totally left your present at home,” Adrien hissed, flashing her a sheepish look as he gave himself a mental kick. Suffice to say he had been more than a bit distracted this morning, memories of the night before swirling around his head while he dressed for school. Adrien could picture her present, wrapped up nicely and stacked beside Ladybug’s in the corner of his room, and he cursed himself for being so forgetful. “I guess I’ll just have to bring it to you after lunch then.”

“You didn’t! I mean… I…a-and…” Marinette floundered for a moment, mouth opening and closing before she took a steadying breath. She raised her eyes to his, giving him a kind smile as she focused on pronouncing the words. “I mean to say, you didn’t need to get me anything, but I appreciate the fact you did.”

This time it was his turn to be a bit stunned, nodding at her eloquence as he returned her smile. Adrien didn’t have time to ponder the erratic beating of his heart before the morning bell drew his attention towards the board.

The morning block passed quickly, as did the first couple of afternoon periods. By the time Adrien walked into his last class of the day, he was in too good of a mood to dread the gruelling photoshoot he had scheduled for after school (some big editorial session to showcase his father’s fall/winter line).

As he headed towards the French room, Adrien had to take great care not to skip. He got a special kind of thrill when giving gifts, a sort of high that came with knowing people appreciated his eye for presents. That’s why he was always finding excuses to give.

Hell, he had been tempted to give Alya and Nino each a “thanks-for-giving-me-the-tips-I-needed-to-have-a-mind-blowing-make-out-session-with-my-girlfriend” present but had decided that would be a bit trashy (not to mention disastrous).

So of course when Adrien had heard Marinette’s birthday was coming up, he wanted to make sure he found something special to gift the girl who had never been anything but gracious towards him. So he schemed and schemed until finally he was content with the basket he now plopped proudly atop their shared desk.

“Happy birthday!” he announced, sliding in next to Marinette with a smile as the girl gasped at the parcel before her.

“Oh my gosh, Adrien…this is far too much!” she wailed, hands fluttering around the tall, purple gift bag as she turned to him with raised brows.

“You haven’t even opened it yet,” he said, waving her off with a chuckle. She gave him a tentative smile, still looking a bit overwhelmed but diving in anyhow. Adrien’s grin only grew wider with each new treasure she pulled out from between the white tissue paper. Marinette fawned over the fresh sketchpad, squeaked at the new gaming headphones, and was positively awestruck as she cracked open the leather portfolio, filled with old design concepts from long-forgotten Agreste seasonal lines.
“Now. Now I can say with certainty this is far too much,” she said, dazedly flipping through pages as she let her eyes roam over the illustrations.

“It really isn’t,” Adrien assured her. “Nobody touches these things once the season is over, but I thought you might be able to get some use out of them?”

“There just…and I’m…” Marinette snapped the portfolio shut, whirling in her seat to throw her arms suddenly around him in an excited hug. Adrien was shocked for just a second before he squeezed her back, enjoying the warmth and gratitude of her embrace. Marinette smelled good, almost familiar even, and Adrien had to fight down the urge to keep her pressed against him when at last she pulled away.

“Thank you, really,” she said, tucking a dark strand of blue-black hair behind her flushed ear as she gave him a shy smile.

“Don’t mention it,” Adrien responded earnestly, not quite able to tear his gaze from her pleased expression for the remainder of the period.

[ can you be at notre dame in 2 hours? ]

[ not unless you give me a good reason ]

[ am I not reason enough? ;) ]

[ is this just an excuse to sodomize me on top of a church? ]

[ absolutely not! I was planing on giving you ur birthday gift! ]

[ …and then sodomizing you on top of a church, yes ]

[ my birthday isn’t for a few more days you know ]

[ still no reason I cant give you ur gift early ]

[ im scared but also intrigued ]

[ I can be there in 3 hours ]

[ deal! ]

“You’re early.”
Chat turned at the sound of Ladybug’s voice. He took a moment to enjoy the sight of her body silhouetted by the setting sun before bending down to kiss her hand. “As are you, my lady,” he murmured against the red material, twisting her arm to nip at the underside of her wrist. Adrien smiled as he heard her oh-so-quiet gasp, reveling in the fact he had so quickly managed to locate one of her sweet spots.

‘Wonder where else she’s tender…’

Ladybug twisted her face into forced seriousness as he trailed kisses up her arms. “I was promised a present,” she said, unable to completely hide her pleasure at the attention she was receiving.

“Who says this isn’t your present?” Chat replied cheekily, straightening up to his full height to lean in for a kiss. His girlfriend stopped him with a finger to the lips, pushing his face backwards as she craned her neck to peek around his back.

“If that’s my present, then what’s that in your hand? Hmm?” She made a quick grab at the parcel, very nearly nabbing it before he had the chance to hoist it high above his head.

“Patience!” Chat tsked down at her, laughing as she gave a hop.

“GIVE,” Ladybug demanded, running her hands down his chest in an effort to distract him.

‘A very effective effort,’ Adrien thought, loving the way her fingernails dug slightly into his suit as she pulled his shoulders down. “My my, someone is handsy tonight…”

“Please?” she tried, softening her voice as she drew her bottom lip between rounded teeth and looked up at him with sparkling eyes. It was an obviously fabricated gesture — he could still see the trickery behind her innocent guise — but it melted Adrien’s resolve nonetheless. He gave a grin, lowering the box into her waiting hands.

“Happy early birthday, my Lady.” She smirked, clutching the box to her chest as she turned to wander down the corridor. Tonight they were in a much more secluded corner of the cathedral, completely cut off from any prying eyes looking up from below.

It was no surprise the media had worked itself into a tizzy. For the past 24 hours all anyone could seem to talk about was Ladybug and Chat Noir’s apparent entanglement. And although Adrien couldn’t help but be elated (now everyone knew she was his!), he could tell Ladybug was less than stoked about the attention. So out of deference to her feelings he didn’t tease any further, indulging her desire to stay out of the limelight for a while.

If anything, the inner parapets were just as lovely as the more exterior parts of the cathedral, with soaring buttresses and curving spandrels that created a private sort of walkway that stretched across the front of the church. It was on one of the low stone walls running between the cobbled arches that the two heroes sat, Ladybug settling across from him as she tucked one leg delicately under her.

“This isn’t going to be like…a dead mouse or bird or something, is it?” she asked, picking at the red ribbon bound around the box with an arched brow.

“No animals, living or otherwise. That’s more of an anniversary thing,” Chat responded with a laugh, leaning forward as she pulled the bow free. Ladybug lifted off the slim black lid, eyes fluttering down to read the logo on the business card nestled atop the white tissue paper inside.

She gasped.

“Oh my god…is this?” Adrien nodded, gaze heated as he took in the blush that feathered its way
down her cheeks. Ladybug gave a shy smile and his stomach flipped. Was it possible his Lady was abashed for once?

“I thought it was a shame that such a pretty girl should have to leave behind her pretty things so…” Here he cleared his throat, fighting down a bubble of shyness himself. “…I did some online shopping.”

Ladybug lifted the paper, letting her fingers trail over the delicate lace of the cups that swelled from within the box. “You really shouldn’t have done this,” she breathed, voice a wondrous whisper as she pulled the bra out by its delicate three-stranded strap.

Adrien felt a wave of panic at her words. ‘Shit, was this too much?’

“Sorry!” he gulped, drawing her eyes to his. “Sorry, uhh…if this makes you uncomfortable I can just —”

“No! No!” she cut him off with a hurried smile, shaking her head. “This is incredible! I just meant it’s really expensive, is all…”

“It was no problem,” Adrien said sincerely, silencing her objections with a wave of his hand. “Money’s no issue when it comes to my Lady’s happiness.”

Then he grimaced as the haughtiness of his words sunk in.

‘Money’s no issue? Way to sound like a tool.’

Ladybug didn’t seem put off however. In fact, a slow smile stretched across her face as she turned the bra in her hands (a sight Adrien mentally filed away) before she returned her gaze to him. “Well, in that case, where’s my matching panties?”

“So demanding, Princess!” Chat admonished, leaning forward to reach into the box still balanced on her lap. “If you just thought to look further…” He gave her a wicked grin, drawing his hand up to reveal a black g-string dangling from the edge of one claw. Ladybug flushed further, eyes crossing to focus on the slip of fabric before her as she reached out to snatch it from his grasp.

“Don’t think I don’t know what you’re doing, kitty cat,” she murmured, examining the piece carefully. “This is quite a bit skimpier than the pair I tried on.”

“You know, I tried to find that one, but would you believe it? They were sold out!”

That was a lie. He’d found it just fine.

But he also found this impossibly smaller one in the same line. And he’d be damned if it wasn’t his job to ensure his girlfriend wore the least amount of fabric possible.

“Why do I get the impression you’re lying?”

“Because I am.”

Ladybug gave a dramatic gasp, clutching her chest before placing her gifts gently back into the box with a laugh. “And on my birthday, of all days.” Chat gave a scoff, still simmering at the memory of her clutching the tiny lingerie as he directed his attention forward.

“You told me it wasn’t for a few more days,” he pointed out.

“All right, you get off this time…”
‘Yes, please.’

‘...But only because I like my gift so much.’

Whatever words Adrien tried to conjured next died on his tongue, disappearing with a hard swallow as he watched her shift the package to the ground and lean her body towards him enticingly.

Then (by way of some divine retribution most likely meant to punish him for his less-than-pure thoughts) Ladybug gave him a downright sinful smile as she began crawling (crawling!) her way towards him. He couldn’t move, trapped by her laser stare and unable to hear through his heartbeat as she crossed the few feet between them and settled into his lap with a content sigh.

No, wait. Not settling.

‘Straddling,’ Adrien thought sluggishly, unable to conjure any higher brain power with the warm weight of her pressed against him. ‘Ladybug is straddling me…’

‘Thank you, Chat,” she said, low and sincere as she sat atop his thighs.

‘She’s totally straddling me holy shit.’

“O-of course my lady,” he choked out, tentatively placing his hands on her hips as he waited for some indication from her that he should remove them.

It didn’t come.

Ladybug leaned in, licking her lips just a moment before they came into contact with his in an electric kiss. Adrien gave thanks for the hundredth — no, millionth time that this was real. That she was real, and here, and right on top of him as he smiled into the embrace. His gloved hands ghosted up her sides as Ladybug slid her tongue alongside his. They wandered past her ribs and up under her armpits, lifting her biceps until her elbows were locked behind his neck in a close embrace.

Ladybug’s chest was now pressed firmly against his own, hips inching progressively closer towards the hard ridge jutting out from between his legs. Adrien groaned as she released his lips, puffing a hot breath against them before she made her way down to his neck. She paused for just a second, tilting her head in consideration before her blue eyes looked up imploringly. “Can I do something?”

“Anything,” Adrien replied instantly, not missing a beat as he allowed his hand to rove over her shoulder blades before settling against the small of her back. Curiosity burned alongside lust, finally spiraling into an inferno of arousal as Ladybug’s slim fingers tugged at his bell, exposing about four more inches of skin as she slowly unzipped his costume. She wasted no time in exploring the new territory, letting her tongue and teeth go to work at his jutting collarbone.

“That isn’t the most holy of things to be doing atop a church, ya’know.” She silenced him with a harsh bite, Adrien hissing out a breath as she drew his skin tight between her teeth and then released it with a soothing press of her tongue.

“That isn’t the most holy of things to be doing atop a church, ya’know.” She silenced him with a harsh bite, Adrien hissing out a breath as she drew his skin tight between her teeth and then released it with a soothing press of her tongue.

“Neither is popping a boner, and yet…” Ladybug let her eyes trail down to the bulge between them, looking back up with an innocent cock of her head.

‘Well, she’s got you there…”

“Touché.” He smirked, a wicked idea forming as she dipped back down to continue marking his neck. “But you know what’s really unholy?” Ladybug made some sort of noncommittal noise, the sound vibrating across the exposed skin of his chest.
Adrien let his hands wander further (and lower) than they had ever dare gone, deliberating for just a second before he firmly cupped her ass with a slight prick of his claws into the supple flesh there. “This is,” he husked, smothering her moan with the slant of his lips against hers as she shuddered at the touch. For just a brief moment he felt in control, groping at her backside with glee as he exalted in the way she seemed to melt under his touch.

Of course that was before Ladybug’s hips snapped forward, bearing down harshly on his now-throbbing erection in a move that sent stars spiraling across his vision. Adrien felt more than heard the girl chuckle, her chest rumbling against his as she very deliberately rolled her abdomen in another gut-clenching grind.

“How’s this for unholy?” she whispered, silencing his reply with another open-mouthed kiss. His body was on fire, set ablaze by the phenomenal amount of heat that seeped from between her thighs and permeated even the tough material of his suit. Adrien grew dizzy at the thought of how warm and wanting she’d be without the barrier, just soft skin and slick flesh sliding atop him before pressing back down in her need.

“God, you don’t know what you do to me,” he ground out, gripping her ass tighter now as he coaxed her hips to press harder against him. ‘Yes, more. More heat, more pressure.’

“I think I have an idea,” Ladybug responded a bit breathlessly, giving a soft cry as he angled his hips to meet her at a new angle. “There! Please, yes Chat, there!”

Adrien was only too happy to oblige, letting out a groan of his own at the sound her using his name. The friction between them had reached a new level of intensity, and he wasn’t sure how long he would be able to keep this up before…

The feeling of her thighs squeezing his own as she clamped down for purchase.

The now-frantic way they rolled against each other, hips bucking to meet in an off-kilter dance of depravity.

The downright lewd sounds spilling from Ladybug’s throat as she nibbled his ear in ecstasy.

He wanted so badly to just give up, to let her drive him over the edge of orgasm as he in turn allowed her to do the same, but the whispered threat of whatever punishment Plagg would unleash upon him if he were to cum in his suit trumped his overwhelming desire to come undone.

Though just barely.

“St-stop…” Chat croaked out, pinning his hands on the side of her hips to bring their movement to a halt.

‘Fuck.’

Marinette was slow to react, thighs quivering as she willed herself to still atop him. She drew back to find Chat breathing heavily beneath her, hair impossibly more wild than usual and eyes screwed tightly shut. “Was that too much?” she whispered, scooting back regretfully as his hands slid from her to dig into the stone beneath them.

“Not too much,” he began, voice creaking and low. Marinette held in a gasp as his eyes slid upon, the pupils blown wide as he regarded her hungrily. “I just don’t think my kwami would appreciating me making a mess of my suit.”
‘Oh, well, all right then,’ she thought, working up a blush at the thought that she had driven him so close.

“Well that’s… very considerate of you,” Ladybug responded slowly, lowering herself onto their bench as Chat shifted beneath her. She settled into a crossed position between his splayed-out legs, the two of them focusing on catching their collective breaths as she tried to wind down from her tightly coiled state. Chat’s eyes had lulled shut once again, and Marinette took the opportunity to shamelessly check him out.

‘Because that will definitely help me cool off!’ she thought sarcastically, allowing her gaze to wander nonetheless. He really was quite handsome, and Marinette let a little thrill of triumph run through her at the fact that she had managed to snag the affections of such an attractive (if utterly annoying) boy.

Chat was the picture of a fallen angel, from his crown of golden hair to the sharp cut of his jaw. He had clear, tanned skin as far the eye could see (at this point just his face and the strip of collarbone she had exposed), white teeth, great lips…

‘Really, really great lips.’

And of course his physique was A+, the years of running across rooftops equipping him with a fair amount of lean muscle along his once-gangly limbs. Marinette grinned in appreciation, letting her gaze trace down his torso to land on…

Chat’s eyes snapped open at her strangled sound, yet hers remained glued to the leather-bound bulge sticking out from under his belt.

Or more specifically, the streak of moisture glinting off of it in the dying light of the evening.

“What’s wrong?” her boyfriend asked, his confusion evident as a furiously blushing Marinette brought a hand up to cover her gaping mouth. He let his gaze follow hers, staring down at his lap with a quirk of his eyebrow before he too seemed to notice the spot. It took a second, she could see the gears turning in his head, but Chat finally seemed to do the math.

His costume was smooth, airtight.

Hers was breathable and porous.

Therefore, there was no way the moisture was from him…and that meant...

“SHIT,” Marinette squeaked at about the same time Chat let out another groan, balling his fists up tighter as he bore down on her with a wide-eyed stare. “SHIT. SHIT. SHIT, I'M SORRY OH GOD. I DIDN’T THINK I WAS WET ENOUGH TO — FUCK. PLEASE DON’T BE MAD.”

‘Please just let the earth swallow me up. Right. Now. I willingly surrender my useless vessel to the void.’

“Not… mad…” he ground out, gaze flickering back down to his erection before settling at the juncture of her tightly pressed legs. “Just…trying not to cum here!” It was at this point his eyes grew impossibly wider, a thought seeming to occur to him as he brought his incredulous stare down upon her flushed face. “Wait, did you…?!”

“D-did I…?” Marinette stuttered out, not catching his meaning until Chat gestured to her pelvis with a blush of his own. “OH! OH, NO NO.”

‘Please, please tell me this isn’t happening…’
“No, I didn’t— I mean not that I wasn’t close or anything! I definitely wanted to…SHIT— That’s not…I just!” She was definitely rambling by this point, hoping an excess of words would make up for a lack of excuses as she scrambled to find the right way to articulate her point. Meanwhile Chat had hunched over, still staring at her with a glassed-over expression as his breath came in small huffs.

“I just mean, you probably would have been able to tell if I had come because I tend to be pretty loud…”

“Fuck, Ladybug…”

“AND THAT’S PROBABLY NOT HELPING YOU RIGHT NOW SO I’M JUST GOING TO STOP TALKING!” Marinette scooted back against the opposite arch, burying her head against her knees as she concentrated on not throwing herself off the side of the building. She was silent for about half a minute before speaking out in a small voice. “I can go…if that will help.”

Chat shook his head with a shuddering breath, blinking slowly until his eyes seemed to snap back into focus. He rolled his shoulders, giving a long exhale as he regarded her. “No, you don’t need to leave. I…I think I’m good now. How about you?”

Marinette glanced at him over the tops of her knees, feeling the heat slowly ease off her face even as the untameable fire raged on deep down in her stomach.

“I’m fine. And again, really really sorry.”

Chat shook his head, a ghost of smile spreading across his mouth.

“You don’t ever have to apologize to me for getting turned on, my Lady,” he began, cocking an eyebrow suggestively. “Especially if I’m the one doing the turning.” His wink was all Marinette needed to let go of the remainder of her embarrassment, rolling her eyes at his all-too-smug expression.

“Yeah, I guess…” she mumbled, dropping her knees as she avoided his gaze.

“So I’d like to revisit that comment about you being loud—“

“Nope! Not on your life, chaton!”

“Because it just makes me wonder—”

“HHHMMMMMMMM…” Marinette made a drawn out sound of displeasure, clapping her hands over her ears in a show of not listening as Chat gave a full-bellied laugh. She stood abruptly, legs buckling under her as her boyfriend looked on with triumphant.

“You sure you’ll be able to make it home all right?” he said, gesturing to the way she wobbled over to retrieve her gift. Ladybug just glowered, righting herself before turning back to address him.

“I’ll be fine. Besides I’m not the one with three whole inches—“

“Okay, ouch.”

“—of hardness to get in my way as I drag myself back home.”

“Whatever,” Chat said, stretching as he stood up to pad his way over to her, “just try not to slip in any puddles on your way.” Marinette scrunched up her nose, about to reply with another retort when he cut her off with another question.
“Are you going to wear it tonight?”

His voice was low, hopeful.

“I was planning on just going straight to sleep tonight,” she replied truthfully, clutching her gift a bit tighter as she remembered the contents.

“No reason you can’t wear it to bed,” he suggested, taking a moment to mull something over before bending down to press a quick kiss to her lips, pulling back before it got too heated.

“And why would I do that?” Marinette murmured, cocking her head up in a challenge.

“Because you like my present?” Chat suggested, earning a noncommittal hum. “Or perhaps because knowing you have it on will most definitely…help things along when I get home.” Marinette shuddered at his insinuation, knowing exactly what he wanted help with if his ever-present erection was any indication.

“Well, I still say it’s too uncomfortable to sleep in…” she began, reaching up to re-zip his costume as she admired the tiny purple marks she left scattered across his chest. “In fact, I prefer to wear nothing at all in bed. Better to feel the sheets that way.”

‘That should help him plenty,’ she thought smugly, keeping her face passive as she rung the bell around his throat.

“…you are evil,” Chat drawled darkly, reaching out as she twirled away from his seeking hands.

“And very, very tired! Sweet dreams Chat, and thanks for the present!” She had to fight down the urge to laugh as he gave a frustrated growl, shooting her boyfriend one last wink before leaping down to run her way to the other end of the cathedral.

Despite the fact she could see her balcony from Notre Dame, Marinette made sure to trek a winding route around the surrounding blocks in order to discourage followers (paparazzi and feline alike). The cool evening air was a blessing as she swung her way around Paris, helping to smother (but not fully extinguish) the roiling heat that radiated from between her thighs. In fact, Marinette elected to go around her trail twice, hoping the exertion would somewhat soothe her ardor.

When she did finally make it back to her room however, she wasted no time in dropping her transformation and retrieving her presents from their tissue wrappings.

The lingerie was, without a doubt, one of the best gifts she had received today, along with Adrien’s portfolio and Alya’s extensive scrapbook. She marveled again at the construction before shedding her clothes and trying it on.

The bra fit perfectly, and Marinette was stuck between being impressed and weirded out by the fact Chat must have looked real close at the picture she had sent him in order to make out what size the label dictated. And of course there was no real explanation as to why the panties were the perfect size as well, other than sheer luck and the hours he spent checking out her ass.

But despite his rather questionable knowledge of her body, Marinette still felt a swell of appreciation at Chat’s thoughtful gift, as well as a bit of guilt at the inevitable price tag. ‘How long had he been saving up to afford this? I know he has a part-time job, but it can’t really bring in that much money…’ She shook the thoughts free, recalling the way he had waved off her concern with the assurance that it wasn’t an issue.

And after catching a glimpse of herself in the full length mirror, Marinette couldn’t find it in herself to
be guilty, instead admiring the way the pieces wrapped around her body like they were made for her alone. She felt powerful and wanted, not at all minding the appearance of her stretch marks as they poked out from behind delicate strands of black lace. Marinette turned, examining each corner of her body and for once not finding anything to beat herself up over.

‘Sexy,’ she thought with a gleam in her eye. ‘This is what it’s like to feel sexy.’

And with that revelation, a scheme planted itself in her mind, prompting Marinette to replace her bra with a tank top (okay, so maybe she didn’t sleep fully naked, sue her) before climbing her way into bed. She sat cross-legged at the end, ignoring her lingering prickles of arousal as she grabbed at her phone. ‘Plenty of time to take care of that later’ she reminded herself, thinking past the wetness now pressed against her (his) new panties in order to focus on her mission.

Marinette’s message was quick and concise.

[ im ready to hear the gospel ]

Alya’s reply was practically instantaneous.

[ girl, I thought you’d never ask ;) ]

Chapter End Notes

(ps heres the link to THE BRA >>>
http://d36utm9ji1ah9r.cloudfront.net/store/media/catalog/product/X/2/X210-1298-BBLK-3.jpg )

And also super sexy fanart!
>>>http://bullysquadess.tumblr.com/post/138122309877/not-safe-for-huffie-bullysquadess-wrote-the
Chapter 21

Chapter Summary

In Which Alya Takes Her Duty As The #HoFriend Quite Seriously.

Chapter Notes

I know this update was long in coming, and I just want to thank you all for being so patient with my busy schedule. That being said, this chapter grew to be crazy long so (you guessed it), I’m double updating! The next part should be up by tomorrow but I hope this tides you over until then.

Enjoy sinners

See the end of the chapter for more notes

It was when Alya asked that she meet her in the library that Marinette knew she fucked up.

You see, she’d just barely been able to beg off the conversation the night before, promising Alya that she would be the perfect pupil when it wasn’t so late on a school night. But her unwillingness to hear the Nude Gospel over the phone had only given her friend more time to scheme, as evidenced by the fact a serenely grinning Alya greeted her the next day in homeroom.

“I’ve booked us a study room over the lunch hour, that way I can use the projector.”

“What exactly are you going to be projecting?” Marinette asked fearfully, dozens of progressively worse possibilities flashing through her mind as her friend just laughed.

“I spent all night working on a power point!” Alya informed her, swiping at a spot on her glasses. “And honestly, I feel like this is going to be my best lesson to date.”

Marinette groaned.

And groaned.

And didn’t stop groaning throughout the entire morning block of classes.

In fact, she didn’t stop groaning until she dragged herself towards study room four, tucked into the back corner of the library. Because when she walked in, only to find a maliciously grinning Alya seated across from a politely confused Adrien…

Marinette began to scream.

The raven-haired teen immediately wheeled around, only to be greeted by the sight of Nino slamming the door in her face. She watched in horror through the glass inlays as the boy jammed a chair under then knob, his shit-eating grin only stretching wider at each curse Marinette flung his way. Nino peeked around her, giving his undoubtable accomplice Alya a thumbs up before causally
walking away.

“Marinette…”

“**NINO GET YOUR SCHEMING, PANSY ASS BACK OVER HERE AND LET ME OUT BEFORE I THROTTEL YOUR FUCKIN-**”

“If you’re done swearing like a sailor-”

“I. KNOW. YOU. HEAR. ME.” She punctuated each word with a swift and desperate kick.

“We would like to get the lesson started,” Alya went on speaking gently, coaxing her friend to sit down even as Marinette continued to rain fury down upon the tightly shut door.

‘**Will not, can not. Not now. Or here. Or with Adrien. Oh God please not with Adrien…**’

“Wait…lesson?” The blonde boy questioned. Marinette wanted to cry.

“Yes Adrien, let’s just call this round three of your Sex Ed curriculum,” Alya said, curiously chipper despite the metaphorical daggers being thrown from the blue eyes just feet away from her. “And this time Marinette will be joining us, seeing as though she *was* the one who asked about sexting in the first place.”


“…oh,” Adrien responded, flicking his eyes towards her before returning them to his hands.

She didn’t disappear.

“Alya,” Marinette squeaked.

A quirked eyebrow.

“Alya,” Marinette begged.

A friendly shake of the head.

“Alya,” Marinette threatened.

The red head gestured to the un-occupied seat across from her, turning to pull down the projector screen as she pattered around the other side of the table. “I’ve instructed Nino not to open the door until the end of lunch break so you can either sit down and earn your education or pout like a child.”

Marinette weighed her options, but a sharp look from Alya indicated there wasn’t much of a choice to be made. Face on fire as she gave Adrien a pained smile, Marinette took her seat beside him with a wince. He returned her greeting with an equally uncomfortable wave before turning to Alya

“Wait, so why doesn’t Nino have to be here?” he prodded.

“Nino has opted for a more…private lesson,” their teacher responded cryptically, hooking her computer into the monitor.

“Then why can’t I get a private lesson as well?” Marinette broke in, Adrien echoing her with a mumbled “Me too.”

“Well Mari I tried to call you last night but you were busy doing God knows what…”
“And as for you Adrien,” Alya went on, typing furiously before looking up at him. “You’re cute, but not really my type.”

“Too handsome?”

“Too…twinky.”

“Oh,” Adrien said, accepting her answer with a shrug. Marinette, for her part, was doing a great job of holding herself together. Especially considering the bold-faced title screen that popped up the projector before her.

Alya’s Patented Nude Gospel
A.K.A The Sin Commandments.

‘Yeah, nope. Can’t do this.’

“YOU KNOW WHAT? I THINK I’M ACTUALLY JUST GOING TO POUT UNDER THE TABLE NOW OKAY?”

“No you don’t,” Alya lectured, pushing Marinette back down into her seat with a tut. “You will sit and listen quietly until such a time as you have a question. And that goes for both of you, am I clear?”

“Yes mom,” both teens mumbled out, slumping in their seats as their surrogate nodded approvingly. She scoped the clicker up from the table, switching to a slide titled “Mission Statement” before swinging in to her lecture.

“The aim of today’s lesson is to help Marinette take some steamy pics for her mysterious new beau…”

Marinette choked as she watch those exact words slide onto the screen with a cheesy transition animation, desperately avoiding the searching glance of the boy beside her as she focused on not screaming again.

“…and also to give Adrien the advice he’ll need in case he ever decides to sext the girl he’s been popping boners for!”

That sentence showed up on the screen as well, accompanied by a thunk as Adrien’s head slumped to the desk. At this point, it was very difficult for her not to shriek. ‘He’s been doing what for who now?’

Alya soldiered on.

“Our first five commandments focus solely on the art of nude photography, with the second half centered around erotic messaging in general.” The girl gave a pause, snapping her fingers until her two pupils returned their attention back from their personal, internal crises. “And as always, just raise your hand if you have any questions!”
Marinette briefly considered if transforming into Ladybug and breaking down the door was an option at this point.

“Alright!” Alya began, rubbing her hands together in glee. “Prepare to hear the gospel!”

45 minutes after he left, Nino rounded the corner into the library, whistling as he leaned down to clutch the seat wedged under the doorknob. Not three seconds after he cleared the exit came a mass of red and blue, stumbling from the study room to give him a down-right poisonous glare. Making his way out behind Marinette was a wide-eyed Adrien, the boy burying his hands in his pockets as Nino just grinned at the pair.

“So how was-“

“We are never to speak of this,” Marinette cut in, voice hoarse as she regarded both teens before her.

“Agreed,” Adrien croaked. The two made faltering eye contact once more before splitting off into opposite directions, leaving a now cackling Nino to stand bracing himself in the doorway.

“What in the world did you tell them?” the boy questioned, wiping tears of hilarity out from under his glasses.

“Everything they needed to know,” Alya answered with a smirk, gathering her materials up before exiting the study room with a flick of the light switch.

“They looked like you just spent 45 minutes smacking them around!”

“Not everyone is ready to hear the gospel.”

“Really? See now personally, I enjoyed your teaching immensely…”

“Well that’s good, seeing as though I’m planning on springing a pop quiz on you tonight….“

Nino gulped, swinging the door closed as he rushed to catch up with her retreating form.

[ … I just had the weirdest conversation ]

[ bet I can one-up you ]
Adrien plugged his phone in with a click, flopping down onto the bed with a drawn-out groan. Today’s photoshoot had been brutally long, and if he had to keep his spine straight for another minute, he might have just snapped in half. The teen stretched himself out, shoulders digging into the mattress as his joints popped pleasantly under the strain. Pale light flooded the large room, casting a dim, evening glow on his prone form. The atmosphere was quiet, creating the perfect backdrop for getting some light reading done, or perhaps just lulling right off to sleep…

‘Well,’ Adrien thought, unbuckling his jeans in a practiced fashion, ‘time to masturbate.’

Nowadays he couldn’t muster up the energy to be ashamed at how often he yanked himself further down to hell, yet honestly Adrien could care less about his supposed innocence as long as things kept going in the direction they were with his and Ladybug’s relationship. And while it had never taken him long to get it up, things had been going especially quick as of late… not surprising considering all the fun, new discoveries he’d made during last Monday’s tryst. He listed each one off with a shiver.

‘Ladybug was capable of getting wet enough to soak through her costume.’

‘Ladybug sleeps naked so she can feel the sheets against her bare skin’.

‘Ladybug more or less admitted to being a scream­er…’

(For God’s sakes that last tid-bit alone was enough to supercharge his every twisted scenario into some B-rated porno that’d undoubtedly be banned in certain countries!)

But suffice it to say Adrien had plenty of new fodder for his fantasies.

A quick scan confirmed his room was mercifully kwami-free, and the teen wasted no time in taking advantage of his privacy to help ease some of the tensions of the day. Beneath the covers his hand went straight for its target, forgoing any sort of foreplay in favor of gripping his newly-formed arousal with a series of practiced stokes.

The first image that popped out of his spank-bank was a new favorite of his, the memory of her crawling forward to straddle him with a wicked smile. The fact he no longer had to imagine the scene, just recall it, was a blessing in and of itself, and Adrien gave a delirious grin as he added to the fantasy.

Now Ladybug was grinding into him with a vengeance, ass moving in tantalizing circles beneath his hands as he gripped her tighter. ‘Not enough.’ With a shake of his head and another jerk of his wrist, both his hand and her backside were rendered bare as the imagined sensation of their skin-to-skin contact coaxed a sharp inhale from the panting boy.

“More... I need more...” his mental Ladybug whined, pulling back to display her need as her breasts heaved with little pleas for him to touch her, oh God please touch her. Adrien imagined himself slipping his fingers down the smooth expanse of her stomach, teasing the hot flesh that resided between her thighs as his girlfriend cried out her pleasure.

In the here and now, his cock twitched in his grasp, and Adrien screwed his eyes shut with a huff. His unoccupied hand scratched at the sheets beside his shuttering hips, prompting him to shift the scene in his mind so that it was Ladybug’s fingers balled up in his linens as her back arched off the bed.
F*ck, he wanted to take her right here.

“Looks like you have other business to take care of... better to feel the sheets that way...” her lilting teases echoed though his mind, and Adrien stifled a groan at the memory of them. She knew. She knew what she did to him, knew what he must think about as he ground himself out every night. Ladybug knew it and she accepted it, perhaps even encouraged it. The thought drove him wild.

“She wants me to fantasize about her,” he realized. “She likes leaving me all hot and bothered because she knows I’ll just go home and think about her,” Adrien sped his hand up, the visions of a keening Ladybug bucking on, under, and around him never ceasing as his stomach coiled tighter in anticipation. ‘God, it’s almost like she gets off on...’

The blonde’s eyes snapped open at the revelation, hips wrenching forward desperately against his palm as a new flood of heat spurred on his actions. ‘What if she does get off on the thought of me?’

Suddenly Adrien found himself subtracted from his own fantasy, watching raptly as a flushed and fully-nude Ladybug buried one hand between her thighs, the other toying with a pert breast as her un-masked (if a bit fuzzy) face contorted in pleasure.

The lingering looks, her body’s physical reactions to him, those double-edged flirts that slid so easily between Ladybug’s lips as she made her departures. It wasn’t a stretch to believe she (just like millions of other young women) made a regular habit of pleasuring herself. And honestly, Adrien shouldn’t have been as shocked as he was at the revelation.

But the intoxicating thought that perhaps somewhere out there (maybe in the dead of night or in the twilight of morning) there was pretty, little dark-haired vixen, laying back on her bed, pinching and teasing herself as she imagined what he’d be doing to her...doing for her...

Adrien growled (actually growled!) as he picked up the pace, desperately seeking his release as the mental image of a shuddering Ladybug going to town on herself drove him to near depravity.

Did she moan his name?

Did she imagine his fingers in place of hers as she pushed them inside of herself?

Did she-

“Seriously, again?”

“OH GET OUT, PLAGG!”

Adrien yanked his hand out from beneath the comforter, grabbing at a throw pillow before chucking it towards the tiny black mass floating around his loft. The kwami dodged it easily, rolling his eyes as the teen shifted himself around with a few mumbled curses.

“In case you forgot, I live here as well. We’re a package deal, you and me, and unfortunately that means sharing a room,” Plagg said, flying down lazily. “So I’d appreciate it if you could go just one day without doing your disgusting little human ritual. It’s bad enough you only seem to transform when you want to try lighting a fire via friction between yours and Ladybug’s hips. Honestly I don’t know how Tikki stands it…” he trailed off, giving his chosen a withering stare.
Adrien sighed, zipping his pants with ease thanks to the magical softening powers of his own built-in boner-killer. “Yeah well it was my room first, so I’ll do all the disgusting human rituals in it that I want. Besides, you are more than capable of flying off elsewhere, so I don’t want to hear another word.”

“Buy my silence. Permanently,” Plagg countered, stretching his paws out imploringly. “For 8,000 wheels of cheese a month, I will stop.”

“How about this…I get you a shiny new tablet, a nice pair of earbuds and all the streaming subscriptions you could ever want if you just give me my alone time,” Adrien offered him, heart rate coming back down as he tried to ward off his irritation at the kwami’s interruption. Plagg did have a point, they had no choice but to share a room, and perhaps he was being a bit selfish by doing his business right in the middle of their space. ”We got a deal?”

Plagg’s eyes narrowed, tossing the idea around his head before giving a curt nod. “That sounds… acceptable. But I also want an expanded camembert budget.”

“Deal!” Adrien conceded, “Now transform me.”

“Oh you’re kidding me!” the kwami moaned, watching as his chosen scrolled quickly though his phone’s inbox before sticking out his ring finger expectantly.

“Please, Plagg. Ladybug hasn’t texted me back in a while and she sounded like she was in a weird mood earlier.” It wasn’t like her to go this long without responding, and Adrien was starting to get a bit worried at her silence. “Just let me be Chat Noir long enough to see if she shows up on the tracker and I swear I’ll rush order your gifts.”

“Fine,” Plagg grumbled, putting up a lecturing finger. “But this better not be an excuse to jump her in some alley or I will not hesitate to break your transformation…”

Adrien just gave a silent nod, grinning as he felt a wave of primal power bind him up into his suit.

‘Well, I won’t be doing any jumping, but if she was the one to leap first…”

Chapter End Notes

I had a number of people message me wanting to know if I would write out the whole gospel, but just know the scene began to stretch on forever so i had to cut a majority of it. I am, however, considering publishing it as a separate ficlet so who knows?? Keep an eye out!

((disclaimer: next chapter is nothing but fluff and SIN))

Also: Hella cool fanart
>>>http://bullysquadess.tumblr.com/post/138772380797/mitsukaihime-a-scene-from-bullysquadesss
Chapter 22

Chapter Summary

In Which I Bang Out 5.5K Words Worth Of Fluff And Sin.

Chapter Notes

Drunk Bully (aka pansy me) wrote the mushy stuff in this chapter about a week ago and i just now managed to edit it so its readable.
Also sin.
And as always, thanks to @mirthalia for being my muse/beta/editor/all around caregiver.
Enjoy kiddos.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

When he found her she was lying down on her back, elbow draped across her mask as she lounged atop the upper deck of their city’s famously lit tower. He grasped to the cool metal railing a few feet above, perching on the rung as he regarded the speckled heroine. Relaxed as she was, Adrien had a brief moment of panic, but his fears were put to rest at the sight of the steady rise and fall of her chest.

Ladybug’s breath came easy, relaxed as she let the cool night air fill her nostrils then whoosh back out silently. Despite the fact that the moon was little more than a sliver, she was perfectly illuminated, red costume bathed in the light of the city she so valiantly protected.

It was almost as if Paris was cradling her, wrapping her form tightly against itself as if to absorb her completely. Into the groves of the twining tower. Into the inky shadow of the sidewalk leagues below. Into the very place itself, until the heroine became indistinguishable from her playground.

Ladybug was the undisputed soul of Paris, the steady heartbeat that kept the metropolis singing. She was only divided from the city in a corporal sense, and in these moments when she could allow herself to merge with the rhythm around her, perhaps not even that.

She seemed content. Content and in-tune and so incredibly beautiful for it, that he felt like an intruder on something much bigger and greater than him.

In fact, Adrien was about to turn tail, to leave her to revel in her precious moment alone with her city, under her sky, when Ladybug’s voice rang out, faint but powerful.

“I hope you aren’t planning on leaving without even saying hello.”

She spoke without moving anything but her lips as they curved around the words. Chat gave a wistful smile, dropping gently onto the deck a few feet from where she lay.

“What are you doing out here, my Lady?” he crooned softly, taking a few careful steps towards her.
“I just really needed the air,” Ladybug breathed, feet shifting slightly, “Today was kind of a long day for me, and I thought some solitude might do me some good.”

‘You and me both,’ Adrien thought, willing the memories of today’s shoot away with a huff.

“In that case, I apologize for crashing your me-time.” Adrien stooped down, sweeping her bangs aside to press a kiss against her forehead. He smiled at her absent sigh before making a move to stand back up. “By all means, go back to enjoying your solitude.”

…”

“Chat.” Ladybug threw the arm not covering her eyes out blindly as she groped towards the sound of his voice. “Stay? Please?”

“If that’s what my Lady wishes,” Adrien replied simply, lying down beside her with ankles crossed and hands tucked behind his head as he wiggled in close. Ladybug immediately sought out his warmth, rolling onto her side to burrow her face into the corner of his chest.

“I missed you,” she mumbled into the dark material, wrapping an arm around his torso as she pulled her knees up between them. The words lit a pleasant heat under Adrien’s skin, less passion and more appreciation as he felt a smile tug at his mouth.

“We saw each other yesterday,” he gently reminded her, tilting his chin down to catch her now-uncovered eyes with his own.

“Doesn’t matter, still missed you.”

“Well then I missed you too, Bugaboo,” Adrien laughed, twining their hands together atop his chest with a content sigh.

Ladybug and Chat Noir had always been an extremely physical duo. They had learned early on in their partnership that in order to pull off the feats they needed to, there was really no option for personal space. Whether it be Chat hooking an arm around Ladybug’s waist to yank her out of danger, Ladybug draping a leg over Chat’s as they ascended atop his staff, or any of the dozens of other small touches they had become accustomed to, the crime fighters had grown innately in tune to the feel of each other.

And now that they were something more than just partners, that almost absent-minded tendency to always be touching had grown into a new beast entirely. Anything from the simple act of holding hands, all the way up to their most heated encounters had become something akin to a drug for Adrien.

Don’t get him wrong, the (recently not-so) dry humping was great! But he also received a similar, yet oh-so-different thrill from the casual brushes and loving embraces that only came when there were no akuma around to eat up their Miraculous timers.

It was in these moments, with her curled beside him (the whispered pleas for him to stay, and be worming their way under his skin in the most divine way possible) that Adrien liked to think on what they could be. What he wanted them to be.

He decided to try again.

“Ladybug?”

“Hmm?”
“Will you go on a date with me?”

Beside him, her chest rumbled with soft laughter, Ladybug moving so her chin was propped up on his collar bone before looking down with a crooked smile.

“What do you call this?” she asked, gesturing to their prone forms.

“No, I mean a real date,” Adrien amended, “Like in the daytime. At a restaurant or cinema or something.”

“Somehow I don’t think the press would ignore the sight of Ladybug and Chat Noir out on a date…”

“Who said anything about Ladybug and Chat Noir?” he said softly, insistently.

Here her grin faltered, yet Adrien tightly clung to his thread of hope.

‘I just need to get her to believe this is a good idea.’

“Chat…”

“Please, my Lady, just hear me out.” His heart was thrumming loudly but Adrien thought past it, propping himself up on his elbows to fully capture her fluttering gaze. “We could do it. I wouldn’t tell anyone and we wouldn’t have to hide from each other any more.”

Now he slid up into a fully sitting position, pulling her alongside him as he grasped at her biceps. Both of their eyes pleaded with each other, but for entirely different reasons.

Adrien went on, his voice a prayer.

“You can trust me, Ladybug. I love you too much to ever let you get hurt.”

There was a silence, but not a “no”, and if Adrien was breathing in that moment he sure as hell couldn’t tell you. Ladybug looked (in a word) thoughtful, as if there were two sides of her brain going to battle inside her skull. She bothered her lips, parting them as if to speak before snapping them tightly together. He didn’t push.

A car honked, the wind shifted, and Chat waited for the answer he couldn’t help but hope was coming.

Ladybug paused, taking a breath as she carefully drew her words together. “I’m not saying no…”

Adrien wanted to sing.

 “…but I can’t say yes right now,” she finished, furrowing her brows as if that wasn’t the answer she meant to express. Ladybug read the confusion in his face, giving an exhale as she tried to better explain. “Listen, Chat. I’m… I’m not the same when I’m not Ladybug. This suit, my Miraculous, it changes me. It makes me better, and more likeable. A totally different person from who I normally am.”

Adrien shook his head.

“Whoever you are as a person doesn’t just disappear when you become Ladybug, and I refuse to believe the girl under the costume is any less incredible than the girl sitting before me. So what if you act different? That doesn’t make you different.”

“And that doesn’t make any sense,” Ladybug shot back, rubbing at her temples. Adrien sighed, crossing his legs before pulling her into his lap as he tried to find the right words. He could feel the
steady beat of her heart as her back leaned into his chest, and the comforting rhythm seemed to steady him.

“A change of clothes doesn’t change your identity, but it can change what parts of yourself you show to the world,” he began slowly, propping his chin on Ladybug’s head. “When I’m not Chat Noir, I’m expected to act a certain way. My civilian self… he’s clean, and put-together. He’s responsible, obedient, and maybe even a bit soft-spoken at times.”

“It’s hard to think of you as any of those things,” Ladybug interjected softly, wonder and doubt threaded through her words as they rose from her mouth. Chat laughed humorlessly.

“Yeah, sometimes I don’t really believe it myself.” Adrien paused, ruminating on the truth of that statement before soldiering on. “But I guess what I’m trying to say is that it’s not me. It’s a part of me, sure, but only about as much as Chat Noir is. People don’t just have to be one thing, Ladybug. And sometimes people don’t have to be just one person. I’m not just a model—”

‘Fuck.’

“—citizen,” he rushed to add, “but I’m not just your cocky, cat-eared boyfriend either.” She gave a small laugh, leaning her head back to look at him thoughtfully. “And I want so badly to be both of them for once.”

His voice grew quiet in the night. “I want so badly to be my whole self around someone besides my kwami. Not just a superhero or a civilian, but me. And I want you to be able to do the same. I want to know every side of you, Ladybug, whether you think you’re worthy of it or not.” His girlfriend stilled beneath him, her voice hardly a whisper when at last she spoke.

“And what happens when the girl on the other side of the mask isn’t the same girl you say you love? What happens then?” Ladybug swiveled again, perking up an eyebrow at him as Adrien could only look on with disbelief.

“Well, that’s when I learn to love her as well,” he said, meeting her dubious expression with an honest smile.

“And if you don’t?”

“I will.”

“How can you be so sure?”

“How can you be so unsure?”

“Because I know the girl under the suit quite well!” Ladybug said with an incredulous shake of her head. “And I’m not certain you’ll like her as much as you like Ladybug.”

“Well, maybe you should let me decide that for myself,” Chat replied, low and honest.

For once, she didn’t seem to have a response, and Adrien couldn’t help but hope his words had gotten through somehow. “You didn’t say yes, but you didn’t say no either.” He plotted his next move carefully, leaning down to rest his chin on her shoulder. “So what do you say we start slow?”

“I…I don’t follow,” Ladybug said tentatively.

“We don’t have to reveal our identities outright, but that doesn’t mean we can’t learn more about each other…”
“Why do I feel like this is leading to—“

“—which is why I propose round two of the question game.”

“That’s your plan to unmask me?” she asked with an unbelieving snort, prompting Chat to shake his head with a grin.

“I don’t plan on unmasking you, I just want to get to know the girl I’m dating! Is that too much to ask for?”

“I guess not…” Ladybug conceded with what he hoped was a content sigh. “But the veto rule still stands and I get to ask the first question.”

“You drive a hard bargain, my Lady, but I accept your terms.” Adrien grinned as the girl crawled out of his lap to sit cross-legged before him. Ladybug scooted forward until their knees were touching, tilting her head as she studied him intently.

“Like what you see?” he couldn’t help but tease, watching the way her gaze lingered on his mouth before popping back up with interest.

“I do, I do,” Ladybug drawled out. “Which is why I’ve gotta ask, what brand of lipstick do you have on?”

Adrien’s brow furrowed, then shot back up as he brought two fingers up to swipe at his bottom lip. ‘Goddamnit,’ he thought, spotting the streak of bright orange pigment across his glove.

“Umm, this isn’t mine?” he tried. Her eyes narrowed. “Not that it’s someone else’s! I just mean I don’t usually make a habit of wearing makeup! This was a…special circumstance.”

It was half-truth.

Adrien did, in fact, make a habit of wearing makeup, but it was usually just subtle applications to help him show up in print. Today’s shot, however, was a bit more editorial, a campaign filled with black clothes and pops of autumn color in the form of brightly tinted lipstick. Of course he had no problem donning the coral cosmetics while on set…

But explaining its presence to his giggling girlfriend was another matter entirely.

“Well I’m a firm believer in the fact makeup is genderless,” Ladybug said resolutely, propping her chin up on one fist. “Besides, it’s a good color for you!” Chat gave a sigh of relief, leaning forwards with a grin.

“Want to see if it’s a good color on you as well?” He didn’t give her a chance to answer before he was patterning her face with tangerine kisses.

“Ahhhh, are you kidding me?!” she squealed, trying half-heartedly to ward off his frontal assault. “Orange tones on Asian skin? What a nightmare!” That stopped him short.

“Asian skin…?” He let the question dangle, excited to watch as Ladybug scooped it up.

“I’m half-Chinese,” she supplied with a nod, and Adrien lovingly scratched it in his ever-expanding mental diary of Ladybug facts. Right under “loves sweets” but just above “Virgo”. “And I do consider that to be your first question.”

Thus the game ensued.
Suffice it to say Adrien was floating. With every new bit of information that sprung from his Lady’s mouth, he continued to construct his upstairs picture of her. Even the smallest of facts sent a jolt straight to his heart, and he eagerly devoured every little tidbit.

She was in the same grade as he was. Her favorite scent was lavender. She had a pet fish.

Of course the information she gave never quite grew personal enough to in any way reveal her identity, but it did allow a window, one that Adrien eagerly glanced through to catch glimpses of her civilian self.

Ladybug liked pop music. She loathed calculus. Her bedroom was painted pink.

He, in turn, answered all of her questions honestly, if briefly.

He was an only child. His favorite soda was cherry coke. He did not, in fact, sleep in a dumpster.

For nearly a half-hour the two went at it, volleying questions back and forth between them in a comfortable dance of the tongues that (for the first time in quite a while) stayed rooted within their owners’ mouths. The comradery was warm and the silences comfortably brief as the two slowly wound down together.

In fact Marinette was almost shocked when her Miraculous gave its first chime, having almost forgotten she was her alter-ego amidst their downright friendly banter. She and Chat both heaved a sigh at the sound, the latter twitching his mouth up at her in a pout. Somehow the two had shifted so that Ladybug was in a sitting position, her back leaning against the sturdy beams of the tower as her fingers twined in the blonde hair beneath her. Meanwhile Chat had managed to worm his head into her lap, green eyes blinking slowly up at her with contentment as Ladybug ran her nails across his scalp.

“Well it seems like the game is over for now, my Lady,” the young man said with a sigh, reluctantly heaving himself up into a sitting position. “As much as I hate to admit it.”

“Wait a bit,” Marinette began, wracking her brain for ways to stretch out their time together. It was irresponsible she knew, and probably a bit contradictory seeing as though she was the one who insisted their identities remain their own, but she couldn’t help but want to draw him back to her.

His warmth, his attention, his trademark curiosity…it dug at a deeply emotional part of her. And it was probably that desire to keep him here (if only in thought alone) that led Marinette to set her half-hatched plan in motion.

‘Commandment number six, build the anticipation.’

Marinette tried to arrange her face into some semblance of calm, a veritable feat considering the increasing tempo of her pulse. "Text me when you get home, all right?" she said, climbing to her feet as she extended a hand down for him to do the same. "Just so I know you made it safely."

Chat rose up next to her, shifting slightly as her other hand reached out to twine their grasps together in the space between them. "How sweet of you to think about my well-being, my Lady. I promise I'll let you know if I don't fall off a roof on my way home."

She knew he was being a smart ass but she let him kiss her anyway, the two pressing together for a sweet (if brief) embrace before the alley cat went leaping his way down the tower.
Only when he was out of sight did Marinette begin her descent, diving down with ease to swing her way back towards the bakery. Her transformation timed out just as she reached her balcony, prompting her to duck under the awning as her magic broke away in a bright flash.

"Sorry Tikki," Marinnette whispered, gathering the exhausted kwami up as she slid down into her room. She felt guilty at how much time she had spent as Ladybug as of late, knowing the strain it put on her friend, but unfortunately the only way she could see her boyfriend was when she was in costume, meaning the kwami had been getting one hell of a workout.

"I'll sleep now..." Tikki trailed off, landing weakly on the pillows as she immediately drifted into a well deserved slumber. Marinette bent to press a kiss against her tiny head before making her way down to the main floor of her room, scooping up her phone in preparation.

It was Thursday night.

Both her parents and her kwami were asleep.

And she was going to sext her boyfriend.

As painfully awkward as Tuesday's lesson had been (she'd never be able to look Adrien in the eye again), Marinette was still titillated by the idea of trying a few things out on Chat Noir. See with his birthday gift to her, he had effectively seized the upper hand in their little game of cat and mouse, yet she didn't plan on letting him stay at the top of the mountain for long. And while most people would call their behavior "competitive" or "a mockery of what a loving relationship should be", Marinette found she liked the challenge, the delicate power struggle that shifted at each not-so-subtle move.

He gave her lingerie, so she was going to give him the conversation of his life.

Of course she couldn't call him just yet: rule number nine ("know when to switch") was still in effect and working in tandem with rule number seven ("work your way up"). But Marinette was confident enough in her teachings to believe she just might be able to pull this off. Obviously it helped that there was no way to stutter via text and the fact Chat was so easy to please didn't hurt her chances either, but as she made her way to the bathroom, phone in hand, she couldn't help the nervous excitement that mingled with just a bit of lust deep down in her stomach.

She had just turned the hot water knob to full blast, crouching to rifle through her under-the-sink stash of bath bombs when she heard her phone ding, signaling the game had begun. Marinette forced herself not to rush over, instead picking up a pink and purple orb caked with glitter before hoisting it over the edge of the tub to plop into the filling basin with a fizzle. In record time the candle stubs were lit and her clothes were chuffed, leaving only a single task at hand.

Operation Break Chat Noir.

Marinette recovered her phone, ignoring the new message icon before switching over to her saved photos. She quickly scanned one of the dozens of screenshots Alya had sent her(a little parting gift just for her after Tuesday’s fiasco), intently studying the conversation flow as she formulated her approach. With a deep breath and the sting of warm water, the teen slid down into the tub, acclimating to the temperature as she turned her attention back to the thread titled C.N.

'Here we go, don’t fuck it up Marinette.'

[ your text, as promised my lady. i’m assuming you made it home safe as well? ]
Marinette quickly tapped over to her camera app, running through Alya’s instructions one more time as she lined up her shot with nervous hands. “Two inches above the knee and all the way down to the toe, taken from a high angle with warm lighting. Let the bubbles settle and for the love of God make sure to place your feet covering the overflow disk. I learned the hard way that metal fixtures can be incredibly reflective…”

Long, slender legs poked out from the frothing water, their milky paleness offset by the purplish hue of the bubbles that swirled around the appendages. Marinette took a few shots just to be safe, scrolling through until she found the best one before deleting the others. ‘Now to wait for my opening…’ She had to play this just right.

‘Build the appeal, don’t jump the gun.’

And there was her opening.

Marinette forced herself to wait a full minute before responding, trying to let the relaxing warmth of her beloved tub calm her jumpy nerves. And when she felt the pause was appropriate for what she was trying to play, her next message struck.

Alya had called it the ‘Storm Drain Maneuver’, a guaranteed way to ease even the most novice of
sexters into a mind-blowing intro session. Marinette decided it was her best bet when it came to starting slow, and the fact she also got to take a bath was just icing on the cake. The trap was set, now she just had to wait for him to-

[ ....are you texting me while taking a bath??? ]

‘Hook, line, and sinker,’ Marinette thought with a triumphant thrill, rolling her shoulder as she carefully followed the script Alya had so graciously lent her.

[ well technically it’s a bubble bath… ]
[ …ur texting me… while taking a bubble bath… ]
[ what can I say, im a multitasker ]
[ A BUBBLE BATH ]
[ yes chat, a bath with bubbles and sparkles in it…do you need proof or something? ]
[ well now that you mention it… ;) ]

‘Ask and you shall receive.’

Marinette took in a gulp of air, attaching the picture before she could chicken out. As the image of her soapy legs filled the conversation window, Chat’s typing symbol cut off abruptly, pausing as he no doubt processed what she had just sent.

[ this proof enough for you kitty cat? ]
[ shit ]
[ you actually did it… ]
[ you did mean to send that picture to me, didn’t you? ]
[ well considering I took it for you… ]
[ fuck ]
[ what do you think? ;) ]
[ why don’t you tilt that camera back a bit farther and I’ll let you know… ]

Despite the fact her bath water had cooled considerably since the beginning of their little exchange,
Marinette still felt feverish at his words. Chat was good, she’d give him that. But if he still felt in control enough to act cocky, she obviously wasn’t laying it on as thick as she could be. She grinned as a cheeky idea surfaced, shifting so that her arms were crossed as they propped up onto the edge of the basin. Laying on her stomach as the bubbly froth sloshed around in response to her sudden movement, Marinette lined up a shot of her soaked forearms, burying her head between them as her loose hair swept across bared shoulders. She snapped the picture, quickly running through her mental gospel checklist to confirm nothing about it would reveal anything she didn’t want it to.

It passed inspection, soon swooping up to join its predecessor in the conversation window.

[ is this what you had in mind? ]

‘Eat your heart out Chat Noir.’

[ cute, but lower if you please… ]

Marinette grinned. He was getting bothered, she could tell. Her next picture was little more than her big toe popping out from beneath the water. ‘Goad me on, will you? We’ll see who comes out on top.’

[ princess… ]
[ chat? <3 ]
[ have I ever told you how much of an incredible fucking tease you are? ]
[ am I too much for you to handle, chaton? ;) ]
[ oh I think I can handle you just fine, my lady… ]
[ would you not agree? ;) ]

Marinette shifted pleasantly in the tub, ignoring the urge to triple-task as her previously dormant arousal flared back up. ‘Finish him off before you finish yourself off, Mari.’

[ hhhmmmm, I still think I prefer the way I handle myself ]

It took Chat a whole 3 minutes to formulate a response.

Those three little dots that pulsed on and off on his end only seemed to cement her victory, Marinette
leaning back with a smug grin as she let lust and triumph fester in the pit of her stomach. ‘Let's see him top that…’

[ see when you say things like that, you make it so fucking hard- ]

[ -for me to know if you’re teasing or being serious. ]

‘Oh, he didn’t just…’

[ has it crossed your mind that perhaps I could be seriously teasing you? ]

[ it has, but I know my Lady wouldn’t dare ]

[ and what makes you so sure? ]

[ because if you were, id be forced to send you this in retribution ;3 ]

This time Marinette almost dropped her phone in the tub for real, eyes widening as his next message filled the frame. ‘Fuck…’

The guy in the photo was leaning back against a pile of gray pillows, dressed in a tight, white tank top that rode up to reveal an enticing slice of tanned stomach as he preened in the frame. He was only visible from the bottom of his nose down to the very edge of his hipbone, hoisting the camera above him with one hand while the other gripped the back of his neck. He looked like a goddamn model, body just so perfectly curved and limbs placed just so…

In fact the only thing that even remotely allowed Marinette to believe it was indeed a picture of Chat Noir was the Cheshire grin stretched across the teen’s face, the look too mischievous to belong anywhere besides on her partner.

‘Boy, his costume really doesn’t exaggerate…’ she thought breathlessly, ogling the broadness of his bare shoulders, appreciating the lean muscles flexing atop his curved bicep and finally glancing her way down his torso to let her eyes trace the subtle v cut into the skin of his lower abdomen. Marinette felt her insides squirm at the sight, and suddenly her bath felt just a smidgen too hot when paired with the heat racing up her neck. ‘Stupid sexy boyfriend… stupid sexy picture… fucking—‘

[ whats wrong my lady? you can dish it out but you can’t take it? ]

Gah! When had her hand slipped under the water?!

Marinette gave a soft curse, ripping her gaze from her phone just long enough push herself up out of the tub and wind a towel around her dripping form. Her phone said it had been nearly five minutes since Chat sent the picture and she could just picture how smug the little asshole must be at her
delayed reaction.

She bit her lip, trying to trust her own judgement now that she’d run out of script to follow, but this was unmarked territory, and she was trekking it equipped only with her wits and whatever knowledge she’d managed to glean from Alya’s gospel. Gathering her words carefully, she made her move, sending a quick message before exiting the bathroom.

[ whoopsies, guess I took a bit too long to finish...my bath! damn wobbly legs… ]
[ thank you for the picture btw ]

‘Yes, good Marinette,’ she thought to herself, flushing at her forwardness as she climbed up into her room. Still wrapped up in her towel, the teen padded over to the armoire, taking a few calming breaths as she returned her attention back to “Operation Break Chat Noir.”

[ …im guessing you had a good time in the tub then? ]
[ oh yeah, tons of fun. But now ive got to get ready for bed ]
[ you tired already princess? wonder what made you so worn-out all of the sudden… ]

He could wonder all he wanted, but damn if she didn’t have plans. Marinette rifled through her bottom drawer, not bothering to reply to Chat’s insinuation. ‘Let him stew, serves him right.’ She pulled out that infamous pair of lingerie, grinning wickedly in anticipation as she slid it up her soak-reddened legs to settle snug around her hips.

[ not a clue, but boy am I ready to slip into my pajamas <3 ]
[ hey now, you told me you slept naked! ]

‘Patience, boy,’ she thought with a shiver, looking up into her loft to check if Tikki was still asleep. Tiny snores echoed down through the space, confirming the kwami was out like a light, and Marinette took that as her sign to go ahead with her plan.

[ well usually I do, but tonight im going to make an exception. you see this guy I know bought me quite the lovely birthday gift… ]
[ …Ladybug ]
[ and since it feels just ~so~ nice pressed against my body, I thought ‘why not wear it to bed?’ ]
Sitting her phone down on the vanity, Marinette hummed quietly as she dabbed concealer here and there, effectively erasing discerning marks across her upper body. ‘Commandment number two, no scars, moles, or tats.’

In the low light, her reflection looked almost foreign. The young woman in the mirror had her eyes, her hair, her cheeks and chin and nose, but it wasn’t truly Marinette. This woman was powerful, confident to a fault as she looked unflinchingly forward at her lingerie-clad self with a satisfied smile.

Marinette was never one to consider herself as Ladybug out of costume before, but now she felt every inch the super heroine. One hand snaked up to rake through her damp hair, the other yanking up the plunging front of her bra so her breasts sat even higher on her chest. The teen gave herself another once-over before returning her attention back to her phone.

[ are you sure you’ll be able to sleep like that, my lady? ]

Marinette bit her lip, walking over to where her chaise sat before settling atop its tufted surface.

[ nobody said anything about sleeping, Chat. besides, there are much more interesting thing to be done in bed… that is if you aren’t tired yet ;) ]

His response was immediate.

[ oh im feeling quite energetic… ]

Marinette felt a smile bloom across her face, comfortable on her lips as she leaned back into the soft cushioning beneath her.

[ well in that case, it’s playtime kitty-cat <3 ]

Chapter End Notes

fun fact: everything in the second half of this chapter was written based off my own personal ho experience
always cover your fixtures kids
ALWAYS COVER YOUR FIXTURES


Chapter 23

Chapter Summary

In Which Sexting Occurs.

Chapter Notes

Im happy to announce the day has finally come. Yes folks, I have created the gospel.
I tried to write out the scene, I really did, but it ended up being super long and hard to
read so instead i made a copy of Alya’s power point and posted it to tumblr. You can
find it here >>>http://bullysquadess.tumblr.com/post/139079776352/the-sin-
commandments
((DISCLAIMER: This presentation contains images of bra-covered boobies, so if you
would rather not know what the author's (admittedly stunning) tits look like please dont
open the link!))
Also: I went back and added fanart links to a few previous chapters so feel free to check
those out.
Enjoy sinners.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

He was going to get Alya a dozen presents.

Scratch that, he was going to get Alya a thousand presents.

And then he was going to buy her a dozen cars to deliver those thousands of presents. He would
build her an entire castle, brick by brick and all by hand, in order to store all her presents, then
another one when she ran out of space there.

‘Although maybe she’d be more comfortable with a card.’ Adrien thought, a herculean feat
considering his current situation. ‘Yeah, just a nice card attached to an overflowing gift basket of
candy and fancy lotions and camera equipment and...’

He was sexting Ladybug.

Ladybug was sexting him back.

And if her messages were any indication, he wasn’t making an absolute mess of it.

Adrien was about 4012% sure it was all thanks to Alya’s Sin Commandments, and he silently gave
thanks once again that she had cornered him that day in the library. Any embarrassment he had felt at
the time was just a distant memory now as the absolute thrill of putting his teachings to use
outweighed whatever lingering complaints he might have over her guerilla methods. Alya was a
savage, make no mistake, but damn if she didn’t inspire amazing results.

Those results being the fact he now had his undoubtedly horny, lingerie-clad girlfriend asking him to
Thanks to Plagg’s interruption earlier that night, Adrien had yet to get his rocks off for nearly 20 hours now, a new high score as of late. And between that fact and his Lady’s mind-blowing innuendos (God, he could only shudder at the thought of what must have gone down in that tub of hers), suffice it to say Adrien was more than a bit bothered. In fact, if the boy wasn’t so fully invested in keeping his sole focus on their conversation, he would have no doubt come already. Probably twice.

But Alya’s words echoed true, “Commandment number eight, balance your attention. The texts will still be there once the conversation ends, so don’t rush your orgasm.”

So he was waiting it out, the erection trapped beneath the flannel of his sleep pants a mere distraction. One he simply would not let draw his attention from her words, her flirts, her pictures… Her pleasure.

[ well in that case, it’s playtime kitty-cat <3 ]

That text alone was about as much an invitation as her spread legs would have been to him right now, and Adrien was more than ready for whatever she had planned for him.

[ i like the sound of that, my lady. what kind of games do you have in mind? ]

He could think of a few. Truth Or Dare. Never-Have-I-Ever.

*Guess Where My Hand Is Right Now…*

[ its called the question game, you familiar? ]

[ …you can’t still be curious after today’s round could you? we just played like an hour ago ]

[ i know, i know ]

[ but im still not satisfied yet ]

‘Now that wouldn’t do.’

[ well, as your partner and boyfriend, its my sincerest pleasure to help you reach your…satisfaction ]

[ *sigh* and yet you continue to derail me with your oh-so-clever innuendos ]
Well if nothing else, at least he was getting her worked up. Adrien grinned at his phone, deciding to give in to Ladybug’s obvious desire to get on with the game. ‘Wonder what she’s just burning to ask me…’

[ alright then, ladies ask first ]

She didn’t respond for another few minutes, and Adrien’s heart began to pound at the thought that perhaps her question would come with another picture. He would give anything to see another glimpse of her, to add to his precious collection of snapshots saved to a very hidden part of his phone.

Adrien stifled a moan, recalling the lean lines of her legs…the smooth expanse of her bared shoulders…the way her skin was drenched and flushing from what might well have been more than just her bath-

[ here’s my question: that day at the mall a few weeks ago, when I said I needed you… ]

[ you didn’t think I was asking for help with an akuma, did you chat noir? ]

‘Busted…’

He knew it was only a matter of time before that little blunder caught up with him, though the timing could not be worse. Adrien wracked his brain for some way to convince her he hadn’t been planning on coming over and having sex with her against the nearest semi-horizontal surface, but he drew up blank. So he just decided to fess up, steeling himself for the inevitable ribbing he was about to receive as he typed out with a wince.

[ …its possible I might have had something else in mind, yes ]

[ sorry about that my lady ]

Her answer was unexpected.

[ i wasnt asking you because I wanted an apology ]

[ I mean I probably would have thought the same thing given the context ]

[ so you aren’t mad? ]

[ of course not ]
Bright relief and whispered lust meet in the pit of Adrien’s stomach as he smirked down at his phone. She could probably invite him over to vacuum her living room and he would show up in a matter of minutes if it meant he got to spend time with her. Adrien thought the hard-ons made it abundantly clear just how very attracted he was to her, but perhaps Ladybug needed a reminder.

[ apparently, you aren’t familiar with the single-minded force that is a teenage boy’s arousal… ]
[ though I could introduce you if you’d like ;) ]
[ oh im well-aware of how powerful something like that can be… ]

His eyebrow peaked.

[ rivaled only in ferocity by that of a teenage girl’s sex drive ;) ]

…

‘Evil, devious girl.’ Adrien thought with a groan ‘Cunning and sly and too goddamn flirtty for her own good.’ If he found it difficult not to touch himself earlier, the urge was near impossible to resist now, as her text inspired a dizzying fantasy of the marathon sex they could be having to flash through his head.

Adrien imagined fucking her near-senseless, taking her any way she wanted as long as it entailed their naked hips smashing into each other. He imagined them riding off their orgasms together, imagined going to work on her with his tongue and teasing fingers until he was finally hard enough to take her a second time. It would be filthy and fast and never-ending, Ladybug crying out as he made her come for him again and aga-

*Ahem*

‘Focus.’

Adrien’s hands behaved, even as his mind did not. The boy took a steadying breath, cooling his ardor a bit as he collected his thoughts.

[ now THAT is something I’d just love to get a demonstration of ]

[ patience chaton, im not done playing yet ]
Adrien wasn’t sure how much more of her “playing” he could take before there was some kind of fallout (read: before he came in his pants), but that’s not to say he couldn’t try and hold out for as long as he could. So he decided to play along with her games, if only to prove that he could. ‘We’ll see which one of us falters first…’

[ well in that case, is it my turn to ask a question now? ]

[ you just did ]

[ …it’s a good thing you’re pretty bc your jokes are terrible my lady ]

[ aww you really think i’m pretty? :) ]

[ also: fuck off i’m hilarious ]

[ princess, I could write volumes on your beauty <3 ]

[ but right now I just want to know how well your birthday gift fits ;) ]

[ am i allowed to answer with a picture? ]

‘yes, fuck yes, oh fucking hell yes.’

[ please do… ]

It took only 20 seconds for her to reply, the attached image poking a sharp hole in Adrien’s arousal. She sent him a goddamn thumbs up, just a bare hand against a blank background.

He grumbled at her tongue-in-cheek response, grinning none-the-less as he sent her a string of frowning cat emojis. ‘Of course she wouldn’t make it that easy, this is Ladybug we’re talking about.’

[ does this answer your question?? ;) ]

[ tease. i was hoping perhaps to SEE the bra ]

[ oh of course, here you go! ]

This time, the picture showed what looked to be vaguely like a shoulder, though the shot was such an extreme close up that Adrien could make out little more than pale skin, pink cushion, and the smallest streak of black. He saved it none-the-less.
‘Seems im not the only one feeling frisky’ he thought with a smirk, hooking a thumb into his sleep pants to drag them dangerously low upon his hips. Adrien’s shot was just as tauntingly cropped, showing just the edge of his V cuts (the ones he was secretly very proud of) as well as the “Agreste” printed band of his black underwear.

(He conveniently left out the very noticeable erection jutting out just a few inches away. Plenty of time to build up to that.)

‘Careful,’ Adrien chided himself ‘you want to push, but not too hard.’

Ah, her kwami. They had spoken only to a degree out their respective companions, and Plagg was usually tight lipped about his other half, but Adrien still wondered how the little creature must feel about all this.
[ how has your kwami reacted to us so far? ]
[ and before you decide to be cute… yes, that’s my question ]
[ oh tikki’s been trying to set us up for YEARS. shes a romantic at heart <3 ]
[ in that case, i think i like tikki ]
[ must be nice, plagg has threatened to break my transformation every time we so much as look at each other –_- ]
[ in that case, i think i like plagg ;) ]
[ oh you would ]

They were getting off topic, and Adrien would be damned if he let their intensity fade away quite yet. He reached out to type with a leer.

[ you both do seem to make things hard for me, though in two VERY different ways… ;3 ]

‘When in doubt, make a dick pun.’

Her response was practically instantaneous, and deliciously heated.

[ are things…hard for you right now? ]

There, now that was the right track.

Adrien’s simmering arousal flared back up to boil as he shivered at her response. Almost on a whim, he turned on his camera once again, switching it to the front lens and aiming it at the bottom half of his face. Parting his lips, Adrien brought one hand up before biting gently on the knuckle of his thumb. He took great care to insure she would be able to tell he was now shirtless, as evidenced by his bare chest, and snapped a few shots.

He chose the best one, sending it off along with his hearty affirmation.

[ incredibly so, my lady ]

Her response wasn’t immediate, which he knew meant one of two things. 1: He fucked up, or 2: She was taking a picture.

Luckily, it was the second option. Her image came nearly a minute later, drawing the breath out of
Adrien’s lungs with its arrival.

[ well in that case I think you’ve earned a peek… ]

Ladybug laid on her side, moonlight filtering down from an unseen window to bounce off the pale expanse of skin stretching the frame. Adrien could just see the curve of one hip, dipping low into a trim waist right before the edge of the photo cut the rest of her off from view. A hand was poised atop the peak, fingers settled into a walking position as one slim digit slid under a familiar, black band of lace.

He greedily drank in the picture, eyes tracing and retracing the swell of her hips, the position of her hand, that pulse-spiking view of her underwear. The image of her body wrapped up in that particular color-in his color-sent a shivering thrill up Adrien’s spine. The thrill that she had marked herself, had declared herself his as she writhed around in the lingerie chosen specifically by him for her.

Two minutes he allowed himself to gape before getting back into the game.

[ …those fingers look like they’re on a mission ]

[ wouldn’t you like to know ;) ]

[ i would in fact ]

[ and as I recall its my turn to ask a question… ]

[ alright shoot ]

‘Do I dare?’

After only a moments hesitation, Adrien typed out the question that had been burning in the back of his mind for God knows how long. Despite his suspicions, despite her little hints and his own subconscious mind reasoning that she must, Adrien had to know for sure if his fantasies were just that.

So he bit the bullet.

[ ladybug, do you touch yourself? ]

His phone was silent for a solid minute, and he was just beginning to plan his apology when…

[ do you? ]
He could have chided her for answering with another question, but hell if his brain wasn’t close to mush at this point.

[ well yeah, i am a teenager ]

[ as am i… ]

[ which means…? ]

He wanted-no, needed her to tell him. Needed Ladybug’s confirmation that she feels this too, that she got just as worked up when they were together. That she went home with that same tight feeling low in her abdomen after he ground against her. That she let herself enjoy the heat the two of them had conjured whenever she at last found herself alone. Adrien had to know she-

[ … ]

[ yes Chat, I touch myself ]

The text set him on the verge of a meltdown.

Ladybug’s words and the images they conjured causing his head to whirl in the most divinely tortuous way possible, Adrien couldn’t have suppressed his groan even if he tried. Her answer wasn’t so much surprising as it was gratifying. Heart-stopping and erotic and so incredibly gratifying.

Adrien lulled his head back against the pillow beneath him, hands clenching in an effort to occupy themselves outside of his pants. Today’s earlier fantasies came flooding back with a vengeance as the images of her hands roaming her wanting self seemed to constrict his every breath with their now-vulgar reality. The teen reluctantly pulled his attention back to the conversation, grasping at his big-boy-thoughts before he lost the ability to communicate entirely.

But what he wouldn’t give to have her in bed with him right now…

[ im glad to hear it, you deserve every ounce of pleasure you give yourself and so much more ]

’So, so much more…’

[ that’s actually…incredibly sweet? ]

[ and also less intense of a reaction than I was expecting ]
if it makes you feel any better im pretty sure I just broke a blood vessel trying not to cream my pants at your response so…

I figured sweet would be the better route

geez, are you still ok to play?

Please, if Adrien’s life stopped every time he got aroused, the boy would never get anything done.

absolutely!

hit me with your best question :)!

how often?

my lady?

im asking how often you do it

‘Dear Lord this was so much better than truth or dare…’

“it?”

Adrien sent the text off with a falsely innocent smirk.

oh knock it off you scheming cat, you know what im taking about!

cant say that I do, care to elaborate my lady?? :3

*groans for a million years*

how often do you masturbate?

He could practically picture her blushing, exasperated face, and the thought of it almost tempered out the lust still ruling over him.

Almost.

so clinical my lady!
I average about twice a day)

...now that seems a little overboard

absolutely not!

tho lately its been more like three ;)

what constitutes lately?

when did we start dating?

officially? three weeks ago

well then by lately I mean the past month and a half

you're an incorrigible flirt you know that?

yes, but im YOUR incorrigible flirt and you LOVE IT ;3

Adrien hoped she was ginning as much as he was. ‘Is it possible to be both love-struck and hopelessly aroused?’ he wondered as she sent him a long string of eye-rolling emojis.

im ready to hear your next question now

She was getting worked up, and Adrien finally felt like he might be wrestling the upper hand back. ‘Time to crank up the heat then…’

well in that case, I want to know WHERE you like to let your fingers wander, princess

Adrien shifted restlessly atop his bed as the message sent. The room was hot, but he knew it had nothing to do with the thermostat and everything to do with...

well most often...in bed

The boy peeked an eyebrow with a lewd grin. ‘Not exactly what I had in mind but I’ll take it…’

After all, she was telling him where (location wise) she liked to get herself off, and he could certainly use that information for future-
[ but still my favorite place to ~wander~ is in the tub ;) ]

[ more specifically during my bubble baths… ]

...

He knew it, goddamit. He knew she spent too long-

His picture.

He had sent her his picture when she was in the tub and she thanked him for it, had cursed her wobbly legs and then apologized for taking so long to finish.

[ fucking hell, ladybug ]

[ did you earlier...while we were texting? ]

‘This girl is going to be the death of me.’ Adrien thought piteously, shifting himself around in order to find a comfortable way to sit in his now almost painfully aroused state. Shaking fingers reached out to open her reply.

[ unfortunately no, my hands were otherwise occupied with you chaton ]

[ you know I would have more than happily given you few minutes alone to take care of yourself, my lady… ]

Adrien gulped, knawing on his lip as his hips twitched forward greedily. “Touch me!” his penis cried. “Not yet,” his mind responded, and Adrien couldn’t decide which one to listen to.

Before he could side with either head, however, Ladybug drew his attention back with another muted ding.

[ it would have taken more than just a few minutes, and besides… ]

The pictured sandwiched between her texts showed pouting lips trapped between white teeth. It showed bared shoulders, no straps in sight. It showed her hair, loose and flowing around her reclining form.

It showed her finger, cocked under her chin in a “come hither” gestures.

It showed Adrien who was really in charge of this conversation.
I’m so tired of having to take care of myself…]

How many times had she broken him that night? Was this the sixth?

Oh fuck it, simple counting was far too strenuous for Adrien to tackle at this point. In fact most all of his brain power was being put towards the single task of not finishing in his pants. That deadly double combo of picture and plea hit a k.o right to his central mainframe, and if the strangled sound emitting from Adrien’s throat was any indication, it had done irreversible damage.

[ fuck, ladybug ]

[ i want so badly to be able to take care of you ]

He needed her now more than any other time his hormone-addled brain could recall ever wanting her before (which was really saying something considering how long he’d been pining after her.)

[ do you want to know what I want from you, chat noir? ]

[ yes, shit, please tell me what you want me to do to you my lady ]

Now this? This is what he’d been hoping for, been waiting for since the very beginning of their little play session. Adrien wanted her to tell him, in the most explicit terms her sweet mouth could manage, what exactly her body craved.

[ i want you to slip through my bedroom window… ]

[ i want you to see me here, laying down in your lingerie ]

[ god, ladybug ]

[ i want you to sit across from me, in the office chair, and watch ]

[ i want you to watch me chat, are you watching? ]

[ fuck yes ]

[ good kitty ]

Adrien was shaking, groaning into the dark of his room as flashes of white-hot arousal sliced into him with every breath. He was about to give in, about to set fire to the “Sin Commandments” in
order to quell the now painful need he had, when Ladybug sent her response. He opened the text with one hand as the other stilled on the band of his briefs.

[ if you were here right now and I told you what I wanted you to do for me, you’d do it right? ]

[ anything and everything you wanted, my lady ]

He needed her. Needed her warmth and her words. Needed to hear her say these things, ask these things in person.

So close, his hand was just so fucking close.

[ in that case, id just love it if you could be here to help me finish my chem homework ;) ]

…

Now Adrien was a gentleman and a scholar, meaning he would never stoop so low as to use the term “bitch.”

And yet he barely had time to glance at her picture (some non-descript shot of a cluttered desktop) before the word slipped from between his clenched teeth, echoed through his cavernous room and finally slipped up in their conversation window with a flood of frowning cats and colorful expletives.

So maybe he wasn't that much of a gentleman.

[ whats wrong kitty? you don’t like the pictures I take for you?? >:D ]

[ i don’t like the fact you always play dirty ]

[ and not in the good way!! ]

[ and what exactly is the “good way” of playing dirty I wonder? ]

Oh he loved her, but she was every bit of that five letter word. A bitch in the most sinful, wonderful, heart-wrenching sense of the endearment.

But that didn’t mean Adrien couldn't be a bigger one.

[ would you like a demonstration? ]
The boy cocked an eyebrow at the text, conjuring a wicked grin as he decided his final play. Adrien was tired of being blue-balled, and with the way things were going (coupled with the fact it was nearing 2 am) it was clear Ladybug was about to cut him off. So he decided to beat her to the punch, using Alya’s final commandment to effectively cement his victory as he left her squirming for more.

Tapping quickly over to his camera, Adrien rolled over with a grunt. The sensation of his hard cock pressed against the mattress beneath him was torturous, but he didn’t want to run the risk of his bulge sneaking into the shot quite yet, so he breathed through it. ‘Teases don’t get dick pics…’

The blonde bent his knees just slightly, raising his hips a few inches off the bed in a way that drew adequate attention to his modelesque, shall we say, assets. Back curved, shoulders flexed, and the toned swell of his backside straining against his sleep pants, Adrien lined up what he considered an A+ shot, including just a peek of the jawline he knew drove Ladybug insane for good measure. His Chat Noir smile edged the frame of the over-the-collar picture, and scheming fingers reached out to send it along with a taunt.

[ well then, I guess this will have to tide you over until I can fully educate you some other time… ]
[ …chat ]
[ but for now, I find myself becoming incredibly tired… ]
[ chat noir don’t you dare I swear to god ]
[ sweet dreams my lady ;) ]

‘Commandment number ten, always leave them wanting more.’

[ you. are. such. an. incredible. ASS. ]
[ correction: I HAVE such an incredible ass :) ]
[ and GOODNIGHT, ladybug <3 ]

Adrien laughed deeply, deriving way too much pleasure from inflicting the same coy move she’d pulled on him so many times before. He could almost picture the way her cute face would scrunch up in frustration, the girl giving a huff at having her toy so suddenly taken away. ‘Serves her right,’ he thought as he snuffed out his lights for the night. ‘That’ll teach Ladybug not to taunt’.

Though the boy’s victory was to be short lived it would seem, as three new messages popped up on her side of the window faster than you could say, “motherfucker yoU THOUGHT.”
The first two were texts….and the last?

A picture.

[ double correction: YOUR GIRLFRIEND has such an incredible ass…]

[ and goodnight chat <3 ]

Adrien’s heart stopped.

Then double timed.

Then stopped again.

Then-

Well lets just say he didn’t have the higher brain capacity to tell you what his heart was doing in that moment because…

Glancing up from the phone screen was Ladybug, her body contorted into the very same position he himself had captured just moments ago and her smirk just as devious. Adrien swallowed… hard, his eyes tracing over her shoulder, down the curve of her back and finally landing to settle on the picture’s undisputed focal point.

Well, she was right about one thing…his girlfriend did have such an incredible ass.

And the fact that ass was now almost completely bare, crossed by two thin strands of lace that strained against the swells of flesh beneath it, only emphasized the “incredible” factor in the most devious of ways. Bent over on her knees, thigh spread, back arched…Adrien had seen tamer things on porn sites for fucks sake.

And the fact that it was Ladybug. His Ladybug, his girlfriend…

Needless to say, it seemed as though the “leave her wanting more” strategy had backfired spectacularly, and Adrien now found himself desperately scrambling to re-ignite the conversation with shaking fingers and muttered curses.

‘MISTAKE, MISTAKE. YOU FUCKED UP BIG TIME BUDDY.’

[ you know i think ive changed my mind and am now EXTREMELY AWAKE ]

Her reply came in the form of a single ladybug emoji.

[ …my lady? ]
For the rest of the night his phone was silent, and for the rest of the night Adrien Agreste burned.

“Yo Marinette, you alright there sister?”

On a full nights rest, Nino’s voice was usually quite loud. And on 4 hours of sleep, it was deafening.

The zombie wearing Marinette’s clothes winced, slinging her bag down next to the boy before following in an almost comical slump. “Tired,” the creature rasped, dead eyes flicking over her unfinished chemistry worksheet with disinterest.

“What, you stay up late working on your sewing or something?”

“Or something,” she grumbled out, causing her friend to quirk up an eyebrow before dropping it down into a waggle.

“Oh I know that look,” Nino began, passing her the energy drink that had somehow materialized from his bag, “you sexted your mystery boy last night didn’t you?” Marinette downed the can, polishing it off in a measly 20 seconds before exhaling at the rush of caffeine through her veins.

“You know, Alya promised me a couple weeks ago she wasn’t going to tell anyone about the guy I may or may not be dating. And yet somehow, everyone in the school seems to know about him. Funny how that works.”

“Well you know Alya,” the boy said with a wink. Marinette smirked.

“I do,” she said, rolling her shoulder as her head spun lightly, “though from what I hear you two have been getting pretty well acquainted lately…” Nino’s face twisted into a kind of dazed smile, resting on his lips before he ushered it away with a shrug.

“We’ve been speaking,” he answered vaguely, seeming to get lost in thought as he tapped away at his tablet. Marinette left him to wander, thankful to have side-stepped what would have been an undoubtedly drawn out interrogation over her love life.

Make no mistake, Alya had picked up on her best friend’s shift in demeanor immediately before first period, adding it up with the girl’s exhaustion to draw her incredibly accurate conclusion with a smirk.

“Ok, spill.”

Marinette had somehow skated by that confrontation as well, making it clear she wasn’t interested in sharing the details of her night until such a time as she was fully capable of going more than one sentence without spacing out. Due to sleepiness of course…

Not like Marinette kept running the entirety of last night’s exchange through her head or anything.

Not like she had gotten off on his pictures and his words both last night and this morning.

Not like she was here once again, secluding herself in her room during lunch hour to relive the whole session.
'You know, maybe three times a day isn’t so excessive after all.’ Marinette convinced herself as she laid back in bed, reaching for her phone with one hand while the other slid to decidedly less innocent places. As per Alya’s advice, Marinette had set up a buried folder in the deepest regions of her phone, expressly for the purpose of saving screenshots and pictures so she could clear out her inbox of all traces of last night’s…tryst.

Despite the fact “Operation Break Chat Noir” had ultimately ended up a success, Marinette hadn’t exactly exited the battle without taking a few hits herself. His arousing teases, that eagerness to please, his goddamn pictures… turns out her boyfriend knew a thing or two about sexting, himself. And Marinette could only flush at the thought of seeing him again, of facing his inevitable smirk in person after what had gone on between them via text.

So when an akuma shattered the window to her French classroom less than an hour later, causing both her and an equally tired Adrien to jerk in reaction, Marinette had only one thought.

‘Well this will be interesting.’

Chapter End Notes

lol this was really long and also what is a plot???
And here are the pics (¯\_(ツ)_/¯)
Chapter 24

Chapter Summary

*Steeples Fingers*

Chapter Notes

I don't know what to say besides
Enjoy Sinners

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

The glass flew apart, shards of it skittering across the lacquered floor as the sound of distant screams echoed through the new opening. Everyone in class jumped at the sudden bout of destruction, their whispers of “Ladybug” beginning immediately as the students anticipated the inevitable arrival of their hero.

As for “their hero”, she just stood up from her seat with a groan, more annoyed than worried as she opened her mouth to spout her usual “gotta-go-deal-with-an-akuma” excuse.

“I need to go the bath—“

“Can I got to the restro—“

Marinette and Adrien blinked at each other as they spoke in damn near unison, both teens clutching at their bags as they paused mid-step.

“Absolutely not,” their teacher cut in, waving for her students to take their seats as she tentatively went to investigate the window, “I want everyone to remain in the classroom until—“

Marinette was almost relieved when a giant hand scooped up her squealing instructor, yanking the woman out of the building with a crooning call of “There you are darling!”

All at once, every student was on their feet, pounding over to the window to watch as a giant, vaguely female titan of an akuma stuffed the woman into an equally giant purse dangling from its arm. The monster stomped off with its prize, exiting the courtyard with purpose as it set a course down the street running parallel to the school.

Thankful for the distraction, Marinette made for the door. ‘I just need to slip away so I can…’

Once again Adrien cut her off, reaching for the handle just as she was about to exit the classroom. “I think you should probably stay here,” the boy said, concern evident in his voice as he glanced down at her distractedly. “Best to leave this for Ladybug and Chat Noir.”

‘I know, that’s why I need to get out of here,’ Marinette thought, digging a knuckle into the side of her temple as she regarded her classmate. Don’t get her wrong, Adrien was her friend, but at this point she was too incredibly tired to even attempt to hide her irritation as she once again moved to
open the door.

“I’ll be fine,” Marinette grumbled, huffing as his hand reached out to stop her a second time.

“Marinette...” He trailed off, eyes pleading as he shifted absently beside her.

She wanted to punch his stupid handsome face.

“Adrien, if you don’t let me through this goddamn door—“ Another explosion echoed distantly through the classroom, causing Adrien’s eyes to shift just long enough for Marinette to duck past his guard.

She slid out the door, ignoring his objections as she booked it towards the girl’s restroom. Although the men’s lavatory was much closer, logic (as well as her past experience with bursting into that particular room unannounced) pushed Marinette to seek out another transformation spot.

The teen rounded a corner, adrenaline flooding her body as it readied itself for another battle. There hadn’t been an akuma all week, and while Marinette was exhausted, the Ladybug side of her was itching for a fight. Her nerves sang, mind so focused on getting out there and kicking ass that—

“...You know, you shouldn’t be—“

CRACK

In her keyed-up state, Marinette barely registered her own fist whirling around to slam into the jaw of the figure who had snuck up behind her. The blow was solid, knocking her assailant back far enough for a stunned Marinette to get a good look at him before his dark-suited self landed on the ground.

Needless to say, she hadn’t intended to deck her boyfriend, and yet…

“So,” Chat Noir began casually, rubbing at his jaw, “that’s one hell of a right hook you’ve got there.” He looked up, green eyes wide and mouth working against the sting that radiated from the side of his chin as the girl before him gaped. Marinette fluttered uselessly above him, muttering a string of apologies as her face flushed with regret. ‘Not really the ideal welcome for the boy who got you off last night...’

“Sorry, sorry!” she yelped, throwing out a hand to help him to his feet. This wouldn’t be the first time she had interacted with Chat as Marinette, but she hadn’t seen him as her civilian self since the two of them had become a couple, and that new closeness made her uneasy around him. Exposed. “I guess I’m just a bit jumpy today.”

“Don’t even worry about it, I’ve taken worse hits.” Here Chat rolled his shoulders, popping his head from side to side as he flashed a confident smile. “Besides, I am incredibly strong.”

Well at least she hadn’t concussed him.

Marinette felt her guilt ebb away, figuring if he was coherent enough to boast, he wasn’t all that hurt in the first place. She resisted the urge to roll her eyes, turning to enter the bathroom. “Well in that case I’ll leave you to your job, hero.”

“Not so fast, I need to know you’ll be safe.” A flash of irritation crossed her face as his gloved hand pressed against the restroom door. ‘What is it with boys not letting me go places today?’ This time Marinette did roll her eyes, extracting his grip as she slid closer to her destination.

“Don’t you have better things to be doing besides playing hall monitor?” she asked pointedly,
inclining her head as another muted crash boomed down the corridor.

“Not until you're back in a classroom I don’t!” Chat answered cheerfully, scooping her protesting self up as he broke into a jog.

“Why can't I be safe in the bathroom?” Marinette pleaded, ignoring the pleasant sensation of his chest pressed against her side as she tried to wiggle out of his grasp. Chat’s hands only tightened, digging in behind her knees as he kicked open an empty classroom door. ‘Careful, handsy…you have a girlfriend.’

Marinette had only meant to think the statement, but her tired mouth must have let the words slip if his laughter was any indication. “That I do,” Chat said with a gleam, setting her on her feet as he whipped a smart salute, “and seeing as though she’s most likely having to deal with the akuma alone…”

‘Well, I should be.’

“…I leave you to your safety!” he ended with a flourish, flashing the thoroughly unimpressed girl a wink before bounding out the door.

“Gee thanks,” Marinette muttered, waiting until she was sure the cat was gone before unclasping her purse. “Lord knows what I would have done without your help.”

“Look how much he cares about you,” Tikki said, giving a dreamy sigh as she floated up to bob in front of her chosen’s face. “Both sides of you!” Marinette waved her friend off.

“No, he cares about Ladybug and he flirts with Marinette,” she corrected. “And since he doesn’t know they are both the same girl, I’m allowed to be irritated.” The kwami just looked her for a long moment, eyes narrowing uncharacteristically as Marinette quirked an eyebrow under her gaze.

“You know you can be pretty exhausting at times,” Tikki bemoaned, shaking her tiny head resolutely, “and extremely blind too!” She didn’t give the confused girl time to respond before flashing her way up into her chosen’s miraculous, effectively silencing the conversation via transformation.

In an instant, the spot the two had occupied was now taken up by one irritated Ladybug.

‘I am not blind,’ the heroine thought tartly, swinging from the window to sail across the courtyard. ‘Besides, Chat’s the one who couldn’t recognize he was holding his own partner…’

By the third failed lucky charm, Marinette was ready to crash.

Both she and Chat wailed in disappointment as they watched yet another plan to grab the akuma fall through. Their target was obvious: the giant pair of sunglasses nestled across “Rain Check’s” face glinted tauntingly in the daylight as the monster continued to rant about the fact her girlfriends just never had time to hang out with her any more, but every attempt so far to nab the offending shades had failed.

“That’s bullshit!” Chat ground out, stomping as he glared down at his beeping ring. It was obvious the duo would have to charge up for their fourth transformation of the day, a fact that made Marinette
feel like yelling.

And yell she did, swerving into a roundhouse kick that slammed her heel directly into the bus terminal’s vending machine. The glass shattered around her leg, Ladybug’s knee catching on the jagged corners as she became hung up in the wreckage. Although it was impossible to feel through the material of her suit, the girl still cursed, wheeling her arms as Chat helped ease her limb out.

“I’m running on too little sleep to deal with this,” Marinette muttered, wrenching a bag of Oreos out of the machine before passing the boy beside her some cheese-its.

“Late night?” Chat responded with a forced lilt, his voice betraying how equally exhausted he was.

“You could say that,” she responded, equally strained as the two ducked into opposing bathrooms with twin grimaces.

Akumas like this that required multiple Lucky Charms and Cataclysms were rare, but the duo had come to abhor them. Holding one transformation was taxing enough, but having their kwami do three or four in one day…

Marinette slid to the tiled ground, wrenching open the snack bag so a worn-out Tikki could dive right in. The girl took a moment, breathing deeply to stop the swimming in her head before Chat’s voice echoed though the hallway separating them.

“Any more ideas?” her partner called in a falsely upbeat tone.

“I don’t have a plan B,” Marinette responded hopelessly.

“I think we’re more on Plan F…”

“Which is…?”

“Plan Fuck It.”

Tikki rolled out of the now empty bag, giving Marinette a knowing nod as another flash of light enveloped the two.

“Okay, so no strategy this time,” Ladybug confirmed, ducking out of the restroom as soon as her transformation completed, “just balls to the wall, do whatever’s necessary to get the object?”

From around the corner came a similar flash of green, Chat Noir stepping out a moment later with an irritated scowl. “Exactly.”

They dashed off, weaving their way down the now nearly empty terminal to where the akuma had scooped up another unfortunate woman.

“What, so going to visit your uncle is more important than our girls’ day out?!” the creature screeched, shoving its ‘friend’ into its tote bag before rounding at the sound of a feral taunt.

“I don’t blame them for not wanting to hang out with you,” Ladybug called, swinging her yo-yo up to hook around the high-up eaves, “you seem like a real drag to be around.” The heroine swung forward, launching herself towards the ceiling as Chat circled behind their target.

“You won’t be so cocky when I take your Miraculous, Ladybug!”

“Yeah, ’cause that'll happen. Why don’t you tell Hawkmoth to bite my ASS?” The akuma screeched again, winding up its purse for another strike as a metal staff swiped against its ankles. A flash of red
swooped down atop the struggling monster, and the struggle began anew.

Despite their exhaustion, Ladybug and Chat Noir fought with a single minded fervor, discarding tact for sheer force as they tackled their giant foe. Neither of them dared invoke their special powers, knowing the act would all but deplete their transformations, so melee was the name of the game.

Chat with his staff, Ladybug with her yo-yo, and both with flying kicks and jabs; the two were relentless. And finally, after about another 20 minutes of struggle, Marinette managed to dislodge the glasses with a triumphant yell. A harsh crack echoed through the bus terminal, the bridge of the lenses snapping over her knee with a satisfying crunch.

Marinette almost wept with joy as she saw the dark butterfly flutter up from the pieces, and from the look on Chat’s drooping face, he was equally as relieved. Ladybug cleansed the akuma, rounding up her failed lucky charms (a peacock feather, an ice cube tray, and (most confusing of all) a life-sized cut out of Jagged Stone) before she hoisted all three into the air.

It never ceased to amaze Marinette just how quickly things went back to normal, especially after long fights like this. In a matter of seconds the entire terminal was sparkling, the only thing out of place being a small group of dazed women sprawled across the floor a few paces away. Well that, and the exhausted look that took root across Chat Noir’s face.

Ladybug turned for their usual fist bump and had barely enough time to grab him beneath his armpits as the teen wobbled over in a faint.

“Chat?” she questioned, the first whispers of genuine concern beginning to creep their way into her voice as she propped him up against her. “Chat, are you all right?”

“Jus’ tired is all,” he responded, giving what he may have thought was an encouraging smile but came out more like a wince. Marinette mentally kicked herself, hunkering over to hoist the objecting boy over her shoulders. ‘He’s on his fifth transformation, plus still recovering from my earlier punch. Why didn’t I let him rest earlier??’

She quieted his concerns with murmured reassurances, ignoring her own fatigue as she reeled them both up and out of the terminal via skylight. Reaching the roof, she paced over to where the upper eaves would conceal them from prying eyes before letting Chat off her back with a grunt of thanks. He pulled on her hand as he slid to the ground, and Marinette followed despite her logic’s objections.

The heroes settled flat on their backs, shoulders brushing as they both gulped down some much needed air. The almost-October weather, paired with the fact that it was nearing sunset, meant the atmosphere was crisp, not quite cold but pleasingly chilly against their battle-flushed faces. Marinette exhaled, letting her tired muscles finally, mercifully unwind as she almost melted into the concrete beneath her.

Neither of them spoke for an indeterminate amount of time, and she could guess the reason. It was obvious they were both thinking not only about today’s akuma, but also…

“So when are we going to discuss the fact we sexted each other last night?” Chat said, shattering the silence with the question Marinette knew was coming sooner or later. Inexplicably, she blushed, bringing her palms up against her sizzling cheeks as mumbled out her response.

“When we aren’t both on the verge of passing out.”

‘Stop being dumb. YOU initiated it. YOU ultimately won.’

And yet Marinette couldn’t quite beat down her jittery wave of nerves as she spotted her boyfriend
lulling his head towards her. Out of the corner of her eye she could just see his smirk, could spy that shit-eating grin creeping along the bottom of his face as Chat inched closer. “Then I guess round two is out of the question for tonight?” he asked with a dramatic sigh, perking up a hopeful brow nonetheless.

“You guessed right,” Marinette confirmed, turning her head so that their noses were just inches apart, “You and I both need a night without distraction—” Chat pouted “—no matter how nice that distraction may be.”

“My Lady, you are my absolute favorite distraction,” the boy proclaimed, seeming to mull something over before reaching over to flick her nose with one claw-tipped hand. Ladybug started, giving a huff of indignation as he grinned thoughtfully.

“What was that for?!” she questioned, furrowing her brow as Chat tipped his head back with a laugh.

“That was for the thumbs up picture!” he replied, his chuckles cutting out with a soft “oof” as her elbow dug into his side. Chat's mouth drooped into a comical frown. “And what was that for?”

“That was for making me type out the words ‘how often do you masturbate’ with my own two hands.”

Another flick to her nose.

“That’s for chem homework!”

Another elbow to his ribs.

“That’s for keeping me up all night.”

A flick.

“Technically, my lady, you were the one keeping me up all night.”

An elbow.

“Yeah, well that’s for waking me up early this morning.”

…”

“But I didn’t text you this morning,” Chat said softly, propping himself up on one elbow as he glanced down at her. Marinette bothered her lip, hissing as she realized her mistake. His eyes followed the movement, and the weight of them pressed on her like a touchless kiss.

‘You don’t have to text me to wake me up early,’ is what she wanted to say, what would have been the suave thing to say. But instead Marinette just gave a sheepish grin, hoping her shrug was explanation enough for the boy. ‘It sure was a lot easier teasing him over the phone,’ she thought with a gulp, feeling exposed under his green eyes as he seemed to draw a conclusion from her (lack of) a response.

Slowly, Chat rolled atop her, eye contact never wavering as he wiggled on his elbows down the length of her body. Marinette held in her squeak (‘YOU ARE IN CONTROL. YOU HAVE THE UPPER HAND’) as she felt the inch of air between them heat immediately, Chat's body ghosting over her own before finally resting fully against her.

Two hands folded on her stomach and one wistful face propped atop them as he arms pressed into
her hips. Chat’s weight was warm, comfortable as he snuggled on top of her with a breathless laugh. “Well in that case, I apologize for subconsciously intruding on your not-so-needed beauty rest,” he said distantly, blinking up at the flushing girl with a tired smirk, “but I promise to make it up to you later.”

“How?” Marinette asked, thankful to find her words (or in this case, word) had come back to her. Chat yawned, spurring her to do the same. ‘What time is it I wonder?’

“I’ll get back to you on that after my cat nap…”

And with that, Chat Noir plopped his head down on her abdomen, body relaxing as he melted into her. Marinette warred with herself, screwing up her brow as his tempered breathing only confirmed he had immediately fallen asleep.

Reason screamed at her to not let this happen, to poke him awake and run home before fantasy got the best of her.

Fantasy obviously disagreed.

‘Just two minutes,’ it whispered, with honey-sweet assurances that everything would be all right, ‘just two minutes and then you both can go home and sleep soundly.’

It was fantasy (or perhaps exhaustion) that won out, that victorious force prompting Marinette to close her eyes just for a moment. Just long enough to enjoy his warmth atop her, his legs between hers, his breath against her ribs and his all-around presence.

Just long enough for her to truly relax….and unwind…and…

When she woke up, the sight of the dark sky told Ladybug it had not been just two minutes.

The sight of a snoozing red kwami told Ladybug she was no longer Ladybug, but Marinette.

And the sight of an equally snoozing black kwami told Marinette Chat Noir was no longer Chat Noir.

Chapter End Notes

...suffer
Chapter 25

Chapter Summary

In which one of two things happen.

Chapter Notes

Hi there kids, did you behave while the Sinmother was gone? Of course you didn’t, you all threw hissy fits in the comments section! More than 200 of them!

That being said, im not even a little sorry for the cliffhanger, but im still going to make it up to you anyways with something a little different. See, for a while now there have been a group of commenters itching for their reveal, readers who aren’t really interested in slugging through a dozen more chapters of mindless, plot-less sin just to get their resolution. And I hear you!

At the same time however, I have a lot of readers who are fine with the story dragging on forever, as long as they get their weekly smut. SO in an effort to appease everyone, I wrote the last chapter as a fork in the road, turning this fic in to a kind of chose your own adventure, if you will.

If you are part of the first group, then I direct you towards your reveal, posted here as a one-shot, and say farewell. >>> http://archiveofourown.org/works/6032116 Now you don’t have to keep putting up with my ungodly amounts of irony and tension. Thanks for reading, ya’ll are the best

…now for all you sinners in for the long run. I hope you’re ready for more of whatever this is, because I still have plenty ideas to keep this shit-show running.

Enjoy kiddos.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Her first instinct was to scream.

And although her luck seemed to be running scarce at that moment, she found the wherewithal to not immediately break down. The pounding of her heart seemed to beat a steady rhythm that chanted out “…mis-take, mis-take, mis-take…” with each new frazzled pulse.

‘Oh my God. I’m Marinette. I’m Marinette and I’m lying on a rooftop with…”

Despite her better judgement, she snuck a quick peek downwards.

She saw blonde hair. She saw a white blazer. She saw a now-silver ring slid onto gloveless hands.

What she did not see were leather cat ears. Well, that, or the face of her very-civilianized boyfriend where he remained snuggled against her abdomen.
“…mis-take, mis-take, mis-take…”

Marinette wrenched her gaze over to where the kwamis still rested, trying to will her friend over through sheer mind-power alone. ‘Please come, please save me!’ she projected desperately, the panic that was settling over her rivalling the weight of not-Chat as he continued to sleep peacefully atop her. When that didn’t work, Marinette resorted to using more tested forms of communication.

“TIKKI. PSSST, TIKKI…” she hissed, not daring to raise her voice above a whisper as she desperately tried to rouse her snoozing companion. ‘Just two minutes you told yourself. Two. Measly. Minutes. What could be the harm? What could go wrong? A WHOLE GODDAMN LOT APPARENTLY.’

Maybe it was the fact she was panicking or, perhaps Marinette just had a knack for fucking herself over, but in that moment slamming her hand down on the roof seemed like a perfectly logical course of action.

And it had the intended effect...to a point.

The muted slap did wake the kwamis, Tikki’s eyes flying open with a start as Plagg just grumbled his way awake, but the sound also roused the fourth party on the rooftop.

The girl seized up.

‘HELP ME,’ Marinette mouthed at her friend, fear gripping her chest as she felt not-Chat Noir restlessly shift atop her. The speckled kwami looked on, taking a second to analyze the situation before her eyes widened to fill almost the entirety of her face. Marinette’s hand fluttered frantically, ushering both kwami over to where their charges were still intertwined.

“This is what you two get—“ Plagg’s biting remark was cut off by a look from both of the lucky ladies before him, the smaller of the pair batting at him with a whisper.

“Not now,” Tikki chastised before returning to Marinette with a significant look, “there will be time to scold them later.” The girl flashed a sheepish wince, stiffening up as she felt the body atop her shift once more.

“…mis-take, mis-take, mis-take…”

“Well I don’t know why they don’t just reveal themselves already,” Plagg went on, oblivious to Marinette’s massive turmoil. “You can’t tell me you approve of all the disgusting things they’ve been doing while suited up?”

“They aren’t the first ones to do those kinds of things and you know it.”

“It doesn’t matter! That’s not what the Miraculous are for, Tikki!”

“PLEASE,” Marinette cut in with a harsh whisper, “please just transform us and I promise I’ll make it up to you. Make it up to you both!” Not-Chat sighed against her stomach, prompting her to give the kwamis another wide-eyed look.

“Anything I want?” the tiny cat proposed.

Marinette nodded vehemently.

“Well I want you to make him stop moaning your name all night, it’s really annoying.”
“I can’t do that,” the girl answered in a soft plead, electing to ignore the implications of his statement in light of her precarious situation. “Name something else.” Plagg’s eyes narrowed.

“Make sure he doesn’t finish in the suit. I don’t want to have to deal with it.”

“He already said he wouldn’t.”

“He’s a weak-willed kitten. I need you to make sure he doesn’t.”

“Fine!” Marinette hissed. ‘I can’t believe I’m promising a tiny anthropomorphic cat that I won’t let my boyfriend orgasm. What has my life come to?’

“Excellent,” Plagg said, turning to grin at his straight-faced other half. “I like this one!”

“Good, fine. Now get in there,” Tikki said with a nudge, giving her chosen one last ‘we-will-be-speaking-about-this-later’ look before both kwami spiraled into their respective Miraculous.

Marinette heaved a sweet sigh of relief as she felt the ancient magic wash over her. Transforming while laying down was a first, as was transforming while under another person, but the charm worked nonetheless. For a few seconds the rooftop was engulfed in light, washing over the night before fading in a flash of pink and green.

Chat Noir sat up with a yowl, his sleep-heavy eyes blinking at the sudden wake-up call. “Wus…how did…?” He looked like a toddler, hair mussed and jaw slack as he tried to place his surroundings. Despite her lingering pulses of panic (‘that had been one hell of a close call’) Marinette couldn’t help but giggle at the sight, drawing his wandering gaze to hers.

“Looks like our cat nap ended up being more of a hibernation,” she responded through deep breaths. Her heart rate was slowing now, pumping more along the lines of “it’s-fine, it’s-fine, it’s-fine” as she propped herself up on her elbows. Chat looked down at the heroine, cocking his head to examine first her suit then his own with a furrowed brow.

“How are we…I mean? Shouldn’t our Miraculous have worn off by now?” Marinette gave a shrug. ‘No need to bother him with the details.’

“Guess our kwamis were looking out for us,” she responded distantly, taking in the dark night sky before muttering out with a curse. “My parents are going to skin me alive for being out this late after an akuma attack.”

“Eh, it’s only 9:30,” Chat said dismissively, sliding his staff open to display the analog numbers flashing across its green screen.

“And I was supposed to be home at three,” Marinette bemoaned, grinding her fists into her eye sockets until flashes of color popped behind her vision. ‘Great, not only am I am going to get a lecture from Tikki, but—’

“Well, if you’re going to be late anyways,” she heard Chat purr out, his voice sounding significantly closer than it had been moments ago, “let’s say we make you extra late, hmm~?” Marinette kept her eyes shut, grinning as she felt him crawl across her propped up self and hover like a housecat scorned.

“I shouldn’t,” she began, the words sounding weak even to her own ears. “I’ve got homework…”

“It’s Friday,” Chat countered easily, his voice provoking shivers where it ghosted across her cheek.
“And I’d hate to waste a fresh transformation.” It was obvious to both of them she had already made the decision to stay, but Ladybug kept her eyes shut and her mouth pressed together as he hovered above her. “Besides, I think we’re both rested enough to revisit what happened last night.”

“You can kiss or you can tease,” Marinette said, tilting her head up in a subtle invitation, “but you can't do both at the same time.” She let slip a contented gasp as she felt his fingers lightly grip her chin, his movements coaxing her body down until she was flattened beneath him once again.

“Watch me.”

It wasn't until Chat’s lips met with hers that Marinette finally allowed herself a peek, letting her eyelids flutter open only to be met with his glowing green stare. Chat winked, deepening their kiss with a triumphant swipe of the tongue she eagerly allowed to glide between her teeth. One of his hands snaked under the small of her back, the other supporting his weight as he dropped down onto an elbow.

Almost instinctively, Marinette spread herself as she felt his lower body sink down to press against her, her thighs bracketing Chat’s as the boy continued to pay due attention to her mouth. All her worries over lectures and identities and akuma seemed to fade until it was all white noise, buzzing under the wonderful melody created by their breath mingling between kisses.

“Thank you for the pictures,” Chat murmured, looking down at her before bending to press his lips to the curve of her jaw. “Wanna guess which one was my favorite?” Marinette made a show of thinking, fighting down a shiver at the way he nipped against her skin before sighing out in a lilting voice.

“I’d say the thumbs up— no, wait! — the toe in the bathtub. Final answer.” Chat grinned against her, scraping his claws absently across the small of her back in a way that almost (almost) made Marinette lose her strenuously held composure.

“Close,” he replied, prompting her to raise a brow, “but not quite.”

Marinette’s rebuttal was lost to a pleasant hum as Chat buried his face into the dip below her chin, the drawn-out noise morphing into more of a whimper as his tongue dashed out to trail along her pulse point. It was a new tactic from him, one she was surprised to find she didn’t at all mind. In fact, his clever little trick invoked much more intense reactions than just “not-minding”, with the way Chat’s mouth skated across the exposed portion of her neck doing wondrous things to Marinette’s body temperature as she shivered under his attentions.

“No, I think my favorite picture was the last one,” he said, voice low as his words stuck under her flushed skin.

“…the one with you on your knees…”

A kiss.

“…thighs spread…”

A lick.

“…back arched…”

A bite.

“…and that incredible ass stuck up in the air.”
Marinette couldn’t even begin to describe what his mouth was doing now, not even if she did have full control of her mental faculties. Which she most certainly did not.

Yes, it would seem grabbing the upper hand was much easier via text, when she had time and privacy to plan her attacks. Because with Chat all over her like this, claws scraping and tongue writhing as he focused the entirety of his attention on her sensation alone, Marinette felt all traces of last night’s bravado slip away, only to be replaced by hazy thoughts of ‘more’ and ‘good’.

“Dammit… I— uh…” Much to her unending pleasure and chagrin, Chat chuckled against her collarbone, the vibrations rumbling down her body in the most divinely sensuous way, but the sound indicating that this was one battle she should prepare to lose. Not that she really minded at this point.

“I’d say something about cats and tongues, but mine’s a little occupied at the moment,” Chat husked, trailing back up to recapture her waiting mouth. Twenty seconds Marinette let him kiss her senseless. Twenty seconds of silently rewiring herself to be a productive member of this make out session, before she pushed his chin back with a single finger.

“I liked your pictures too,” she said, licking her lips as she stared up at him. The words were meant to be a flirt, but the way her voice wavered somewhat ruined the effect, reducing it to a plea that pulled at the corners of Chat’s lips. “They came in handy last night.”

‘Ah, there we go,’ Marinette thought, watching as her last sentence finally seemed to have the desired effect on him. Green eyes widened. Just a smidgen, but it was enough to egg her on.

“And this morning,” she continued softly, placing a second finger against his chin, “and at lunch.” Chat’s eyes were absolute saucers by the time her third digit joined its partners, Adam’s apple bobbing at each syllable that snuck between her teeth. Marinette let out a slow grin at his reaction, the expression immediately souring on her face as the boy huffed out a short laugh.

“Okay so, I know that was supposed to be sexy,” he began, working his mouth mischievously as he glanced down at her growing pout, “and it really was…but I can’t get over ‘came in handy’…”

“What about it?” Marinette questioned, wiggling beneath him with growing displeasure at his relative candor. She wanted him bothered, goddammit!

“Well see, you used the term ‘came in hand—’” he paused, and gave a nod to her palm, “—y’, when you were talking about…” Chat flashed a wicked leer.

“Oh c’mon!” Marinette said, half-exasperated and half-embarrassed as her boyfriend continued to laugh above her. “Stop punning for just one second so I can flirt with you!”

“Not so fun when someone steamrolls your attempts at seduction, is it, my lady?”

“This is different.”

“It really isn’t,” Chat assured her with a wink, his jovial expression melting into something more heated as he let his laughter trail off. “But then again, I did say I’d get you back for leaving me wanting last night…”

“You were the one who tried that tactic first,” Marinette reminded him, “so I don’t want anything held against me!”

She realized the fault in her wording a second too late.

“Really?” Chat asked. “Not even this?”
By 'this', Marinette assumed he meant his erection. The very same erection Chat now intentionally dug into her lower stomach with a roll of his lithe but powerful body.

She hissed at the contact, caught between being impressed and scandalized by the fact that her boyfriend seemed to be able to conjure up a hard-on at the drop of a pin. Like literally, out of thin air! That kind of potency was (in her mind) hard to come by, and she wasn’t quite sure what to make of his staggering libido. Luckily, he didn’t leave her time to dwell on it before his weight lifted and his grin was back.

“So you tell me, still bent on the whole ‘no holding’ rule?”

“Oh get back here,” Marinette grumbled through a blush, worming a finger behind his belt to drag his hips back to where she wanted them. Chat complied with a wry smile, allowing his lower body to press down against hers firmly before nuzzling back into her neck.

“Did you mean it?” he asked, setting a slow, rolling pace of his hips as Marinette hooked her ankles around his.

“Hm?” the girl purred, mind growing immediately fuzzy due to the delicious pressure of him rocking between her legs.

“When you said the pictures I sent came in handy,” Chat clarified, speaking against her skin as his motions never ceased, “I just want to know…did you…?” Marinette’s flush flared up brighter, and she couldn’t tell if it was due to his question or the feeling of Chat hiking her thigh up over his hip. Probably both.

“I don’t know why it’s so hard for you to believe girls do those kinds of things too,” she said, voice miraculously steady considering that she had to swallow a moan in order to force the words out. Chat wormed his head out from under her jaw, pressing another forceful kiss to her lips before continuing in a low drawl.

“It’s not that I’m shocked… but fuck, Ladybug…” His hips snapped against hers in a particularly languid thrust, and this time Marinette did moan, hands scrabbling for purchase behind his suited back as their pace seemed to speed up incrementally with each word Chat ground out between kisses. “…The thought of you getting yourself off… of you thinking of me while you do it…” He trailed off with a shaky exhale, the sound mirrored by the girl beneath him as the teens fought to erase every inch of space between their bodies (said space practically non-existent at this point in their make-out).

“Interesting concept?” Marinette managed to pant as they parted for a breath.

“Mind-blowing concept,” Chat corrected, pupils blown wide as he regarded her shuddering form. “I think of you too, you know.”

“Well that would explain the whole moaning my name in your sleep thing,” she replied, not taking the time to think over her words before they slipped out. Of course when Chat Noir looked down at her, intrigue mixing with his ever-present smirk to form an expression of aroused befuddlement, Marinette realized how strange the statement must have sounded.

“Since when have you heard me sleeping?” he asked, stilling his hips against hers but continuing to toy at the small of her back. “Was I muttering earlier?” Marinette swallowed.

“Not exactly,” she said with a tiny wince, flashing him a sheepish look as she shifted against him. “Plagg might have mentioned it to me in passing.”
Chat Noir’s eyebrows (well at least the area of his mask covering his eyebrows) shot up in surprise. “And since when do you and my kwami just happen to have passing conversations?”

“Oh, you know…”

“Ladybug.”

Marinette huffed a nervous laugh, placing a single finger in the center of his chest and guiding him back just far enough for her to catch her breath. “Okay, so don’t freak out,” she said, gnawing her lip as he looked on with one eyebrow quirked even higher, “but our transformation might have worn off during our nap.”

Chat’s jaw popped open.

“Are you—“

“I didn’t see you!” she rushed to assure him. “Your face was still flat against my stomach so all I really saw was your hair…and your clothes, I guess…but not you!” Chat slipped the hand that was under her out to wave in the airspace between them.

“You know I wouldn’t even mind if you did…but you mean to tell me I was sleeping on you — like, the real you — and I wasn’t even conscious enough to enjoy it?!” Chat gave a pout, and despite their still very suggestive entanglement, Marinette couldn’t help but snort at the look.

“Trust me, it would have just opened a whole new can of worms for us, chaton. And I think we can both agree our relationship is complicated enough without an accidental reveal to stir up the pot.”

His hum in response illustrated the duality of her statement more than any rebuttal could. Marinette knew Chat’s opinion on their identities. The boy had made it quite obvious to her over the years that he would not at all be against letting her see his civilian self. Which is why her boyfriend’s next words came as a bit of a shock.

“You’re probably right,” Chat said, rolling over fully to plop against the roof beside her.

‘Now where is this coming from?’

“I’m…surprised to hear you say that,” Marinette began, propping her head up on one fist to examine his honest expression. “I thought you wanted to know who I am.”

“I already know who you are,” Chat said with a laugh, mimicking her position as the wind shifted over them. “You’re Ladybug, and you’re my girlfriend. Do I want to know what other name you go by? What other titles you hold? Absolutely! But not unless my Lady wishes it to be so.”

“Since when are you such a sap?” Marinette mumbled to hide her genuine shock at his words. ‘What happened to the boy who just yesterday pleaded with me to let my transformation drop and go on a date with him?’

“Must be the full moon,” Chat quipped, leaning forward to press a quick kiss to her lips. “Brings out the romantic in me. Besides, I know that when…er, well… if we ever see each other out of costume, it should be intentional. Not because of some cliché mistake made by two very tired teens.”

His words warmed her, even through the growing chill.

“When,” she said softly.
“My Lady?”

“When we see each other out of costume, it will be intentional,” Marinette responded with a resolute nod, prompting Chat to quirk yet another eyebrow. His smile was wondrous, brightening his handsome features with its awed glow, and it was almost enough to quell the jitters festering in her stomach.

“Are you saying…?”

“I’m not promising anything yet,” Marinette rushed to add, “but I don’t see how much farther we can go with these suits in the way.” Chat nodded enthusiastically.

“I totally get what you’re saying,” he agreed, gesticulating broadly as if he were discussing plans for world peace (or if his mischievous glint was any indication, world domination). “Though I’ve given it some extensive thought, and I think if I can get my zipper down past my hip bones and you’re flexible enough to bend—“

“As in I’m not sure how much farther our RELATIONSHIP can go without us knowing each other’s identities, Chat!”

“Oh, yeah… That’s what I was talking about too…”

“No it wasn’t,” Marinette grumbled light-heartedly, reaching out to gently smack the back of his grinning head. "But I’m going to pretend it was for the sake of my sanity.” Chat let her tut at him for a good few moments, looking properly (yet falsely) abashed when at last she let up on her teasing.

“So you really think you’ll let me meet you under the mask one day?” he asked once the silence had returned. As per usual, the two had gravitated back towards each other, legs tangled as they lay facing one another.

“Eventually,” Marinette said with a weighty sigh. “I still have a hard time seeing myself as both Ladybug and… well… me. I think once I get past that, the idea of introducing you to my civilian self will be much easier to stomach.”

It was true. In her mind, Ladybug and Marinette were two entirely separate beings. Two girls with two lives. Of course now that Chat Noir had begun to bleed between the lines, sneaking his way onto Marinette’s phone as well as her sleeping form, the distinction between her personas was becoming increasingly difficult to decipher. It was obvious that Ladybug was dating Chat Noir, but that logic also dictated that Marinette was dating Chat Noir. And by extension, Marinette was dating the boy on the other side of Chat Noir.

It was a dizzying and often-times frustrating line of thought, one she didn’t usually like to travel.

“Well, I for one can’t wait to meet her,” Chat broke in, effectively derailing her mental tangent. “I hear the girl behind the Ladybug suit is a real knockout.”

“That’s because you’re the only one who’s seen me in and out of my suit. Besides my kwami,” Marinette shot back.

“Well in that case I— wait!”

The girl jumped at his sudden outburst, looking on with confusion as Chat’s eyes narrowed dangerously. “What did you give him?” her boyfriend whispered, speaking low as if he didn’t want to be overheard.
“Give who?”

“You said our costumes had worn off while we slept, but I was Chat Noir when I woke up. Which means you somehow convinced Plagg to transform me. Which means you basically made a deal with a demon. Which means I need to protect you from whatever sinister reward he made you promise him.”

Marinette laughed full and long at his theatrics. “What makes you think he didn’t just nicely pop right into your ring when I asked him to?” she asked with a smirk.

“Plagg doesn’t do nice,” Chat assured her. “And Plagg definitely doesn’t do unnecessary transformations. So tell the truth, did you offer up our first-born?”

Her giggles only grew as she gave a shake of her head.

“Second-born?”

“I didn’t auction off my hypothetical children, yours or otherwise!” Marinette said with a snort, poking at his nose at the boy continued to make his wild guesses.

“Lifetime supply of cheese?”

“Nope!”

“Limited edition box set of Real Housewives of Paris?”

“Nope!” Chat gasped, letting one had flutter dramatically to his forehead.

“Your blessed purity?!” Marinette put on an over-the-top expression of confusion.

“My what now?”

“Ladybug I need to knooooowww,” Chat whined, pouting and pawing at her like a toddler until she finally gave in.

“Fine,” Marinette sighed, “but you’re not going to like it.”

“It can’t be worse than our first-born.”

“Well…”

“YOU PROMISED HIM SOMETHING WORSE THAN OUR FIRST-BORN?”

“Worse for you maybe…”

“Ladybug…?”

“Fine,” she said, dropping her chin as she continued on in a mumble, “I promised Plagg I wouldn’t let you orgasm.” Her boyfriend shot up.

“Ever?!” Chat squeaked, sounding more akin to the skinny, fourteen year old boy whose voice cracked every time he spoke too loudly than the so-called man he now branded himself as.

“Not while in the suit, any way.”

Chat threw his hands up in defeat.
“You should have just given up our child.”

“WE ARE NOT PARENTS,” she reminded him once again.

“AND NOW WE NEVER WILL BE!”

Marinette tried not to laugh at his stricken expression, she really did. But the way Chat was carrying on, now standing as he paced the area around her, was just too hilarious for her to ignore.

“You’re being over-dramatic as usual,” she chided, giggling nonetheless as she pushed herself up into a cross-legged position. “Besides, you already told me you weren’t going to finish in the suit, so what’s the big deal?”

“The big deal is you used my orgasm privileges… AS RANSOM,” Chat huffed, stomping over to tower above her still-grinning form.

“I’ll make it up to you?” Marinette tried, smirk growing wider as he hunkered down before her. Chat squinted his eyes, bracing his hands on his knees as they engaged in a silent stare down. She feigned innocence, batting her eyes without a care in the world as he continued to pout just inches away. After about 20 seconds Ladybug pitched forwards, pressing a kiss to his nose and continuing on in a sickly sweet voice.

“Whatsoever you want, kitty.”

“I want. To cum,” he replied, enunciating each syllable with a nod of his head.

There was a pause.

‘Commandment Number Nine…’

“Deal,” Marinette said simply, sticking a cordial hand out in invitation. Chat didn’t seem convinced.

“What do you mean…deal?” he questioned, taking her hand but not shaking it. Instead, he heaved them both to their feet, immediately crossing his arms once they were fully standing.

“I mean deal, now are you going to shake or not.” ‘Better not push it, boy…’

Chat’s eyes narrowed only a smidgen more before he gave up his annoyance with a shrug.

“All right, deal,” he said, giving her hand a firm, businesslike shake, “though I’m still very confused as to what I just agreed to.”

“Well, I’m sure it will come to you sometime this week,” Marinette responded with a swallowed grin, “but for now I think it’s time we get headed home.”

For once, Chat didn’t seem to have any objections. He nodded absently but not unkindly, bending down to kiss her goodnight. And with a zip of her yo-yo and a vault of his staff, Ladybug and Chat Noir were gone.
Upon reaching home, Marinette made it through both her parents’ (“…and you couldn’t take the time to call us if you decided to go to the fabric district after school?”) and Tikki’s (“If you’re serious about keeping your identity a secret, you need to be more careful!”) lectures without a hitch. She took her punishments (three “I’m very disappointed in you”s) with grace and even managed to get some school work done before crashing for the night.

Ruminating on her day, she couldn’t help but see it as a positive overall.

‘I mean, sure,’ Marinette thought, tucking herself into bed with a contented sigh, ‘I punched my boyfriend, exhausted both myself and my kwami, nearly had my identity revealed, bargained Chat’s orgasming rights away to a mystical creature who may or may not be a demon, and got back home past curfew, but hey…’

The girl snuggled deeper into her sheets, ready to pick up where she had left off nearly two hours ago.

‘…at least I had a pretty great nap.’

Chapter End Notes

From this point on, there will be chapters that cross into the E rated area, and while I won’t be changing the overall fic rating (I feel like I’ve done enough development that this shouldn’t be shocking at all) I will post disclaimers when smut is coming. Although if you’ve stuck it out this long, I’m assuming you are here FOR the smut.
Chapter 26

Chapter Summary

In which we get back on track ;)

Chapter Notes

WELL, now that we’ve gotten all the innocent souls/ people looking for actual plot out of the way… let’s just dive right in to your regularly scheduled mindless sin, shall we? From here on out, I dont want to see any comments about “when are you going to add plot/develop(insert character/story element here)/get to the reveal?”

GUESS WHAT? I wrote the alternate ending for a reason folks! That reason being so I can write whatever the fuck I want and you can’t call me out on it because I gave you your escape route!

But anyways, enjoy you filthy sinners.

To say Adrien was having a rough time of it lately would be a gross understatement.

In addition to his busy schedule, demanding colleagues, and having his right to orgasm bartered away by his seemingly unconcerned girlfriend, Adrien also had to deal with the knowledge that his kwami had met said unconcerned girlfriend’s civilian self before he did, a fact Plagg had been lording over the boy for the past week.

“I get it, I really do,” Adrien bemoaned, pacing after the hovering cat as the two trekked across his room. “So you don’t want me finishing in the suit, that’s fine! Whatever! It definitely doesn’t kill me inside! But you’ve got to tell me what she’s liiiike…”

His ‘mature, adult conversation’” with Plagg had quickly devolved into more of a pleading match, one in which the kwami floated around with a self-satisfied smirk as his charge tried his best to wrangle information from the smug little creature.

“Picture Ladybug, but without the mask,” Plagg answered drily, eliciting another exasperated moan.

“That’s not what I mean,” the teen said, throwing himself atop his bed with a starry expression. “I want to know what she was like. Did she smile like Ladybug? What was she wearing? Was it like, business casual, or more punk?” Adrien sat up with a gasp, wide eyes dashing to his disgusted kwami. “She said she likes pink! Was she wearing pink? Or purple? Oh God, I bet she looks so cute in pastels…” Plagg made a retching noise as the boy pressed a pillow to his blushing face.

“She was wearing clothing. Made of a material. In a color,” the kwami ground out with a sniff. And
with that final statement Plagg flitted away, zooming to where his new iPad was set up on the loft as Adrien just simmered in malcontent at his own rotten luck.

But of course, if his pent-up frustration didn’t kill him, his modeling career would certainly finish the job.

Turns out a pretty face and a recognizable name will get you far in the fashion industry, as evidenced by his ever-growing popularity among designers and photographers. And they weren’t the only ones taking interest.

See, Adrien was used to being noticeable in the small scheme of things (at industry parties or amongst a niche group of teenage girls who tracked his modelling progress). But now that his face was popping up all over France and beyond, the young man had to endure the burden of recognition almost everywhere he went. Magazines, print ads, posters — you name it and people were plastering his image across it. There were even rumors of a new billboard slated to be erected towards the end of the month.

‘Geez, you'd think I was the only model on earth,’ Adrien thought with a suppressed grimace, cordial smile in place as he dodged the screaming crowd gathered outside of his father’s headquarters to slip into the waiting silver sedan. The attention was exhausting, to the point where school (school!) seemed like a break for the overworked and over-exalted teen.

Well that, or the occasional akuma.

It took a special kind of person to view almost getting their ass handed to them, courtesy of possessed monstrosities, on a weekly basis as the highlight of their life. But when he was Chat he didn’t have rabid photographers, pushy reporters, or squealing fangirls lording over him all the—

Well okay, he did still have to put up with those things in his hero persona, but at least when people fawned over him as Chat Noir it was because he actually did something other than stand around looking pretty, so the attention wasn’t unwelcome. Plus most of the fan presence was centered on Ladybug, meaning most of the time he could just sit back admire her alongside them.

As was the case during their first press conference as a confirmed couple.

The duo stood together outside of city hall, facing down the gathered crowd of reporters as news cameras rolled to capture every second of the heroes’ address. It had been two weeks since their infamous kiss, and Ladybug had finally made the decision to go (officially) public about their relationship. The entire time she talked, her words concise and professional as she made her statement, Adrien had to try not to float up into the sky.

Because there was the love of his life, standing before all of Paris and declaring that they were together.

“La Tribune Internationale. How long have you two had feelings for each other?”

‘Since the very moment we first laid eyes—’

“We've been dating for a month.”
“Libération. Why did you keep it a secret?”

‘Our love is too powerful and complicated for mere mortals to—’

“It wasn’t a secret, there just wasn’t a need to make an announcement about a private matter.”

“Ladyblog. How’s the sex?”

‘I wish—’

"Next question!” his Lady said quickly, opting to skip over Alya’s rather lewd inquiry.

Adrien saw the nervous energy swirling behind the holes of Ladybug’s mask, prompting him to wrap an encouraging arm around her waist to help steady her. The action was obscured by the solid wood podium in front of them and Ladybug relaxed into the hidden embrace. Adrien let his thumb work in soothing circles over her hipbones as the heroine continued to plow through the non-stop questions thrown her way.

The conference positively dragged.

He tried to behave, he really did, but boy was he getting antsy. Being in costume, especially with a fresh transformation, always seemed to key Adrien up, feeding him an unending excess of energy that tended to fester if not properly expended.

So sure, he could rationalize his actions as little more than his powers at work… but he’d be lying if he said the way his hand steadily slid up and down his girlfriend’s side was completely unintentional.

At first Ladybug ignored his wandering fingers, shooting him a subtle eye roll as she remained focused on the interview at hand. But after a while Adrien became bolder, piping out an inconspicuous whistle as he let his hand skate downward to firmly grasp her self-proclaimed “incredible ass.”

Ladybug gave a soft squeak, quickly smoothing her features as she called on another reporter.

“All right, in the blue there,” she said, voice annoyingly steady as she continued to avoid the subtle grin of the boy beside her. ‘You want play it that way, huh?’

Cats did not like to be ignored.

“Paris Inquirer. Will your newfound relationship detract from your ability to protect our city?”

“Actually!” Adrien cut in, snagging the question before his partner could open her mouth to answer, “I think the two of us growing closer will only help us keep a firm grip…”

His fingers dug into the soft swells of her backside.

“…on our responsibility to the people of Paris.”

“Hilarious,” Ladybug whispered under her breath, still pointedly ignoring the gleeful way he groped at her as he continued to ramble.

“And we can promise that when villains rear their ugly heads, we won’t turn tail and run.”

His hand worked in circles atop her clothed flesh.
“I mean sure, it’s a *handful*, but trust me when I tell you…”

Ladybug pitched forward just slightly as Adrien applied a light spank, letting a hiss escape her at the stinging contact before her face was once again the picture of composure.

“…it’s our absolute pleasure!”

When Ladybug spoke again to call on her final interviewer, it was with a curious lilt of arousal that only he could identify.

‘*Gotcha,*’ Adrien thought with a smirk, soothing the skin beneath his hand with a gentle rub as the heroine mercifully concluded the press conference. With a pleasant smile for the final spattering of camera flashes and a wave to all the cheering fans, Ladybug shot off with a dazzling fling of her yo-yo, giving him a subtle incline of her head that Adrien was only too eager to follow.

Turns out he *had* found an opportunity to expend all that pent-up energy after all.

Marinette wasn’t quite sure what to name her new mission.

“Operation Phone Sex” lacked subtlety. “Operation Bait And Switch” sounded like she was trying to trick him somehow, and “Operation Make Chat Noir Cum” was just downright vulgar.

Besides, it wasn't like her motivations were completely selfless…

Did she feel guilty about her deal with Plagg? Of course! Did that mean she was planning on dirty dialling Chat purely because of guilt?

Not exactly.

Truth was, she was curious. After all the times she’d heard Alya recount her various heated encounters via phone call, Marinette couldn’t help but wonder what the appeal was.

‘*Maybe it's the whole hands-free aspect?*’ she thought, working listlessly through another shift at the bakery as the Friday afternoon rush wound down. She recalled how difficult it had been to keep her fingers focused the last time she and Chat had gotten steamy over text, and the idea of having her grasp freed up for other activities was an attractive one.

But at the same time, she still held reservations about the whole scenario. ‘*What if I stutter?*’ she worried, brow furrowing at the thought of her annoying habit somehow throwing off her master plan. ‘*What if I don’t have anything to say? What if he gets bored and hangs up?*’ Marinette wasn’t exactly what you’d call a flawless conversationalist, especially when she wasn’t Ladybug, and the fear that she would inevitably mess up her first go at phone sex was probably what delayed Operation…

‘*Operation Orgasm?*’

…

‘*No, too alliterative.*'
But of course the most daunting factor working against her was the terrifying, exhilarating reality of actually going through with the deed. This wasn’t words on a screen. She wouldn’t have time to plan her responses. This was her and Chat Noir, in real time, in a very real setting where they would most likely be doing some very real things. The fact that there would be no actual, physical contact between them didn’t really matter, as phone sex (just like its more literal counterpart) was still an exceedingly intimate act, one that flooded Marinette with equal parts longing and trepidation.

Longing because, c’mon… she was a teenage girl with a mysterious hot boyfriend she couldn’t even touch most of the time, and trepidation because said boyfriend was Chat Noir. He was her long-time partner, and as much as she enjoyed being with him, as much as she trusted him, Marinette would be lying if she said the thought of them bringing their relationship to this new level of intensity didn’t scare her just a bit.

‘You can’t really go back to being just friends after you make someone cum.’

So when she found herself still at an impasse exactly a week after she had made her deal with Chat, Marinette had begun to despair of ever working up the courage to actually put her plan into action. She wanted it, she really did, but her old friend Mr. Anxiety just wouldn’t allow her to buck up and press call.

That is… until a golden opportunity presented itself one Sunday afternoon.

She was playing video games (surprise, surprise) when Chat’s messages dinged their way across her home screen.

[ please help ]
[ work is boring ]
[ I NEED ATTENTION TO LIVE ]
[ calm it kitty, im here ]

She snickered at his theatrics, trying to balance her attention between her current boss fight and her boyfriend’s boredom as she alternated between screens. They had hardly spoken all week (outside of the press conference, anyway), and Marinette found she almost missed the annoying way he used to spam her phone with unflattering pictures.

[ thank goodness, I was about to drop dead! ]
[ whatchu up to bugaboo? ]
[ not much, just playing video games ]
[ really now? and here I was thinking you only liked to play with me… ]

Marinette cursed as an oh-so-familiar red screen popped up, helpfully alerting her to the fact she had
died once again. She drew in a breath, glaring at the hated blood splatter motif as the “Continue?”
button flashed tauntingly across the page. At this point it was either let her game rage get the best of
her, or just take it as some divine sign that she had played long enough.

Marinette humbly chose the latter, exiting the game as she settled back with her phone in hand.

[ my favorites are the legend of zoldo and cogs of war ]

[ excuse you, it's the legend of ZARDAR and GEARS of BATTLE ]

[ fake gamer girls :^( !!! ]

‘This meme-loving fuck…’

Marinette tuned on her camera with a mischievous grin, aiming it towards the bottom of her face as
she pressed the edge of her controller against her lips in a humorously played-up pose. After taking a
few shots she decided to take the farce a bit farther, pulling down her camisole so the very top of her
cotton purple bra (as well as a good deal of cleavage) poked out from under it. She then snapped
back into the infamous “fake gamer girl” position, nibbling against the controller as she tilted her
phone down to achieve the best and most ridiculous angle.
It was somewhat surprising how easy sending Chat pictures had become — a far leap from her nervewracking first time. It was almost effortless, and Marinette found herself sending him snapshots of almost anything and everything she did. Whether it was just a simple photo of what she was having for breakfast or a picture of an especially fat bird she spotted in the park, more and more little moments of her life were captured and sent off to the boy, often returned with little glimpses of his own.

She’d seen the sunset from his bedroom window, his booted feet propped up on the cushioned seats of the subway, a vague glance at his place of work (that particular picture looked as if it had been snapped in the wings of a stage, heavy curtains and sound equipment leading her to believe that perhaps Chat was a show tech of some sort).

Each little shot was treasure, one that only fueled her wonderings about who exactly the boy behind Chat Noir was and what kind of life he led. It was a fun and exciting game the two of them played,
toeing the line between hero and civilian with each revealing glance.

Though not quite as fun as….

[ nice control pads… ]

[ you looking for a player 2? ]

‘This guy is seriously trying to flirt with me via video game puns,’ Marinette thought incredulously, eyes rescanning his texts. She wasn’t sure what disturbed her more, the speed at which he had come up with the quips… or the fact they were actually turning her on.

The gears on her head began turn, and dangerously so.

[ you offering to play? ]

[ ill co-op with you any day, babe ;) ]

[ well we do make a good combo ]

[ you know I love it when you talk nerdy to me… ]

Damn, she didn’t have the imagination to keep this up!

[ uuuhhhhh…shit ]

[ something about a joystick? ]

[ help me out here ]

[ might I suggest something along the lines “hey boy…why don’t you let me blow on your cartridge?” ]

[ that way I could respond with “only if you let me put the finishing moves on you” ;) ]

Yep, it was obvious at this point that Chat wasn’t merely looking for some friendly banter.

‘Do it now,’ that scheming part of her brain whispered, low and exciting. She made it behave… but perhaps the voice had a point. Marinette shook her head, trying to clear her mounting anticipation as she made her way up to her room.

[ hey boy… ]
aren’t you supposed to be at work? ]

[ c’mom ladybug, play nice! ]

[ and im actually driving home now ]

‘He’s going home. That’s where he can be alone.’

[ not while youre texting I hope ]

[ *riding home ]

It was too perfect. Puzzle pieces snapped into place, stars aligned, and a multitude of other overused idioms all played out before her. Marinette tried to find a flaw in the timing, tried to pick the situation apart in order to find one reason why she couldn’t do it. Why she couldn’t call up Chat Noir.

It was when she drew up a blank that that familiar roiling motion began to work in the pit of her stomach, half nerves and half something much darker as she laid out the base work of her plan.

[ good, way to be safe ]

[ and need I remind you…I don’t often play nicely :) ]

[ ah yes, how I could I forget… ]

[ my little bug likes to play it dirty… ]

The invitation couldn’t be clearer, not even if it had been one of the hypothetical messages Alya had drilled into her while teaching her friend to spot said invitations, and Marinette’s hands were flying into action before her brain could even think about putting on the brakes.

“Operation Whatever” was a go.

[ I do… ]

[ and im still looking for a player two if you’re interested :) ]

The girl stilled in the middle of her bedroom, a bit stunned that she (Marinette the human disaster) had managed to pull off such a suave opening line on such short notice. No planning, no worrying or rewriting. Perhaps she was spending too much time around a certain smooth-talking alley cat…
Now that was clear consent if she’d ever seen it, and his words made her anticipation double. The act of dotting concealer across her body almost put Marinette in a trance, like she was some fabled Amazon warrior preparing her war paint for battle. The imagery helped temper her nerves, if only for a moment.

After a few seconds the lights were natural, marks were obscured, and all that was left was the actual act of...

Marinette sowed her seeds, allowing the heat curling in the space below her belly to seep into her text with a flirty insinuation she knew Chat wouldn’t miss.

His response almost inspired panic in the keyed-up girl, almost sent her running back to her safe ledge of humor. But after rereading the texts, stilling near the rungs that led up to her bed (her stage), Marinette saw the desperate longing beneath them. He wanted this, but he was in no place to fully enjoy it.

‘Even better…’

Marinette could just picture him squirming in a crowded back seat, and the image would have made her laugh if not for the nervous arousal that still punctuated her every breath. ‘You can do this,’ she
thought, climbing up to her loft with flimsy determination, ‘You're Ladybug, capable of toppling villains and saving the day.’

Though in all honesty, she’d probably be more comfortable facing a thousand akuma at once than attempting her current feat. Marinette took a moment to focus and refocus on the task at hand before reaching out to reply.

[ really? well im all alone… ]
[ …in my room, on my bed… ]
[ …and thinking about all the fun little games we could be playing if only you were here with me right now ]

All right, so maybe she had stolen that line from Alya’s screenshots, so sue her. But the words seemed to have the intended effect, and Marinette couldn’t find it in her to feel guilty about her slight cheat as Chat took the bait. She laid back against the pillows with a bite to her lip.

[ well I know im going to regret this but… ]
[ tell me what you had in mind, my lady ]

‘Think, Mari! What’s the best way to ease into this?’

She got it.

[ you and me ]
[ I like the sound of this… ]
[ super smash brothers ]
[ stock battle, no items, final destination ]
[ ahh, classic choice. i approve! ]
[ ah-ah, not so fast kitty, I haven’t told you the final rule ]
[ which is? ]

‘This better work…’
[ every time we lose a life, we lose an article of clothing ;) ]

His reply told her it had worked.

[ well now I doubly approve, especially considering the fact I saw very few layers in that pic you sent ;3 ]

[ I wonder tho…what would be the first piece to go?? ]

Marinette spotted her second invitation of the day, shifting around in anticipation as a slow grin broke across her face. One hand reached for her waistband…

[ cover your phone screen ]

[ why? ]

Marinette snapped two pictures, surprisingly calm considering the heated nature of her subject. Her sleep shorts bunched over her propped up knees. They filled the frame as she sat up slightly from her lying position to capture the shot of them sliding down her thighs. Likewise, her shirt wrinkled in a similar manner as she teased it up her abdomen, the picturing just encompassing its curve along her ribs, as well as a peek at her toned stomach.

She was getting scary good at using her angles.

[ because the first article of clothing I’d have to take off would be my teeny… tiny… shorts ]
Off went the first shot, rising up into the window at about the same rate her pulse was climbing in her throat.

[ then my even tinier camisole… ]
She didn’t even wait for him the process the first picture before sending the other along as well. (Marinette would rationalize it as an effort for emotional impact, but really the timing was more an attempt to outrun her own steadily rising nerves.) She wasn’t sure what was more exhilarating, the sight of her stripping form displayed in the conversation window…or the three dancing little dots that told her Chat saw them too.

[ please ladybug… ]

[ im almost home ]

Marinette had almost forgotten how fun this could really be, and the girl allowed herself a grin of pure indulgence at his obviously affected reaction. She settled bare-skinned against her comforter, heavy lidded eyes drinking in his plea and deft hands reaching out to respond.
… are you saying you don’t want to hear what I’d take off next? ;)

fucking

fine, alright, just tell me

not until you ask nicely :)

…please ladybug, tell me what you would take off next

well I thought I’d let you pick

so what is it chat? what comes off next?

…do I get to take it off you?

A thrill shot through Marinette at his words and the image of Chat’s (hopefully ungloved) hands working their way around her undergarments flashed unbidden across her thoughts, sending her squirming at the fantasy.

if that’s what you want, yes

well in that case, I choose your panties…

plus my teeth ;3

His forwardness drew a soft gasp from her, waves of heat radiating down her body as shaking fingers reached down to divest herself at his command.

Now her fantasy was supercharged, wandering hands morphing into a grinning mouth as Marinette could almost feel the sensation of Chat’s teeth gently grazing the edge of her panties. Or the crotch of her panties. Or perhaps even…

This time she let her underwear (a plain bikini of white cotton) dangle off the end of a big toe, one leg still propped up as the other draped lazily across her bent knee. That image joined the others with a muted buzz.
[ done and done ;) ]

[ …seems to me like you’d be pretty bad at super smash if you were down to just a bra while I still had all my clothes on ]

‘Cheeky bastard…’

[ oh the bra is gone too ]

[ and please! if we were REALLY playing, I’d have you bare long before I lost my first life >:D ]

[ I wasn’t aware I was supposed to be naked at this point ;) ]

[ well maybe you aren’t… but I sure am… ]
‘Extremely cheeky bastard…’

Another jolt, another pulse of heat that let Marinette know this was right. That doing this with Chat was right. And fuck if right didn’t feel so goddamn good as it whispered over her expanses of bared skin.

The way her chest heaved up against cold air, the way her nipples pebbled not entirely as a result of the temperature, was right.

The coiling in her abdomen, making any thought beyond him (him, and what he could do for her) nothing but a distant fog was right.

The heat across her shoulders, the lips between her teeth, the dampness against her inner thigh was right.

Marinette’s free hand scraped against her sheets, her legs pressed together in a bid to increase the ever growing pressure found between them. It was practically effortless the way she tapped back to her home screen, pulling up the phone icon as lust hazed eyes stared up at the innocuous little “C.N” inscribed there.

She wanted him, so much so that it would have been almost alarming if not for the fact she knew how much he wanted this too.
He went a full minute without responding, a minute in which she positively writhed in anticipation. The anticipation of hearing his voice, of whispering her fantasies where only Chat could hear, of finally allowing her twitching fingers to go to work in exactly the places they so desperately wanted to tease.

‘Commandment number nine…’

[ im alone princess ]

‘…know when to switch.’

[ you have my full attention ;) ]

At the sight of his text flashing across the top of her phone screen, Marinette took a deep breath. And pressed call.
There were certain unspoken (but wordlessly observed) rules in the Agreste household.

Most of them had to do with proper etiquette, simple pleasantries that came with being part of an affluent family. And really, they weren’t all that hard to follow.

1. Hats and jackets were to be taken off at the door.

2. Voices were to remain at a respectable volume.

3. No running.

See? Nothing too outrageous, nothing too hard to abide by. In fact, it had been quite some time since any of those rules had been broken, probably not since the house’s youngest occupant was no more than a four foot streak of blonde hair and baby teeth ricocheting through the hallways. And those days were long past anyway.

But it seemed today was as good a day as any for rule breaking, as evidenced by the fact that that newly-returned (but now much larger) ball of sunshine was currently charging his way through the foyer, gripping his coat tight around him, and taking the stairs two at a time as he called out to Nathalie that he would be unavailable for the rest of the evening.

Needless to say, etiquette was the least of Adrien’s concerns as he positively sprinted towards his room, heart in his throat, phone in his hand, and mind solidly in the gutter.

“Please Chat,” was what Ladybug’s last message had read, and he’d be damned if he’d allow something as unimportant as house rules prolong her wait. Or his for that matter.

So no, Adrien did not feel any remorse for running or shouting. He didn’t feel remorseful for the less-than-gentle way he prodded Plagg out of his coat pocket once they had reached their room, or
for the stern plea he threw at the kwami, begging for his sorely need privacy.

And when at last he was alone, shirt shucked and pants quickly following as eager hands typed out his greenlight texts, Adrien found that remorse was impossible when the heady thrum of arousal struck out across his every limb. Because it was playtime round two, and this time he was ready for anything she could throw at him.

At least that’s what he thought… until his phone began to ring.

Ironically enough, Adrien’s first reaction was irritation. ‘Why would someone choose now, of all times, to call me?’ he thought, staring as his screen for a solid ten seconds before registering the caller ID. When his mind did catch up, however, the irritation was quickly replaced by pure shock and awe at the sight before him.

**Incoming Call: L.B <3**

He never hit answer faster in his entire life.

“Hello?” Adrien said, throwing one knee up on his bed as his heart shifted into an entirely new pulse. ‘Is Ladybug really calling me?’

There was a single breath from the other end of the receiver, followed by an exhilaratingly familiar voice.

“Hi Chat.”

Adrien couldn’t have suppressed his grin even if he tried. “Uh, hi,” he responded, settling fully atop his comforter as he tried to puzzle out why she wanted to talk to him **right now**. He’d been absolutely **certain** they were about to go for sexting round two, but perhaps she'd changed her mind?

There was a long pause.

“Ladybug…?”

“Oh!” she squeaked, the sound followed by a muffled shifting. “Uh, yes Chat?”

“Is there any particular reason you called me?”

“Well I mean, I was planning on making good on my promise…but I can… I can hang up if you want me to…” Adrien’s brow furrowed in confusion. What was she talking about, and why did she sound so nervous?

“No, don’t hang up,” he began, wracking his brain to recall any promises she had made him over the past few months. He drew up a blank. “But… what are you even saying?”

“Shit,” Ladybug muttered over the receiver, and Adrien heard a dull thump that sounded suspiciously like she had smacked her own forehead. “Listen…so I’ve never actually had phone sex before—“

‘Wait, what now?’

“—so obviously I'm not very g-good at this whole thing but…” Ladybug took a deep breath and Adrien followed suit, trying to bring oxygen back up to his brain after it had so quickly shut off at her prior statement. “…But I promised you an orgasm, and I intend to…well, I want to…uh… deliver?”
In an instant Adrien’s mind flashed back to a week ago, when he had (somewhat jokingly) told her all he wanted was to cum… then proceeded to shake hands in agreement to a pact he’d had no fucking clue about. “Deal” she’d told him, and he’d completely missed her meaning altogether.

Now Ladybug was trying to make good on her promise.

Her promise to make him cum.

“You want to have phone sex with me?” Adrien asked, voice miraculously steady despite the way his lower abdomen twitched at his sudden understanding of the situation. ‘Phone sex. Ladybug wants phone sex. This is not a drill people. This is not a fucking drill…’

“Well, I mean, I’m trying to…” Ladybug answered, giving a nervous giggle that shot straight to some deeply rooted part of him. “That is, if you’re comfortable with that?”

Comfortable was a bit of an understatement in this case.

“Yes, absolutely. Oh hell yes!” Adrien cheered, pumping his fist a few times in celebration as he tried not to let out a giggle of his own. There it was again, that curious combination of love and arousal that only Ladybug seemed to conjure out of him. The concoction was deadly, simultaneously turning his mind to sludge and his body to sparks as he tried to remain composed.

“Great,” came her response from the other end of the phone, “sooo…do you have any idea how we start this?”

He did not.

“I guess we should maybe do some foreplay?” Adrien suggested, shifting himself into a lounging position against his pillows as he wracked his brain for any information on how in the world someone actually had phone sex. ‘Homeschooling did not adequately prepare me for this…”

“Oh! Yeah,” Ladybug said, seeming relieved at the tip, “foreplay…”

There was another downright painful stretch of silence.

“Seems like we’re both pretty bad at this…” Adrien said with a wince, rubbing the back of his head with his free hand. Thankfully Ladybug laughed at his quip, and the nervous tension mounting between them seemed to ease up at the melodious sound.

“Yeah, I’m definitely much smoother when I actually have time to plan out my flirts,” she said. “…Plus it’s kind of hard to stutter via text.”

“Oh I don’t know about that,” Adrien replied, letting a fair amount of Chat Noir flirtation creep into his voice in an attempt to bring out her Ladybug confidence. “I still say your voice is far sexier than any message, my Lady. Stuttering or otherwise.”

The nickname seemed to have the intended effect: when his girlfriend spoke again, the sound sent shivers down his spine.

“Well if you think my voice is sexy…you should definitely hear my moans.”

‘I definitely should.’
“Trust me, I intend to,” Adrien assured her, using his free hand to trace his way down his bare torso to nestle in his sparse happy trail.

“Oh really. And how do you plan on making me moan, chaton?” Ladybug asked, low and curious.

“Well for starters, by telling you how hard you’ve got me right now…” He didn’t dare take himself out quite yet, despite how badly he wanted to. Adrien knew the first touch would be the beginning of the end, and he’d be damned if he wasn’t going to stretch this treat out for as long as he could.

The sound she made wasn’t quite what he was aiming for (what she was teasing him with), but the drawn out “mmmm” was enough to make him bite down on his bottom lip in response.

“Well in that case,” Ladybug drawled out, her voice getting more confident with each word, “I guess I should tell you how turned on I am…”

“And just how turned on are you, my Lady?”

“Enough to soak through my panties…that is, if I were wearing any.”

Fuck, he'd almost forgotten her little strip tease earlier. Adrien groaned at the mental picture of her completely nude, writhing atop her sheets as one hand held her phone up to her head and the other…

He suddenly had the burning need to know where her other hand was.

“Are you touching yourself?” he croaked out, putting the portion of his brain not imagining her current position to work making sure he didn’t soak his own underwear. After a brief deliberation, Adrien decided to do away with them altogether, hissing as his swollen cock was freed to rest against his lower abs.

“I’ve been waiting for you to tell me to,” Ladybug practically purred, and her words almost unraveled him at the seams.

“You want me to tell you when you should start letting your fingers wander?”

“Please do,” she said, the breathless nature of her voice betraying just how equally aroused she was getting at the attention. Adrien’s hips slowly dug into the mattress beneath him in response to how turned on she sounded. The thought that he did that, that he brought such an otherworldly girl to such a state of longing, sent a heady jolt of power right to the middle of his chest.

“Then go ahead, princess, explore yourself,” Adrien commanded, fingers (amongst other appendages) twitching with want as he strained to hear any whispered reaction from his girlfriend. He desperately craved the attention of his own hand, the one still rising and falling atop his heaving chest, but wouldn’t allow himself to give in to temptation, knowing how close he was already just from her words alone.

It was almost primal, the desire to ensure she came first, and Adrien wouldn’t let up until she was a puddle against her sheets, until she was a sobbing shaking mess coming apart on the other end of the line. His last thoughts were of himself in that moment, mind still spinning with the image of her slight but powerful body shuddering in on itself, of her sweet voice crying out for him. He lusted after her pleasure more than he could put words to… and so his hand stayed dutifully still.

Finally, mercifully, he heard her speak across the receiver.

“Chat…” Ladybug panted, soft and sensuous.
Adrien came.

He came and it wasn’t a graceful thing. There was no slow shiver fanning down his spine, no coil of pleasure that worked its way across his limbs. If Adrien’s regular orgasm was a cresting wave, then this one was a bursting dam, an explosion of heat in the most instantaneous and brutish of ways.

This was four years of longing condensed into four seconds of blinding pleasure, brought on by a single needy utterance from his object of affection. With hands tangled in sheets and a jerk of his hips up into empty air, Adrien was powerless to stop the crashing sensation as it burst its way out of him alongside a shuddering yelp.

He took a moment to catch his breath.

He recovered his phone from where he’d dropped it atop his bedspread.

He wanted. To die.

“Fuck…I…” Adrien stuttered out, bringing the receiver back up to his ear with shaking hands.

‘ALL THOSE YEARS OF TRAINING WASTED.’

“Ladybug, I just…”

‘COUNTLESS HOURS SPENT DREAMING OF THIS MOMENT AND FOR WHAT?’

“Yes, Chat?” she said, and the sound was a knife stuck into his heaving chest.

‘THREE MINUTES OF ACTUAL PHONE SEX?!?’

“I think you just fulfilled your side of the bargain…” Adrien groaned out, his eyes screwing shut as hot shame mingled with the aftershocks of his sudden undoing in a fiery flush that encompassed his sweat-slicked form. He would never, ever, be able to live this one down.

“You… think?” Ladybug questioned, tone unreadable.

“I know,” he amended with a wince, eyeballing the evidence spattered across his stomach.

Each second of silence that followed was another nail in his coffin until…

It was his girlfriend’s hysterical laugh that put him in the ground once and for all.

“You really? You just…oh my GOD…” She couldn’t even get the rest of her sentence out, the words garbled as a painfully victorious laughed echoed across the receiver. He was ready to burrow under his covers and never come out by the time she finally pulled herself together enough to continue speaking.

“What was that, champ, two strokes?”

“More like none,” Adrien mumbled piteously, seeing no purpose in trying to sugarcoat it now.

“Wait,” Ladybug said, her laughter petering off as wonder flooded her tone, “…so you’re saying I got you off on my voice alone?”
He nodded before realizing she couldn’t actually see him (which was probably a good thing given the fact he probably didn’t look all that sexy pouting on the corner of his bed with a limp dick and a sour expression written across his flushed face).

“You did,” Adrien confirmed, waving his white flag with as much pride as he could muster.

“Holy shit…”

“Yeah—“

“I’m the world’s greatest dirty dialler!” Well, no fighting her on that one.

“I guess that makes me the worst, huh?” he said with a little self-deprecating chuckle.

“I mean, I wouldn’t say the worst…”

“Ladybug, I only lasted for like three minutes.”

“At least it was an amazing three minutes.”

…

“Wait, really?” Adrien asked, perking up at the words. Maybe he could salvage this, maybe he could…

“Well yeah,” he heard her say, voicing sliding back into a less jovial tone to settle somewhere along the lines of…

‘Was that bashfulness?’

“I mean, I was having a good time,” Ladybug continued slowly, “and given a few more minutes I probably would have—“

“Oh my god I didn’t let you cum!”

Adrien wanted to smack himself. He was so hung up on his own lack of self-control that he had completely forgotten the fact she was trying to get off as well!

‘Great, now I’m weak-willed AND selfish,’ he thought, running the hand not holding his phone down the front of his face in shame.

“I-it’s okay,” Ladybug said on the other end, her voice recovering its awkward lilt from the beginning of their conversation. “I can take care of it later if you—“

“No!” Adrien said, wincing as he interrupted her for the second time that night. ‘And the award for shittiest boyfriend on earth goes to…’ He took a deep breath. “I want to help you, especially after you gave me that great of an orgasm.”

“Are you even still in the mood?”

Despite his spiraling self esteem, Adrien grinned.

“Give me a few more minutes plus a few more of your lovely moans and I definitely will be, my Lady.”
“The powerful force that is a teenage boy’s arousal…” Marinette breathed out into her dim room.

“Rivaled only by a teenage girl’s sex drive…” Chat recited back through the phone, and suddenly she was extremely thankful for his youthful stamina.

Marinette made herself comfortable against the pillows beneath her as she prepared to jump back in. Still riding the high of knowing she had gotten him off with her voice alone, the girl couldn’t find it in her to be annoyed by her boyfriend’s early finish.

Turns out making someone orgasm can be a real confidence booster.

“So…what do you say we start this again?” she asked, wiggling in anticipation of what she hoped would be a much longer second round.

“I’d say it would be my pleasure, but this time around it’s all about yours, princess,” Chat purred, regaining his bravado eerily fast for someone who sounded ready to sink down into the earth just a minute ago.

Well, Chat Noir was nothing if not unflappable.

“And just how are you going to ensure my pleasure?”

“Eager are we? Wait and see, my Lady.”

“I’ve done enough waiting for this…”

“Is that so…” Chat drawled languidly. “…How long exactly?”

“Hmmm?” Marinette hummed, haven already fallen headlong back into a lusty haze as her free hand traced fire up her inner thighs.

“How long have you been waiting to do this with me?” her boyfriend clarified, voice pitching low with arousal in a way that only increased the heat across her skin.

“I-I…”

She didn’t have an answer, but thankfully Chat filled the pause.

“I’ve wanted you like this for so long,” he continued reverently, “Since the day you first kissed me… and honestly far before that too… Have I ever mentioned how skintight your costume is?”

“No more skintight than yours,” Marinette answered, appreciatively picturing the planes of his body as they crested out from behind the reflective, black material of his suit.

“I’ll give you that…” Chat conceded with a chuckle, “but you’re dodging my question.”

“Remind me again? My brain’s a little fuzzy right now.”

“I want to know how long you’ve been lusting after me, Ladybug.”

‘Oh, right…’

She took a steadying breath.
“The first time I dreamt about you was the night after our first kiss,” Marinette began, slow and honest as she thought back to when these feelings had been new. She almost wanted to laugh when she remembered how adamantly Past Marinette had tried to deny her obvious desire for Chat. How quickly things change.

‘I’ve got news for you, honey...’ current Marinette waxed ironic, mentally taking two-months-ago Marinette gently by her oblivious shoulder, ‘...you’ve got it bad, and there’s a big storm a-comin’.’

Said storm interrupted her thought with another purred flirtation.

“Was it a good dream, my Lady?”

“Very good,” Marinette assured him, pulling herself from her reverie.

“And what was I doing in your very good dream?”

“You were kissing me… touching me...”

“Funny, I think I’ve had that very same dream about you,” Chat said with a low laugh.

“Oh yeah, and when was that?” Marinette threw back at him.

“Every night for the past year or so.”

“That’s a little much.”

“You’re a little much… Actually, make that a lot of much.”

“I guess I can be a handful at times.”

Chat hummed in response, a plotting sound.

“You know speaking of handfuls…” he began. “Where is...”

“On my breast,” Marinette cut in, having anticipated the question before he could even finish it, “and waiting for you to tell it what to do.”

“O-oh,” Chat said, and his little stutter sent a lick of pride racing down her spine.

‘Boy, was he smitten...’

“I’m getting antsy,” the girl warned, smirking as she heard him curse.

“Sorry, sorry. Mental detour,” her boyfriend winced out, “but I’m back to you now, 100% babe.”

There was a brief pause in which she could almost hear him planning out how to start.

Marinette took pity on the lost kitten.

“If you’d like a hint, my nipple is right there...”

“How could I forget...” Chat murmured, clearing his throat before speaking out clearly. “All right, I want you to cup yourself... then let your fingers trace over your nipple?”

‘Well, he did good up until he made it a question.’

Marinette felt herself shiver nonetheless, hand moving to obey as she played out the motion he
described. She let out a small croon as the pads of her fingers nipped at the pebbled flesh, the sound as much for his sake as her own.

“Is that… is that good?” Chat questioned, and she felt her heart melt a bit at his sincere concern. He really was trying.

“Mmm, very good.” It wasn’t a lie. Something about groping herself at his insistence was indescribably arousing, and the heat of their exchange prompted a heady blush to roll across her shoulders.

“I’m glad to hear it… So do you maybe want to pinch—“

She interrupted with a sharp whine, way ahead of him as she drew her nipple between two fingers

“Well I guess that answers that,” Chat croaked, his breath coming in shallow gasps now alongside hers. “So…Ladybug?”

“Yes?”

‘Think you can wedge the phone against your ear with your shoulder?’

‘What was he…’

‘Ummm… I think so?’ Marinette said, blinking at the sudden request.

“Good,” he remarked voice pitching lower, “I want you to be able to touch yourself with both hands.”

“O-okay.” Marinette flushed hotter as she moved to free up her grasp. There was some muffled rustling as she pinned the device against her head, but eventually the girl found a position that worked. “Where do you want my other hand?” she said at last.

“Well, I thought I’d let you decide where you want it most.”

“My Lady…”

“My Lady…” She smirked at his needy little entreaty.

“Do you know how hard it is for me to not stroke myself right now?” Chat groaned in frustration.

“Hmmm… Extremely hard, I’d imagine,” Marinette said with a triumphant little lilt. Having two hands free meant she could now give equal attention to both breasts, and she grinned at her boyfriend’s obvious desire as she arched up into the electric touch.

“Bingo.”

‘Nuh-uh, no way is this guy finishing again before I do.’

“Well I hate to say it, but I don’t think I can let you touch yourself quite yet,” she sighed, letting a bit of authority creep into her tone. “Not until I get my turn, that is.”

“Understandable.” Chat conceded, though his voice was anything but composed. “But, in the meantime… where would my Lady have me place my hands?” Marinette bit down on her lip. She wanted him to follow her motions.
“Touch your chest.”

“As you wish,” her boyfriend replied, “though I’d much rather be touching yours, my Lady. I don’t exactly have a lot going on around that area. Unlike you.”

“You have plenty,” she assured him, shivering as she thought back to the picture he’d sent her of his bared pectorals. “But I’m serious Chat, chest and thighs only. We don’t need another… interruption… and I will not hesitate to hang up and finish myself if you decide to cockblock me again.”

“Say no more. Besides, as hot as the thought of you going to town on yourself is, I’d much rather be around to hear it.” Marinette let out a breathy moan in response to his words as she pinched and teased at her breasts. Chat followed with an aroused hum of his own, and the sound shot down to mingle with the almost uncomfortable amount of pressure coiled deep in her core.

Don’t get her wrong, the sensation was all well and good, but Marinette thought if she didn’t get the chance to move lower (and soon), she might just go insane. In fact she was seconds away from indulging her desire when Chat’s voice rang out once again.

“So, have you decided where that other hand of yours should wander, my Lady? Because if not, I have a few suggestions…”

‘Impeccable timing.’

“Suggestions?” Marinette piped up, hoping he was thinking along the same track she was. After all, he wasn’t the only kitty craving attention.

“Well, really just one suggestion…”

“Tell me then.”

There was brief pause, an implied hesitation.

“Do you…” Chat began, breathing out what sounded like a conflicted exhalation before continuing to pose his question. “Do you like to finger yourself? I mean… are you comfortable with me asking you to—“

“Yes!” Marinette broke in, biting her lip as she registered the overwhelming need in her voice. “I mean… yes C-chat… I’m comfortable with that.” His sigh in response was as genuine of a prayer as she’d ever heard.

“Well then…” Chat said, voice ghosting through the receiver to skitter along the shell of her ear, “I want you trail your hand down your stomach…”

Down it went, following his instructions as it skated across the heaving plane of skin.

“… part your legs, nice and wide…feel your way up your thighs…”

The pace Chat set for her was tortuously slow and Marinette whimpered, fingers twitching to bury themselves in the pulsing heat just inches away from where she stroked at the seam of her thigh. ‘Please hurry, please let me—’

“…and then… I don’t, uhh…”
Uh-oh, he was floundering again.

“N-next I usually like to start rubbing with two fingers,” Marinette hinted, not bothering to hide her desire as she planted the right idea in his mind. “Up and down… until I’m ready.” Thankfully, he took the idea and ran.

“Good… that’s so good, Ladybug,” Chat panted. “Touch yourself.”

Marinette took that as her cue to go, finally parting her lower lips with a much-anticipated swipe of her digits. She keened, making sure he was aware of her actions as her fingers fell into a familiar rhythm against the impossibly slick flesh of her sex.

“Chat… that’s…” She broke off with a shiver, hips jolting forwards as one finger grazed her most sensitive area.

“I know, Ladybug,” her boyfriend encouraged, the care and want in his voice only spurring her to press harder. “When you’re ready… I-I want you to push a finger inside of yourself… I want you to imagine it’s mine…”

Marinette was only too happy to oblige. Her moan was half in response to his words, and half as a result of her index finger sliding knuckle-deep into her clenching core. And true to her word, she imagined that wonderful “other” belonged to Chat Noir.

“I want it to be… I w-want…” The shivering girl was close to babbling at this point, but she couldn’t bring herself to care. It was all too good.

“Go on, Ladybug… tell me what you want,” Chat begged, barely a step up from her own jumbled incoherency as he panted across the line.

‘I could probably die now, go to hell and still be happy,’ Marinette mused, arousal making her cognition crawl and her fingers fly. No doubt she would definitely end up in hell if she were to expire right now, as the thoughts swirling through her head were nothing if not sinful.

She thought of his body against hers, his voice trailing down her neck. She imagined the planes of his torso, the lilt of his lips, his green eyes tempered with swirling lust. She—

“I want it to be your cock inside of me.”

…I

‘I did NOT just moan that…’

Marinette flushed deeply at her own forwardness, biting into her lip as he growled low in her ear. She hadn’t exactly planned on vocalizing that particular thought, but Chat’s response to the vulgar plea all but dashed any traces of embarrassment she might have felt at her slip of the tongue.

“Fuck… I… I didn’t know my Lady had such a filthy mouth on her.” He sounded taken aback, though in the best of ways.

“Chat—“

“I wish it was my cock too…”

His voice plus that word was a powerful combination, she found, one that socked her dead in the pit of her stomach with raw arousal.
“I wish I could be there,” Chat continued, “to take you any way you wanted.” Marinette writhed at the sound of the wanting groan the boy let out, screwing her eyes shut as a second finger nudged its way through her opening. The tightness was phenomenal. “Tell me...tell me how you’d want me to take you.”

“I...um,” Marinette murmured, trying to force her lust-heavy tongue to cooperate with her down-in-the-gutter thoughts. “...Fast?” Chat gave a breathless chuckle.

“Of course, Princess... as fast as you’d like. But what else?”

“I’d want—” Marinette’s voice broke as her hips rolled up into her working hands. The motion pressed her palm tight against her clit, and the pressure brought a whole slew of filthy expletives rushing up out of her mouth.

“Go on... please go on, Ladybug...”

“I’d want to be on top of you,” she practically sobbed. Marinette clamped the hand previously pinching her breast over her trembling lips, attempting to stem the wave of sound bursting out amidst her mounting pleasure. Needless to say, she didn’t want to wake the entire house when at last she did cum.

“Oh fuck... yes... yes I could definitely see you riding me...”

She could too, and the image only sped her actions further.

“...I bet you’d look so gorgeous... b-bouncing up and down on my lap.” Chat punctuated his speech with another plaintive growl that sent shivers radiating towards the source of her heat. “Do you want to ride me, my Lady?”

‘YES, YES!’

Marinette wanted to reply, wanted to keep telling him all the dirty things she pictured them doing together, but the whispered presence of her own loudmouthed tendencies kept her from removing her hand. She hoped her muffled cry was response enough.

Apparently, it wasn’t.

“Are you stifling yourself?” Chat asked, a sliver of admonishment creeping into his panting tone.

‘Busted.’

“Yes...” Marinette admitted with a squeak, speaking around her fingers before they clamped down to prevent another loud moan.

“Don’t.” It wasn’t a suggestion. “I want you to scream for me, Ladybug.”

“T-c-can’t...” the girl ground out, stilling her hand momentarily in order to get some blood flow back to her brain. “My parents are in the house.”

A beat.

“Well in that case... does my Lady need a gag?” She could tell by his tone that it was supposed to be a tease, but hell if it didn’t give her ideas.

She grinned at his wicked suggestion, chest heaving with her pent-up arousal. Throwing out the hand not buried between her legs to feel around in the space beside her, Marinette located the slip of
fabric she sought and pulled it up to press against her chest

“Not when I have my panties here I don’t,” she said in tease of her own, reveling in that way Chat groaned at her insinuation.

“God…yes…good…” He seemed more than on board.

“I won’t be doing much talking from here on out,” Marinette warned him, “so I expect you to keep up the conversation on your own.”

“Are you actually telling me to talk more?” he asked in an overly incredulous voice. Marinette never thought she’d see the day she’d be able to finger herself and roll her eyes at the same time…

And yet…

“Chat.”

“Just teasing, Buggy,” he soothed, sliding back into his care-filled tone. “Now let's get you that orgasm, okay?”

‘Sounds good to me.’

“Okay…” the girl said, twining her panties within her grasp before a thought occurred to her. “Oh, and Chat?”

“Yes, my Lady?”

“Feel free to touch yourself now.”

And with that last utterance the final countdown began. Balling the soft cotton up her hand, Marinette wedged it between her teeth and clamped down on the material with a murmur that signalled she was ready to continue.

Luckily, Chat seemed to catch the memo.

“I wish I could see you right now,” he began, voice low and hypnotic in a way that seemed to coax her hands back to work. They returned to their prior positions, settling on her breast and mound before greedily kneading at each area. “I’d tell you how beautiful you looked with your legs spread and your… mmmm… your chest out…”

The girl bent herself to mirror his fantasy, parting her thighs as her back arched off the bed in anticipation.

“Are you touching yourself again?”

Marinette let slip an affirmative hum, the sound vibrating out from behind her improvised gag as she let her index finger sink slowly back into her heat. Its passage was aided by the slick essence that had only continued to accumulate with each tickling moment she’d spent teasing herself that evening.

“Good,” Chat said, and his praise made her that much more eager to allow a second digit to join its partner as they curled up against the spot she alone had mapped out within her most intimate parts. Hitting that point sent a jolt of pure pleasure racing up Marinette’s spine, along with the indication that it wouldn’t be long now before Chat had returned his favor in earnest.

“I want so badly to be there…” Her boyfriend’s voice was hungry, reflecting her own heady sense of need as Marinette rocked against her hand with another stifled cry. “I want to be in bed with you, so
my fingers could replace yours... so I could touch you in all the places that'd make you squirm and pant... so I could treat you like the princess you are..."

'I want you here too,' Marinette thought plaintively, unable to voice her confession but hoping her muffled groans made the fact quite clear. Still reeling from her earlier ministrations, the shuddering girl felt herself wind up impossibly tighter with each twitch of her hand.

"I'm so attracted to you... I don't think you even know what you do to me," Chat continued, true to his promise as his voice never ceased. "Thinking about you... thinking about all the things I want to do with you... Fuck, it makes me so hard."

Marinette couldn't help but fantasize at his words, pulling sharply at the peak of her breast as she imagined something much thicker and longer than her twin fingers gliding its way past her love-slick folds.

"I can't wait to have you twitching around my cock... around my fingers... on my mouth... anything and everything you wanted... again and again..."

The noises working their way through her jittering jaw were nothing short of piteous at this point in her high, little cries that synced up with the cant of her hips, with the shudder of her shoulders. Marinette had never wanted to cum more in her life.

"God... Ladybug..." Chat answered with a groan of his own. "God please just keep making those sounds. K-keep pumping your fingers into yourself... and keep teasing at your nipple... just keep moaning. Moan and whimper like that until you cum for me."

If his halting tone was any indication, her boyfriend wasn't far off from his own second coming, and the thought of them climaxing together only brought Marinette that much closer to the end she so desperately desired. Her fingers positively flew.

"Please... please... you're just so beautiful..."

'Too close... too good...'

"...you're beautiful... a-and incredible... I can't believe you're mine..."

Something about the word ignited her, and her hand's ministrations reached a fever pitch as the girl ground and thrust and wiggled her way towards sweet release. Marinette's body fluttered, a phenomenal heat radiating out from the space between her thighs as Chat's voice egged her ever closer.

'Too hot... too right...'

"Cum for me. P-please just cum for me, my Lady..."

It was that last, longing pant of her pet name that finally undid Marinette. A high, shuddering keen worked its way up her throat, mixing poignantly with the sound of her boyfriend spurring her on as she came loud and hard, clamping around the two fingers still inside herself with a rolling shiver. Through her ecstasy Marinette vaguely registered the fact that her makeshift gag did very little to actually stifle the noise of her crashing pleasure, but she couldn't find it in her to worry about that now.

Because now she was writhing.

Writhing and shaking and stilling her hands in a vain attempt to somehow stem the flow of now all-
too-good pressure working against her over-sensitized flesh. Every part of her throbbed and pulsed, heartbeat echoing its way through her twisting chest as Marinette was swept up in a hazy wave of sensation. This orgasm was heat and motion, the ferocity of it doubled by the fact she could hear Chat follow her over the threshold as he finished loudly in her ear.

“My Lady… my Lady…” he murmured over and over, easing her down from her tightly coiled state as Marinette sunk boneless into her bedsheets.

And suddenly everything felt just right. There was no more excess of heat, no more mounting pressure. Just their mingled breaths and hidden smiles pressed against their glowing phone screens.

Still shuddering in the most pleasant of ways, Marinette allowed herself a moment to soak up Chat’s whispered adorations (his lady, she was his lady), before making a move to properly orient herself again. The hand buried between her twitching thighs slid from its position, trailing wetness in its wake as Marinette’s fingers worked their way up to free the bikini from where it was bunched between her teeth.

Her first semi-coherent thought was, ‘Well…that was fucking amazing.’

Pure. Eloquence.

“Chat… kitty…” Marinette breathed, spiraling earthbound from her high as she spoke low into the receiver. The words were almost lazy, the way they rolled off her love-slackened tongue bringing to light just how much her orgasm had taken out of her. ‘But this is a good kind of tired.’

Chat seemed to gather up the pieces of himself before she did, speaking up in a wondrous croon that only stood to further the way Marinette’s stomach fluttered in her post-orgasmic bliss. “That was… absolutely incredible. You, my Lady, are absolutely incredible.”

“You aren’t so bad yourself,” Marinette hummed out between breaths, her blush taking on new meaning as the reality of her situation dawned on her once again.

‘I just had phone sex with Chat Noir.’

But she would find the time to freak out about it later because…

“I don’t know…” Chat nudged from the other end of the line, “that last noise you made sounded a hell of a lot better than ‘no-so-bad’, wouldn’t you agree?” She could practically sense his shit-eating grin.

“Don’t you push it, or I hang up,” Marinette warned, giving an endearing eye roll at how quickly her alley cat had regained his swagger. ‘Big talk from the guy who came from my voice alone,’ she thought smugly.

“You wouldn’t dare,” her boyfriend replied with an easy chuckle. “You like it when I talk, remember, Bugaboo?”

She hummed, but didn’t contest him.

“Chat, we’re both lying naked in bed after bringing each other to orgasm… maybe find something better to call me than Bugaboo.”

“My scarlet goddess?”

“No.”
“Lovebug?”
“Eh, closer.”

“Princess Loudmouth?”

“Only if I get to call you Prince Premature.”

“You know… if you hadn’t just given me the best two orgasms of my life, I would have probably hung up on you just now.” Marinette giggled at his audible pout.

“Well I hate to say it,” she began, “but we probably should hang up soon…” The girl pulled her phone back to eye the little ’10:23’ atop her screen. ‘Have we really been on the line this long?’

“Well I can’t argue with that,” he conceded with a sigh. “…Hey, Ladybug?”

“We should… I mean… I’d really like to do this again, and not just the sexy parts.” Chat paused, and when he spoke again, Marinette could hear the longing smile in his words. “I just really like talking to you.”

“I like talking to you too,” she responded, grinning into the darkness of her room at their shared sense of childlike giddiness. “So yeah, we should do this again.”

“Awesome.”

A warm silence that neither of them were eager to break stretched on before his soft voice rolled out of the receiver to wrap its way around her ear.

“So I guess I’ll see you on patrol this Wednesday?”

“If Paris isn’t attacked between then and now, absolutely,” Marinette replied sleepily.

“Perfect, I look forward to it as always.”

“As do I. …Goodnight kitty.”

“Sweet dreams, my Lady.”

As much as she had grown to love the sight of Chat’s signature heart emoji, Marinette found she enjoyed the sound of him bidding her goodnight even more. Especially with his orgasm still evident on his tongue. And when at last she begrudgingly hit ‘End’, she couldn’t help but grin at the warmth that still settled across her, heavier and more comfortable than the blanket atop her bare skin.

“Operation Whatever” had been a soaring success, even if there were a few hiccups along the way, and Marinette couldn’t have been more content as she rolled over to burrow her flushing face into the
pillow beneath her.

She couldn’t wait to see him again.

As luck (whether good or bad) would have it, the teen didn’t have to wait until patrol to see her boyfriend again…

…because she ran into him during her lunch hour the very next day.

Marinette could only freeze on the street corner leading to her and Alya’s favorite café, taken aback by the sudden spotting. They’d walked this route almost every day like clockwork for the past two years, and the thought that she could possibly encounter Chat in such familiar territory wasn’t one Marinette had ever paused to consider.

Yet there he was before her.

Him and his cocky grin (the one that pulled at the lips she so was oh-so familiar with).

Him and his peridot eyes (they always glimmered like that when challenged to a race across the rooftops).

Him and his confident posture (shoulders leaned back, hips thrust forward, one hand behind the head).

Him.

Marinette’s eyes laser focused, body stilling and mind spinning as she took in the sight of her boyfriend unmasked and in broad daylight. He didn’t move either, pinned under her gaze as he held his pose indefinitely.

Not surprising, seeing as though he was a picture on a billboard.

And billboards simply didn’t move… not even if they were advertising the illustrious Agreste brand.

…

“Mari… are you alright?”

“Kill,” Marinette responded casually, voice dangerously chipper and verging on the psychotic. Giving her best friend a swift nod before turning on her heel, the girl set off in a single-minded march down the road she knew would lead her back home.

“Uh, alright…” Alya said from behind her, apparently getting the hint to not question any further. “So you wanna hang out later tonight or…”

Marinette didn’t answer, probably because she couldn’t hear over the frantic rush of blood pumping behind her eardrums. Either that, or because she was too enthralled by her own whirring thoughts, too enthralled by the image now branded across the forefront of her brain.

The billboard image of a bed-headed Adrien Agreste, broad shoulders trapped under a black leather jacket and grinning mouth lined with striking tangerine lipstick.
It was the very same shade that had clashed so horribly against her complexion, the one that had taken an insane amount of effort to finally remove from her kiss-stained cheek. The one he had jokingly patterned her with the night he told her he’d love the girl under the mask, regardless of who she was.

And despite the world-shattering, fabric-unravelling flood of realization she currently faced, Marinette did have to admit once again…

‘It really was a good color on him.’

Chapter End Notes

Remember when everyone thought the reveal would go down because Adrien would recognize Ladybug’s lipstick? :^)
Chapter 28

Chapter Summary

In which plot finally makes a reappearance.

Chapter Notes

So I’d like to address some of the responses to the last chapter. While most of the feedback I got was positive (I live for your guys’ funny comments <3) , there were a fair amount of people who had some complaints over the placement of the reveal. Namely, that they thought I put it in too early…

This fic is the longest in the ML section on A03. We are literally more than 100k words in. Ive written 27 chapters for you. How in the world can this be considered too early?

I get it. Most of my critics have said they didn’t expect the reveal to come so quickly (lol) after I published the mercy release chapter, but I’m here to tell you…. A REVEAL DOES NOT NECESSARILY MEAN THE END IS NEAR. Sometimes the reveal can be used as a stepping stone for further situations, which is what I plan for this one to be.

So, for future reference, if you find fault with the way I write my story, please don’t complain into my tumblr ask box or try and tear me down via comment. There is a much quicker and easier way to resolve your negative feelings…

Stop reading my fic!

Bye haters, enjoy sinners.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Adrien missed Marinette.

See, most days he could get through French class without complaint (due in no small part to his friend’s ever-sunny demeanor), but today Marinette was nowhere to be found. It was surprising given that he’d seen her earlier in homeroom, but whatever the reason for it, her absence only sucked any lingering traces of joy from the room.

Adrien sighed, letting his head drop onto his desk with a quiet thud. It was review day, meaning the classroom was full of muted conversation and half-hearted attempts at studying.

He didn’t even bother.

‘I could do this in my sleep,’ Adrien thought, shooting a weary glance at his vocab list. ‘Practically child’s play.’

So he elected to continue lounging, thankful that his teacher seemed too occupied with something at her desk to call him out on his slouched idleness. He might have considered cracking a book if his
study partner had been there, but as things stood, Adrien would much rather spend his free time
letting his mind wander.

And he knew just where to let it wander to. Getting comfortable at his desk, he thought back to a few
hours ago with a grin.

Adrien wasn’t exactly what you would call a morning person, and he most definitely was not a fan
of Mondays on pure principle alone.

That being said, this Monday morning had gone incredibly well.

It had started (like most all his mornings did) with a tinny alarm and a sleepy groan. However his
usual gogginess had faded quickly, only to be replaced with glorious recollection as he’d registered
the fact he wasn’t wearing pajamas.

‘Oh, yeah…’

He’d rolled on to his back, sheets wrinkling beneath his heavy form as a wondrous grin stretched his
sleep-deadened cheeks. The grin had only furthered as each little memory slotted its way into the
forefront of his mind, fire racing up his chest in a paltry imitation of the inferno he’d felt the night
before until he was thoroughly flushed.

It hadn’t been a dream.

He’d had phone sex with Ladybug.

He, Adrien Agreste, had laid back in bed, groaning out his fantasies and directing his girlfriend’s
motions as he helped her bring herself to orgasm.

It had all seemed so surreal in the faded light of the infamous morning-after — his room had looked
quite a bit different than it had when he’d had Ladybug panting across the line in the dark of night. In
fact he’d felt a momentary clench of doubt, questioning whether or not their steamy encounter had
really happened.

So he’d reached for his phone, pulling it off its charging port in the desperate hope that it hadn’t been
a dream after all (God knew he’d had enough fantasies about her for imagined phone sex to not be
outside of the realm of possibility).

Thankfully, his text messages didn’t lie.

From the video game puns (complete with her joking yet deliciously sinful “gamer girl” picture), to
the invitation for playtime round two and all the way up to his girlfriend’s erotic strip-tease, none of
their sexting had been a fantasy, which had led Adrien to the conclusion the their subsequent phone
call also must have occurred.

His greedy eyes had re-scanned the images, his heart thudding with an entanglement of love/lust.

Head still down, Adrien shifted in his desk seat as he recalled his reaction to rereading the texts.
Even now, he could still hear Ladybug’s moans.
Her whimpers.

Her stifled screams.

All the little sounds she had made while in the throes of ecstasy and all the little sounds that were now branded into his core. Together they had formed a new and all-encompassing goal that had stuck under Adrien’s very skin with quiet urgency.

He needed to be the one to pull those noises from her.

He needed to be there with her, needed to have those sounds shrill down his eardrum, crash into the plane of his collarbone, and echo across their lips so he could swallow the pleas that he alone inspired from his Lady.

Because while it had been at his urging (his words, his moans) that she’d made those shattering sounds in the first place, it had ultimately been her own fingers that had brought Ladybug to her pleasure. Not that that thought wasn’t incredibly arousing, but Adrien couldn’t help but want to take it a step further, to see what kind of utterances he could draw from Ladybug. With his fingers, his mouth.

In the morning he had recalled with perfect clarity how she'd said that she wanted his cock…

…and the memory of her begging for it had roused that particular organ back to life.

But the clock had ticked its reminder that school would be starting in less than an hour, so the teen had ignored his need, still far too sated from last night’s tryst to consider indulging himself a third time. Instead he'd pushed himself out of the embrace of his bed to begin his morning routine.

Which had started, as per usual, with a wake up text to his Lady-love.

[ rise and shine sweetness <3 ]

[ did you have nice dreams or naughty ones? And were they about me? ]

Ladybug had the most charming tendency to sleep through her alarm, and after hearing her complain about her third tardy slip of the semester, Adrien had made it his own personal prerogative to text her every morning and not stop until she answered. Sure his girlfriend had griped about it at first, spouting some line about stupid cats and their inability to be ignored, but the fact she didn’t ask him to stop let Adrien know that she secretly appreciated his efforts to help reform her attendance.

Of course he didn’t dare attempt his little stunt on the weekends.

He was concerned, not suicidal.

[ too tired to dream. too tired to GET UP. ]

[ still worn out from last night? ;3 ]
She was the cutest grump he had ever had the pleasure of knowing, and her petulant reply had only
inspired a laugh to bubble up out of the boy while he’d made his way to the bathroom and fallen into
his rigorous skincare routine. It had taken less than two minutes for his phone to buzz again, drawing
his head out from under the cool water and his hand towards the device.

[I am, remind me again why I thought staying up til midnight on a school night was a good
idea? ]

[ it probably wasn’t, but boy am I glad we did ]

[I guess youre right ]

[ well, at least I had a lot of fun… ;) ]

‘Good to know I keep my lady satisfied…’

[AH HA! So we DID have phone sex! ]

[I know, I was there! ]

[tbh I thought it might have just been a wet dream?? ]

[id like to think im a bit better than a dream ]

[ that you are my lady ;3 ]

Their conversation had petered on for the next half hour or so. The easy banter carrying Adrien
through his lonely breakfast, his solitary car ride, and right up until class rules had dictated he put his
phone away.

Which is why he was more than a bit confused to feel it vibrating now, the motion snapping him
back to the present.

With a quick glance to make sure the teacher was still occupied, Adrien pulled himself out of his
musings and slipped his phone from his pants pocket to glance down at the device. ‘It isn’t like
Ladybug to send texts in the middle of the day…’

He opened her message with a quirked brow.
‘Cool it,’ Adrien chided himself, trying not to get too excited at Ladybug’s words, ‘you’ve already misinterpreted her text once before, don’t go jumping to conclusions.’

He tried to reel in his suspicions, he really did. But it was difficult for his mind not to immediately plunge into hell, especially considering everything they’d done the night before.

Adrien somehow managed to not buckle.

‘She probably just wants to move up the patrol,’ Adrien rationalized, not letting his ardor get the best of him as he shifted around in his seat. ‘Ladybug is probably busy on Wednesday so she—’

The next message he got was an address, and Adrien had to fight down a wicked wave of déjà vu.

‘is this about an akuma?’

‘no’

‘Double oh.’

‘well then are we taking a patrol?’

‘no, I just really need to see you’

Adrien eyeballed conclusions… and plowed right into them.

His stomach twitched, heart thumping at her words and stuttering with glee when Ladybug’s next message arrived. Now there was no mistaking the invitation.

‘so are you coming or what?’
'I certainly hope so,' Adrien thought, suddenly much less bored than he had been just minutes ago as he typed out a hearty affirmation.

[of course, my love <3 ]

With the anticipation of seeing Ladybug again now swirling deliciously in his chest, Adrien found the second half of his French class to be significantly better than the first.

Marinette or no.


Marinette couldn’t tell you how she managed to get home after “The Sighting”™, but somehow she did.

Pushing through the doors of the bakery before making her way upstairs, she vaguely registered her own voice calling out to her parents, spinning some gossamer-thin excuse before her trapdoor was closed and her bag hit the ground.

She was silent.

She was absolutely, positively silent.

She was silent as she unthinkingly made her way up into her loft, silent as she pushed herself down atop her mattress, and silent as she ruminated on everything she had just witnessed.

She stayed silent because if she didn’t…

She’d be screaming.

And if today were, in fact, the day she was finally going to lose her mind, Marinette wanted to bid it farewell with some dignity. Her brain deserved that much at least.

“Are you okay?” Tikki asked softly, the care evident in her tone as she flitted around her sprawled-out companion. Marinette rolled on to her back at the sound of the kwami’s voice, peering up at the red creature as she swallowed down the lump in her throat.

“It’s Adrien,” she whispered hoarsely, staring up at her ceiling but not at all seeing. “Adrien is Chat Noir.”

Just vocalizing the statement was enough to send another jolt of panicked excitement down her spine, as if speaking the words aloud somehow cemented their blinding accuracy.
The way she said it was not a question, was not a theory or hypothesis. It was a realization. It was solid truth. “Adrien is Chat Noir.”

Tikki gave a sigh, floating down to rest atop their shared pillow before continuing on in a soothing voice.

“I know this isn’t how you wanted to find out,” the kwami began, sweeping her tiny mitts over Marinette’s brow, “...and I’m sorry you had your choice taken away, but... maybe it’s good you finally learned the truth?”

“I was going to tell him... We were going to...” Marinette trailed off, allowing herself a second to wallow in self-pity at the whole situation. Of all the ways she'd imagined finding out who her partner was, this took the cake for most ridiculous.

It wasn’t supposed to be like this.

It wasn’t supposed to be Adrien.

Except it was him, and it had been him all this whole time. The boy she’d long chased after and the young man who had finally caught her were one in the same.

Three years Marinette had spent dodging Chat's advances, three years spent denying and sidestepping... all so she could fawn over his civilian self.

It would have almost been funny if not for the sheer insanity of the situation.

“Well, I think you’re handling it pretty well,” Tikki ventured, sugarcoating her words with sickly sweet encouragement. “Honestly, I’d always just assumed you would completely freak out when you discovered Adrien was—“

The kwami’s eyes blew wide with regret as she quickly snapped her jaw shut. Though not quickly enough, if Marinette’s gasp of recognition was any indication.

“You knew!” the girl yelped accusingly, sticking a finger in Tikki’s crossed eyed face. “You knew and you didn’t tell me?!?” Marinette felt the fingers of her free hand twine in the blankets beneath her as she impaled her tiny friend with a bewildered glare, trying to process the implications of this discovery.

“You didn’t want to learn Chat’s identity!” the kwami reminded her, throwing two hands up in a placating gesture.

“I've been crushing on Adrien for four years, Tikki! Why would you think I wouldn’t want to know he was Chat Noir?!”

“Because that’s exactly what you told me!”

The only response Marinette could conjure was a drawn out yell, dampened by the pillow she pushed against her face as she threw herself back down onto the bed. The muffled sound was a strange one — a scream filled with tension, yes, but also much more than that.

Regret?

(She wanted to go back, wanted to un-see his trademark mop-top, un-glimpse his rakish smile, un-know his true identity.)
Check.

Longing?

(She did not, however, want to un-feel his lips against her temples, or un-learn the way his presence made her feel wanted… feel supported.)

Check.

Frustration?

(Goddamnit she had been so close! So close to feeling comfortable with letting their guises slip and their civilian selves meet. And with one chance sighting, one fluke encounter, the entirety of her grit had fled. Her choice had been taken away.)

Double Check.

Anger?

…

No, Marinette couldn’t find it in herself to be angry… not at Chat, anyway. Not at Tikki, or Adrien, or really anyone for that matter. Sure, she was scared and confused and maybe even a little bit exhilarated… but never angry.

And as much as she was still reeling from her unwanted discovery, as much as she wanted to punch something for the sheer sensation of fist to surface contact, Marinette felt herself sliding back into that oh-so-familiar mindset of frustration instead.

‘This isn’t happening. This can’t be happening…’

And that’s when the denial kicked in.

Like someone had flipped a switch in her mainframe, Marinette went from simply processing her situation to full-on trying to disprove it had ever occurred. A million conflicts, a million little dissuasions began churning around in her thoughts, each more far-fetched than the last as she desperately tried to reason her realization away.

‘Adrien can’t be Chat, he’s too…’

‘And Chat is…’

‘They both…’

Her arguments were feeble, and their pathetic desperation only made Marinette’s guts tie up into ever-increasing knots as she curled up on her side.

After an indeterminable period of reflection, Marinette came to the conclusion that she knew only two things for sure.

1. Adrein Agreste was Chat Noir.
2. She needed to confront him about it.

This kind of knowledge wasn’t the sort of thing you could just hide from your partner/classmate/boyfriend/whatever, and Marinette knew any attempt on her part to cover this up would only lead to more drama down the road.
Of course, that didn’t make the idea of what she had to do any less terrifying.

‘No,’ Marinette thought adamantly, letting her lingering frustration fill her with purpose as she reached for her phone, ‘this gets sorted out now.’

She tapped at the icon labeled “C.N.”

[ I need to see you ]

[ tonight at 9 ]

Marinette wanted nothing more than to curl up and nap her problems away. She wanted to just sleep and sleep until she woke up in a world where things made sense, a world where cats were cats and boys were boys and both species left her the fuck alone.

But she didn’t.

Because she was Ladybug, goddamnit, and Chat Noir was going to give her some answers.

[ no problem, where should we meet? ]

She took a breath, typing out the address of the infamous street corner and pressing send.

[ is this about an akuma? ]

[ no ]

[ well then are we taking a patrol? ]

[ no, I just really need to see you ]

Irritation flared as he paused in his reply. ‘Let's go Agreste, I know it’s review day so you’ve got plenty of time to respond…’

[ so are you coming or what? ]

…

[ of course, my love <3 ]

His message was a double-edged sword, impaling her with equal parts swooping glee and crashing
guilt.

‘How in the world did I manage to trick Adrien Agreste into thinking he loves me?’ Marinette thought with a groan, rolling over to throw an arm over her eyes.

Much to her chagrin, she couldn’t quite stomp down the lingering butterflies of giddiness that took flight at the mere insinuation that her (not-so) forgotten crush’s feelings for her went beyond that of just friends, and the sensation festered in the pit of her stomach, heavy and dull.

‘He loves a lie.’

Marinette had never felt so undeserving of his or Chat’s (‘So I guess really just his…’) affection in her entire life.

It wasn’t fair! Here he was, thinking he was having some fantasy relationship with a poised and beautiful heroine of the night, when in all actuality he’d been making out with his clumsy, plain-faced, disaster of a classmate for the past—

“FUCK,” Marinette shrieked, bolting upright as Tikki startled at the sudden movement, “I’VE BEEN MAKING OUT WITH ADRIEN AGRESTE FOR THE PAST TWO MONTHS!”

Correction: she had been doing much more than just making out with Adrien over the past two months, and the sudden recollection sent her into another tailspin.

“I was wondering when you’d catch on to that,” her kwami mumbled.

The teen didn’t hear. Couldn’t hear.

Marinette sat gasping in her bed, mentally reliving each touch and flirt and tease the two of them had thrown each other’s way since the beginning of their relationship as she tried not to combust from pure embarrassment alone. Somehow, the more physical aspect of their… entanglement… had gone right over her head, lost in the background noise of her prior breakdown.

But boy if Marinette didn’t notice it now.

She’d had her tongue down Adrien Agreste’s throat.

She’d ground down on Adrien Agreste’s erection.

And just the other night, she had…

Nope.


Marinette buried her head deep into her pillow, letting out a squeak as she willed the memory of her and Chat’s illicit phone sex encounter away in another strenuous feat of denial. The mental picture of Adrien, sweat-slick and lust-consumed as he whispered dirty promises of things to come through his cell was almost enough to break her, and Marinette felt like she may just evaporate into nothing as she desperately forced the image away.

But this wasn’t something she could just ignore. There had been pictures, there had been words, and eventually… there had been orgasms.

‘You can’t really go back to being just friends after you make someone cum.’
Marinette ripped an eye off her cat shaped body-pillow.

The rest of her afternoon was spent first in quiet processing (‘oh, this is happening’) then more loud discussion with her kwami (“Honestly Marinette, I’m not sure how you didn't see this coming beforehand…”) and finally with some good old-fasion avoidance. Avoidance of her responsibilities, avoidance of homework, avoidance of friends and boyfriends, and (in one special case) avoidance of both in one person.

She missed her second half of classes as well as the dinner her mother had tried coaxing her down to eat, opting instead to barricade herself in her bedroom with a metaphorical “no boys allowed” sign taped to her door while she indulged in some sorely needed contemplation. Marinette might have felt guilty over her childish denial of responsibilities if not for the fact that there was absolutely no room for additional emotions alongside the relentless flood of pure, visceral realization that thrummed through her brain and skittered down her body.

The way she saw it, the confrontation could go one of three ways:

In the first scenario, Chat would be pleased at his sudden unmasking, instantly transforming back into Adrien as he implored Ladybug to reveal herself so they could run off into the sunset.

In the second scenario, Chat would be pissed, blaming her for the fact his identity had been compromised before ending their relationship and leaving Paris for all eternity.

And of course there was a third scenario, one in which Chat was not, in fact, Adrien, and the only thing to come of the whole situation would be some incessant teasing at the idea Ladybug thought he was a model before things returned to how they usually were.

‘I fucking wish…’

Needless to say, that last option was looking more far-fetched by the minute, but the other two were still very real possibilities.

Marinette didn’t know which one was more nervewracking.

The thought of losing him and the fear of her own reveal weighed equally heavy upon her shoulders as the girl spun listlessly in her office chair, trying to steady her heart rate as the minutes ticked down.

‘Whatever the outcome, I still have to do this,’ she told herself firmly.

8:45 pm.

Marinette looked up at Tikki, the kwami giving her a heavy nod of understanding before pressing a kiss to her chosen’s cheek.

This time her Miraculous transformation did little to temper the swell of anxiety that worked into a lump in her throat. And while physically it was Ladybug who climbed out onto the moonlit roof minutes later, the figure making her way towards the west end was all Marinette.

All clenching jaw and flushing face.

All tongue-tied words and stumbling feet.

Everything she was… and nothing he deserved.

Marinette planted herself in front on the billboard at ten to nine, averting her eyes from the damning
Marinette couldn’t feel much at the moment.

She breathed out into the night, watching tiny puffs of fog accompany her exhalations and wondering which boy would show up to meet her.

Adrien practically hovered across the Paris skyline, navigating his way toward the meeting space his Lady had dictated as he happily whistled away. The young man had been riding a high for the past 24 hours or so, a high that was swathed in dotted red and made of smirks and luck and kisses. Not even his earlier back-to-back fitting sessions could bring him down; the anticipation of seeing his girlfriend again far outweighed any petty complaints he may have had about his bloated schedule. In all honesty, his father could work him to the bone all day every day for the rest of his life as long as the nights were kept free. Because Adrien would gladly face a million photoshoots if it meant he got to see Ladybug at the end of each one.

Needless to say Plagg didn’t exactly share the sentiment. There had been a rather heated discussion between them earlier over what constituted “necessary transformation situations” (as well as a great deal of asking… then pleading… then finally bargaining) but Adrien didn’t dwell on it. Any trade-off was worth the prize of whatever his Lady had in store for him on this crisp October night.

(Of course, now he had to explain to Nathalie why it was absolutely crucial that he have a fondue fountain installed in his room at the earliest convenience.)

‘Problems for later…’ Adrien thought, winding down to a sauntering pace as he neared his destination.

Chat Noir was in fine form tonight, folks, making excellent time as he touched down onto the corner rooftop and swaggered his way to the edge. Peeking over the precipice, the hero could just spot (ha!) his partner, back turned in his direction as she lazily shifted herself from side to side. Adrien allowed himself only a second to admire the way she moved before his need to annoy her outweighed his need to ogle her. He grabbed his staff with a grin.

Ladybug had excellent senses, no doubt about it, but even her hearing was no match for his stealth — a fact Adrien used to his advantage as he sneakily extended his baton to plant it in the concrete just feet behind her. Years of practice had honed his movements, meaning he was nearly silent as he landed on the pads of his boots and quickly retracted his weapon.

He slid up behind her in a stalking motion worthy of his namesake, body moving slowly and eyes never leaving the target before him. ‘Heeeere Buggy Buggy……’

He pounced.

Ladybug jumped as one of his arms wrapped around her waist, the other clapping a light hand over her eyes as the cat joyously beamed against the crown of her head.
“Guess who?” Adrien sang out, holding her tight as she wiggled in his grasp.

“Chat—“

“Correct!”

“Chat,” she repeated, slowing to stand stock still as she spoke out into the night. Ladybug tilted her head back, eyes widening almost comically as his hand fell away and she took in his shit-eating smirk. “We— um… Well, I… I didn’t come here to p-play around…”

“That’s a shame, I like it when she wants to play,’ Adrien couldn’t help but think, feeling a burst of affection at her uncharacteristic shyness as he whirled his girlfriend around in his arms. ‘She’s probably just feeling bashful after what we did last night.’

Adrien decided to put her at ease.

“Well, purr-haps my Lady would like to tell me why it is she did invite me here on this lovely evening?” he murmured, voice soft and filled with care as he slotted himself against her with a pleasant shiver. Adrien bent down, nestling his forehead in the wondrous spot between her neck and shoulder that seemed to fit him like a glove before slowly easing them into a subtle sway.

“I came here to t-talk…” Ladybug responded, gingerly letting herself be pulled alongside him. Had he not fallen completely under the spell of her familiar scent, Adrien might have noticed the way her words caught against her tongue, the way they vibrated up from her chest in an anxious buzz.

But frankly the boy was gone, and Ladybug’s strange cadence went unnoticed.

“Really now?” Adrien pressed his lips to the seam of her collar, speaking against the skin he found there. “See, I thought we did plenty of talking last night.” His tone pitched just slightly lower, rumbling like a purr out from his dark swaddled chest as he continued to tease at her thrumming pulse. “Well, that is, I talked and you mostly just moaned, but hey…”

He swooped up, whispering the words into her pursed lips.

“…I’m not complaining.”

Ladybug gasped at the kiss.

Chat Noir grinned through it.

And all the built-up heat from the last day and a half channeled itself out, drawn towards her presence as Adrien let it guide him forward. The first touch was all it took for him to never want to stop, his mouth joyously capturing hers as gloved hands situated themselves atop Ladybug’s hips.

“So— Her words fell away as he soothed them with his tongue, groaning as he sampled her uniquely intoxicating flavor once again. The new knowledge of all the noises that particular mouth could make only tripled its sweetness, and Adrien swore he could taste the sound of her escaping pleasure as the memory of her undoing resurfaced in his mind.

Ladybug clutched at him, not quite drawing him closer (as was usually the case) but not pushing back, either. Just clinging, as Adrien continued to lead the embrace.

He pulled back just enough to inhale, fingers climbing up her ribs as poignant recollection sparked a craving heat in him.
Those noises, her noises…

Whatever it took, he needed to make her moan.

“Did I remember to tell you how beautiful you sounded when you came for me, my Lady?” Adrien husked, shaking his head down in wonder at the girl. Ladybug gnawed her lip, alerting his eyes to the fact they were still there for the taking, and inadvertently issuing a challenge he was all too eager to accept.

“Cha—mmmffmlphh.” Again, whatever request she had was lost as Adrien tried to thread himself into her very being. Ladybug moved differently than usual, less rolling with the embrace and more rolling alongside it, her off-kilter reaction prompting Adrien to press even closer.

Alternately kissing and whispering along her lips, the hero was floating, drowning in the simple pleasure of having his Lady so close again.

Mine…mine…mine.

“I’ve wanted to do this all day,” Adrien confessed, drawing her taut against the line of his body before smothering her mouth with his once more.

“We—“

Another scorching kiss prevented whatever it was Ladybug had to tell him, and the girl mumbled into the embrace for just second before relinquishing her lips. If Adrien noticed anything off about the way she not-quite returned his kiss, he never gave an indication.

Hers…hers…hers…

Adrien didn’t know why he felt the desperate need to rush, the need to ensure that they were never separated for more than a moment’s breath. He was hers after all (Ladybug has told him as much many a time before), so the breakneck pace at which he latched onto her mouth was entirely unnecessary.

Because surely there would be a next time, and even a time after that.

Surely there would be more kisses and caresses, each more precious than the last.

Surely there would be—

“STOP,” Ladybug all but shouted, breaking their kiss with the force of her lips as they expelled the word in a firm reprimand. The command shattered the silence of the roof, lodging its way into Adrien’s eardrums and immediately halting his actions with its urgency.

Stop… stop… stop…

Adrien fell back at once, retracting his hands and blinking through his love-fogged vision to focus on her face. What he saw when his eyesight cleared was enough to make his throat close up in the most gut-wrenching of ways, stomach dropping to his knees as he registered his girlfriend’s wrecked appearance.

Ladybug was falling apart, and not in the way one should after being kissed.

She was flushed, yes, but not just from exertion. In fact the red of her face was almost alarming, especially when paired with the knit of her brow and the thin line of her freed lips.
But it wasn’t any of those things that suddenly socked Adrien in the abdomen with bitter self-loathing…

It was the tears that sat perched in the eyeholes of her mask. The ones threatening to spill over as her lashes fanned out over the damning moisture.

Every apology Adrien could possibly conjure, every apology he wanted to conjure, got stuck on the lump in his throat, congealing with the regret lodged there until he could hardly breathe through its presence.

‘Too far,’ his mind scolded, the thought slicing at his heart almost as deeply as the sight of the still-very-shaken Ladybug before him. ‘You took it too far.’

“I’m so… I-I didn’t…” Adrien felt a devastating numbness crawl up his body, starting in his fingertips and racing up his limbs. “I shouldn’t have… oh my god…”

The way his partner drew into herself, tucking her hands beneath her armpits and ducking her head, was just another blow alongside the unending barrage of shame that pelted at his heaving chest.

Ladybug shook her head, blinking hard as if to rid herself of her lingering tears as she continued to chew on her lip. His wavering green eyes traced each droplet as it slid, watching as a red shoulder perked up to wipe them away for good (as if their presence wasn’t already etched into his aching ribs).

Adrien was about to make a another (hopefully more coherent) go at apologizing when Ladybug cut him off with a single raised hand, effectively searing his jaw shut as he scrambled to follow her every command.

‘She tried to tell you to stop but you wouldn’t let her.’

The heroine took a steadying breath in and out before slowly approaching his shaking form.

‘You forced her, forced yourself onto her.’

At this point Adrien was ready (perhaps even willing) to accept a blow. His actions more than warranted an ass-kicking and he almost wished Ladybug would just let him have it.

What she did was much worse.

Gloved hands reached towards his cheek — not to strike, but to gently cup his jaw. The touch was delicate, careful in a way that only stirred the seething guilt festering low in Adrien’s stomach.

‘Of course she wouldn’t hit you. Decent people don’t force contact on those they care about.’ The thought burned an acid trail in his lungs.

Slowly (so, so slowly), Ladybug nudged his head to the side, forcing his gaze away from her inscrutably shattered face and turning his attention to the adjacent building.

‘Oh.’

With a quick glance at the previously unnoticed (but now wrenchingly familiar) advertisement that adorned the lit-up façade, Adrien was suddenly all too aware of the reason Ladybug was crying.

Turns out the tears were his fault, just not in the way he’d originally assumed.

“Start explaining...”
'Goddamn tangerine lipstick—'

“...now, Adrien.”

Chapter End Notes

so i know i said i dont write angst but...
also, 100k words holy shit
Chapter 29

Chapter Summary

This is so dumbly angsty that it should have been written by an emo 7th grader in 2008 who didn't get tickets to the panic! concert lmao. #rawr XD

Chapter Notes

Mirthalia is a goddess
shout out to the sin squad for SPAMMING ME WITH FLUFF AND MAKING IT VERY DIFFICULT TO WRITE THIS
enjoy sinners

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Ten seconds.

Adrien took ten long, heavy seconds to think.

He took three seconds to convince himself not to spit out a loud curse. (Ladybug wanted an explanation, not an expletive.)

He took six seconds to map out his situation. (He was on the roof. He was on the billboard. He was in deep shit.)

He took only a single second to breathe before launching into his opening. (Despite his shock, he knew she was reeling far more than he was. He needed to handle this right. For her sake.)

“So…” Adrien began, keeping his voice calm and light in an attempt to iron out the nerves in the airspace around them, “…any point in trying to convince you that’s not me?”

The wind whistled around them, chilling the rooftop the two heroes stood on. At his question, Ladybug shook her head, blue eyes swimming in disbelief. ‘Ah, didn’t think so,’ Adrien thought, immediately backpedalling. ‘Guess it’s time to take the direct route.’

“Well, all right then. In that case,” he said, giving a sheepish grin before extending one gloved hand out before him. “I’m Adrien.”

‘I’m introducing myself to my own girlfriend. What a night…’

Ladybug’s eyes crossed, gaze focusing on his offered appendage but folded arms never unwinding from their bunched up position under her chest. An awkward silence filled the space, broken only by the distant sound of the city below. Adrien gulped at her rejection, retracting his outstretched hand and instead rubbing the back of his neck with a grimace. ‘Of course she doesn’t want to shake your hand! Not when you’re mid identity reveal and certainly not after you all but jumped her a few
“Right, right! You probably don’t want me touching you right now and that’s fine!” Adrien rushed to assure her, maintaining a respectable distance as his girlfriend just continued to stare in the most unsettling way. He soldiered on. “I’m really, really sorry about kissing you earlier by the way. I didn’t… uhh… I didn’t think this would be going down right now.”

‘Awesome, more silence.’

“So anyways… My name is Adrien Agreste.” This time he tried for a friendly wave. “I’m a model… and of course I now realize you already know that because I’m staring down at you from a billboard… ah shit…”

‘BE. BETTER,’ the voice in his head screamed, mentally socking Adrien again and again for his poor attempt at consolation. The young man tried to draw on his well of Chat Noir confidence, only to find that particular pool of energy woefully empty as he struggled to string a few words together.

“Sorry. I was hoping to be more… suave, I guess?” Adrien winced out, peering down at Ladybug’s unreadable expression. “H-honestly I’m just as blindsided by this as you are. I swear, if I’d known they were going to use this exact image I would have made some phone calls, but I didn’t, obviously. Aaaaaand now you know who I am aaaaand you wanted to wait aaand everything is just kind of a mess aaaand you still aren’t saying anything…?”

‘Why isn’t she saying anything??’

Adrien wracked his brain, searching desperately for the right thing to say as she continued to stand in shell-shocked silence. Obviously the situation was less of a disaster to him, but then again, he wasn’t the one so adamantly against their identities being exposed. If it were up to him they would have gone through this years ago, but knowing Ladybug’s stance on the situation, knowing she wasn’t quite ready for this to go down yet, he couldn’t help but let his heart ache for her.

How was he supposed to convince her this wasn’t the end of the world?

“Hey, c’mon, bugaboo…” Adrien soothed, instinctively reaching out to grasp her arms but pulling back right at the last second, instead letting his hands flutter in the space between them. “I know this sucks, and I know this isn’t how you wanted us to reveal ourselves, but it doesn’t mean we have to make it a bad thing, right? I mean, there’s gotta be some good to come of this, I know there is!” He snapped his fingers, pouring as much excitement as he could muster into his voice as he glanced down at girlfriend.

“Dates! I can take you on dates now, anywhere you want to go. We could take trips to the movies or the park. I can treat you to dinner like a respectable boyfriend should and maybe even walk you to your door. Doesn’t that sound like a good thing?”

Ladybug made a move to interject, mouth opening for just a second before she snapped it shut once again with a shake of her head. Adrien’s heart plummeted, shoulders dropping alongside it as the girl remained unconvinced. The way she screwed her face up shot ice into his veins, as if she were tossing something dangerous around in her mind.

“Ladybug, you—“ He broke off, brow furrowing in growing dread as a sudden realization crashed down upon him. “You…”

‘She’s not… she doesn’t want to…’ Ladybug shifted from side to side, her ducked head and guilt-ridden expression all but confirming his suspicions in the most wrenching of ways.
“You aren’t going to tell me who you are… are you?” Adrien whispered, steady and slow as he tried to process the situation. His words were clipped, accompanied by an unidentifiable emotion that landed somewhere at the cross-section of disappointment and frustration as Ladybug’s eyes delivered all the reply he needed. The red-suited hero gave a jerky nod, the motion carrying with it a shattering sense of clarity.

“What?” he asked, still trying desperately to decipher anything from her stoic demeanor. Ladybug’s silence was now verging on worrying, and something about her lack of response made his stomach turn. ‘She doesn’t want me. She’s seen me now and she doesn’t want me.’

“Why?” he asked, still trying desperately to decipher anything from her stoic demeanor. Ladybug’s silence was now verging on worrying, and something about her lack of response made his stomach turn. ‘She doesn’t want me. She’s seen me now and she doesn’t want me.’

“Why is Adrien Agreste not good enough for you?” Adrien asked, trying and failing to not sound upset. Anger wasn’t what he was going for, but it was what showed up anyway, seeping into his words with a biting heat. “What do I have to do to be good enough for you?” he repeated plaintively, bringing his hands up to rub at his temples. Something about his civilian self being a disappointment just seemed to open the floodgates, years of pent-up shortcomings rushing out in a scorching plea. “What do I have to do to be good enough for anyone?!”

Adrien deliberately captured Ladybug’s gaze, needing to get some kind of reaction, some kind of answer from her. Ladybug let him stare her down, latching on to his ire and narrowing her eyes dangerously as she spoke for the first time.

“You don’t get it,” the girl ground out, flaring up in a shade to match her mask. “You don’t get it and I c-can’t explain it to you!” She stomped down on the corrugated rooftop, the motion that had once brought a grin to Adrien’s face now turning hot coals of frustration in the pit of his heart.

“What can’t you explain? What’s so difficult about admitting you don’t like who I turned out to be under the mask?”

“Oh you’re kidding!” his partner said, laughing in incredulous derangement as she stalked away. “I’ve seen your face in my fashion magazines since I was ten! TEN! I used to cut out your pictures and post them all over my bedroom wall!” She whirled back on him, gesticulating broadly. “I used to pass your ads on the street, used to read your interviews and watch your commercials and sit and wonder what it must be like to know someone like you! Then when I was thirteen you—“

Ladybug suddenly interrupted her tirade, seeming to swallow down her next thought as she let her arms fall dead to her sides. Adrien could only stare.

“When I was thirteen, I met Chat Noir,” she continued, much softer than before. “I met you a-and… and how was I supposed to know who you were? How was I supposed to know what we’d b-become?”

In a matter of seconds, all of her fury had fled, draining his alongside it. Adrien watched Ladybug cross her arms and sigh, his heart twisting at her utterly defeated stance.

This wasn’t like her.

The silences, the stuttering, the way she could hardly seem to get a word out around him before retreating in on herself, it was all wrong.

Yet Adrien couldn’t help but latch on to the hope that they could fix this. ‘If she’s sad, it means she still feels something, right?’ the boy rationalized, taking a single step in her direction. ‘I can still fix this mess…’

He was about to wrap her up in his arms and assure her that everything could still be okay, that they
could still be okay, when—

“I-I… I can’t do this any more…”

Ladybug’s words took a moment to sink in, but by the time they did… Adrien was already deflating.

“What do you mean by ‘this’?” he asked in a hoarse whisper, fingers shaking as he tried to move closer to her. His body didn’t listen. His mind was silent.

“Us,” Ladybug spoke, never looking up from her feet as the words dropped from her lips to shatter on the ground. “I don’t think I can do us right now.”

‘Us,’ his mind echoed, the phrase repeating until it created a grating screech against his eardrums.

Normally, hearing her say that word brought on a flurry of giddy excitement. Now, it all but broke him.

‘No… No. No. No. Please. God. No.’

“You’re breaking up with me…” Adrien wasn’t sure if his whispered words were a statement or a question, so he just let them dangle, feeling their steely weight dig into his heart with the harsh grip of realization.

“I’m not—” Ladybug swallowed thickly, seeming to gather up her thoughts. “—I’m not breaking up with you. I just… I need some time.”

“Time away from me?” Adrien clarified, knowing the answer even as the question flew from his mouth.

“Time to think.”

“Away from me.”

“Yes.”

There was another silence.

“I still love you.”

It was perhaps the worst thing he could have said in that moment, but Adrien might have imploded if he didn't let the words out. If he didn't remind her.

He’d always remind her.

“You shouldn’t say that,” Ladybug murmured, voice cracking on the last syllable in a way that drained all the bite from her retort. She was still slouched over, lips between her teeth and looking smaller than Adrien could ever remember seeing her. The usually so proud heroine trembled like a leaf, seeming like she might blow away with the next big gust of wind.
“But I mean it,” Adrien said. His heart still thudded painfully in his chest, but it was a dull ache compared to the sight of her so shaken. “I really do love yo—”

“You can’t possibly know that!” Ladybug shrilled, making the young man jump with her sudden volume.

“Why not? Why can’t you just believe me when I say I love you?”

“Because you don’t even know me! You don’t even know who you’re talking to under this suit!”

He should have kept his mouth shut after that. He should have just stayed silent and let her simmer. But black cats were unlucky for a reason.

So he spoke.

“Well, whose fault is that?!”

Ladybug shifted away from him then, wincing at the sting of his words in a way that almost made Adrien want to shovel them back into his mouth. Watching her pace away was torture, but the physical distance was nothing in comparison to the emotional gulf that now spanned between the heroes. Adrien felt the past few months melting away with a sharp pang, felt all the closeness and comfort the pair had come to cultivate being torn further apart with each hollow step his partner took.

August had never seemed so long ago as it did on this October evening.

The casual touches, the easy banter, those whispered hints of something beyond mere infatuation… it was all being ripped from his hands like some cruel nightmare. Adrien had stopped crying years ago (one can only have so many bad days before tears start to become a real inconvenience) so the moisture that now clouded his vision was an unfamiliar sight.

He’d forgotten he even knew how to cry.

“I need time,” Ladybug repeated, so low that Chat had to strain his heightened senses to hear her across the distance between them. “I need time and I need space. A-and I need it away from you.”

Each little word was a bullet lodged in his shattered ribs, the barrage of fire never ceasing as Ladybug edged her way ever farther from him.

She’d been his Princess in his arms, his Lady by his side.

Yet it was a stoic heroine who spoke from the lip of the roof.

“Please don’t call me, and work-related texts only.” Ladybug’s words were clinical, precise, and somehow their metallic tone made Adrien wish she would scream at him again. At least her yelling had heat, had some semblance of a feeling person behind it, had some echo of her usually vivacious self.

Now she was colder than the night air surrounding them.

“Patrol?” Adrien murmured, not trusting himself to speak more than one word at a time.

“Cancelled.”

“Akuma?”

“I’ll keep doing my job if you keep doing yours,” she said, pulling her yo-yo from her hip as her tired eyes scanned for a ledge.
“All right,” Adrien breathed, feeling himself break down more and more with each passing second. ‘Her job. Being Ladybug is no more than her job.’

He couldn’t help but wonder if that meant everything she did as her superhero self was just a job.

He also couldn’t help but wonder how he was going to get home when his arms were numb with grief.

Luckily (‘doesn’t she just have it all?’), Ladybug seemed to have no problems with coordination, shooting off into the skyline without so much as a backwards glance. The young man’s body ached with her departure, tears rolling freely but without feeling as he stared into the empty space before him.

Just minutes ago Adrien had been so sure that she was his. That he was hers and they were each other’s. He’d been so sure that they’d have forever… or at the very least a next time.

But as he stood there now, alone on the rooftop except for the unwanted company of his own smiling picture (the image was taunting, damming), Adrien knew with a sharp clarity that he no longer had any sort of claim on the heroine. He probably never did.

Ladybug had, and always would, belong to Paris.

Not to Chat Noir. Not to Adrien Agreste.

And certainly never to him.

Cataclysm usually burned as it engulfed his hand with destructive energy. This time, Adrien felt nothing.


By the next morning, whispers of a wild animal loose in the city were running rampant. News stations, websites, nearly everyone was discussing the possibility of another zoo breakout as theories became wilder and wilder with each passing hour.

Because what else could reduce a billboard to nothing more than a pile of shredded ribbons and shattered rubble?

Her Tuesday began with sobbing, feral and body-shaking.

The second Marinette opened her eyes, the entirety of the previous day descended upon her chest like a deadweight, bringing with it a poignant conglomeration of all the feeling and frustrations she had been dealing with since The Sighting™.

This time the tears were instantaneous. No silence, no argumentation, just the sudden and jarring sensation of being wracked with sobs.
Tikki breathed with her through the spell, murmuring reassurances to the shuddering teen and eventually coaxing her down from a borderline anxious episode. Marinette lay clutching her one-eyed cat pillow, willing her heart rate to even out and trying to think past the regret. She wanted to scream, or maybe sleep.

She did neither of those things.

What she did do was force herself up and out of her room. She showered and combed her hair. She put on a clean set of clothes, she persuaded herself to apply some makeup and she made herself gather up her backpack. She was going to school, goddamnit.

Marinette liked to think she wasn’t the type of girl to let a boy get in the way of her education (despite what evidence the last 24 hours could provide), so she pushed her way down the steps, out the door, and all the way to the threshold of her homeroom in a bout of righteous pride.

But that strenuously assembled grit all but fled when she set foot into the classroom. See, while anyone else would assume the boy sitting in Adrien’s spot, wearing Adrien’s clothes, would, in fact, be Adrien… Marinette knew better.

Because she wasn’t anyone else. She was his girlfriend, his partner, and the only person who also knew the other face of the coin. She knew his face, and she knew it well enough to know it should never look like that.

Adrien looked about as wrecked as she felt, slumped over in his seat with his fingers scratching at the desk. His eyes were dull, strung with heavy bags that told her he had probably slept about as well as she had. ‘You did that to him,’ her mind supplied helpfully, berating Marinette as she walked with heavy strides to her seat. ‘You’re to blame for this whole mess.’

The one thing, the only thing that kept Marinette from vaulting the desk and settling in his arms with murmured apologies and pleading looks was the fear of his inevitable reaction. She could see so clearly in her mind’s eye the way Adrien’s face would screw up, then drain of all color as he realized who she was. Being a gentleman he would probably conjure a polite smile, gently guide her off his lap, and then calmly explain to her why this wouldn’t work out.

Why they couldn’t be together.

And at that point Marinette would nod, swallowing the heart in her throat and assuring him that them being no more than partners (in French class and crime fighting alike) was just fine.

But truthfully, the idea made her want to black out.

Because as much as Chat promised to love Ladybug no matter what, Adrien would never see Marinette as anything other than a friend, and she wasn’t ready to face that particular rejection. Not yet. Perhaps not ever.

The school day was torturous. Each time her gaze snagged on that oh-so-familiar head of blonde hair, Marinette felt her need to flee increase tenfold. She had told Chat she needed time and space, to think on what came next, but unfortunately she didn’t have that luxury with their civilian identities — and with every minute that ticked away in his presence came another little flicker of emotion. Flickers of doubt and trepidation. Flickers of longing and sorrow. Little flames that charred her nerves to ashes and burned her alive with indecision.

Lost in thought, Marinette hardly registered her classmate ducking out of the room, subtly wiping one sleeve across the bridge of his nose as he muttered something about the bathroom.
Her Tuesday ended with the vision of tear-drenched green eyes.

Her Wednesday began with a text from C.N., one so unlike his usual wakeup calls that she nearly tossed the phone in childish discontent.

[ Akuma at Champ Elysees ]

Marinette knew he was only following her wishes (‘Please don’t call me, and work-related texts only.’), but she still found it hard to fight down her wave of displeasure at the absence of his trademark heart-eyed cat emoji.

Waking up had never been harder.

...

Actually, she took that back… Akuma fighting had never been harder.

Unsurprisingly, Chat Noir was already on the scene when at last Ladybug reached the monument. He offered no greeting spare a single fleeting glance before he was vaulting off and after their target, and his avoidance was both blessing and a curse. Quelling the rising wave of guilt that crested in her chest, Marinette set herself on autopilot, allowing her kwami-granted instinct to take over as Ladybug’s limbs followed the subconscious commands.

The fight took much longer than it should have, and both heroes took much more damage than they should have.

They were reckless, working more like two single forces instead of the duo they should have been as each teen took their own approach to the battle. It was messy, and irresponsibly so. It was petulant and ineffective and it ground on a very deep nerve inside Marinette’s gut as she watched more and more of Paris being torn down because they couldn’t get their act together.

“This isn’t working!” she finally admitted in a shout, wheeling to where her peripheral vision had tracked a blur of black and forcing the words not to come out as a sob. “We need to do better than this.”

‘I need to do better than this…’

For a moment Chat (‘Adrien,’ her mind unnecessarily interjected, ‘That’s Adrien’) didn’t react, seeming to decide whether or not she was addressing him before tentatively calling an answer of his own.

“Just tell me what you need me to do in order to make this work.”

Marinette swallowed at the duality of his statement, looping down towards him with a repressed apology on her tightly closed lips. Reaching the pavement, she planted herself a few feet from where his boots stuck to the ground and launched headlong into discussion. They strategized, voices
clipped and sentences short as two pairs of eyes dutifully danced around each other in a synchronized shuffle of denial. A minute later a solution was reached.

For one of their problems, at least.

It was two blocks away from their original battleground that the final confrontation took place. Frankly, Marinette had no interest in the akuma’s name or its goal, having too much on her mind to register anything past the fact that the monster was hell-bent on covering Paris in a thick blanket of flour.

And when one of the heavy projectiles went sailing towards her partner’s turned back, Marinette didn’t even have to think about intercepting it.

Being a baker’s daughter, she was no stranger to industrial sacks of flour (all burlap and twine and solid mass), but she’d never been so intimately acquainted with one until her leap sent it crashing across her unprotected abdomen.

The force of it knocked the air from her body and her body from the air, throwing the huffing heroine in a sprawl across the powder-strewn street with a deep cough. ‘Oh, that’s gonna twinge for a while,’ she thought with a wince, rolling onto her back and breathing through the ache that radiated out from her lungs as she took a moment to clear the stars from her vision.

When at last the constellations cleared she was greeted by a brilliant yellow halo, wavering in the sky with a deep frown that told Marinette it was not, in fact, the sun.

“Why did you do that?” Chat hissed, kneeling down immediately to cup one hand around her abdomen and outright ignoring the fact that there was still a raging monster bent on destruction just yards away.

Marinette bit back her “Because I care about you”, instead flinching as his touch raised a thrumming pain along her body. Chat (‘Adrien’) lightened up at once, the scowl sliding off his face to be replaced by such a tender expression of concern that Marinette had to look away for fear of melting under its concentrated warmth.

“I need to get you—”

“You need to get the akuma,” she cut in, thinking past her physical and mental turmoil to focus on the task at hand. “I’ll be up in a few minutes, and it would really help me if you managed to grab the cursed object by then.”

For a second it looked as if he were about to argue, but her partner ended up giving no complaint. With one last lingering caress of her ribs (could he feel the way her heart beat beneath his gloves?), Chat Noir sprinted down the street, leaving Marinette to force down her discomfort with gritted teeth and a hiss of breath. Luckily for her, corporeal pain was much easier to work through than its emotional counterpart.

The fight resolved quickly after that, her partner sealing his end of the bargain with stunning speed and ferocity as he delivered her the rolling pin only minutes later. Marinette wrapped it up from there, dazzling the gathered crowd with her healing magic while she tried to not let anything show on her face as she tossed the artefact upwards in a burst of light.

The fans screamed, chanting for their heroes to embrace in a bittersweet cheer that made Ladybug’s fabricated smile sting her face. With a quick glance of shared understanding, she and Chat slid up beside each other, the boy draping a dead arm across her tension-filled shoulders as they played the
happy couple. It took everything Marinette had not to burrow into his side and never come out.

Her Wednesday ended with a white butterfly, a bruised rib, and a meaningless fist bump for the cameras.

On and on it went.

Mornings and evenings of conflicted contemplation, afternoons filled with nothing but dread, midnights that brought out the longing in her, until she inevitably gave in and reread the last text he’d sent her before she’d made a mess of everything.

[ of course, my love <3 ]

It seared her in more ways than she could count.

To her infinite shame, Marinette couldn’t actually recall the first time Chat Noir had declared his love for Ladybug. It had to have been sometime after they reached high school, perhaps even the summer before, but she couldn’t seem to pin down an actual date.

There had never been a grand poetic confession on his part, no swelling strings and narrowing spotlight as time froze around them. There wasn’t really anything to make the alarms go off in her mind like “HEY, THIS PERSON IS IN LOVE WITH YOU!”

In fact, Marinette was about 75% sure his first “I love you” came when they were joking around after patrol, the endearment slipping out amongst their laughter to flow organically through their banter. From there it had just become a part of the cat’s natural vocabulary, dropping as easily from his tongue as any pun as the declaration morphed more into a well-known truth.

“That was a cat-tastrophe, wouldn’t you say my love?”

“You jokes aren’t even remotely funny, but it’s a good thing I love you anyway. Right, Buggy?”

“Oh please, my love for you could outmatch an akuma any day!”

Those were the times Ladybug never seemed to catch the sincerity of his words, their burning truth buried beneath a snarky smile and a lilting tone. Of course she saw it now, in the bittersweet clarity of 20/20 hindsight, and the realization made her want to go back and scream “IT’S HIM!”

“IT’S HIM!” she’d scream to middle school Marinette, startling the girl from where she sat staring at the blonde head sitting before her in class.

“IT’S HIM!” she’d cry, smacking pre-summer Ladybug over the head as she rolled her eyes at one of Chat’s hidden declarations.

“IT’S HIM!” she’d beg and bide and plead, chastising the girl who’d left him standing alone on that rooftop just a few days ago. “IT’S HIM AND YOU KNOW IT!”
For years Chat had shown her his affection, never once withdrawing his adoration due to a lack of reciprocation but instead continuing to love her regardless. Not because he was holding out for a change of heart, not in some attempt to wear her down and strike when she was weak, he quite simply continued to love her as a reminder, unhurried and without remorse or expectation.

He loved her when she was oblivious to his feelings.

He loved her while she knew.

Hell, he even loved her after Ladybug had all but said she didn’t want to see or hear from him!

But most of all, Adrien had said he’d love her no matter who she turned out to be under the mask…

…and, needless to say, that was the one that dug at Marinette the most.

Chapter End Notes

everythingisfine
Chapter 30

Chapter Summary

In which Adrien listens to Evanescence and Marinette is #gayAF.

Chapter Notes

Daaaaammnnnn Bull... Back at it again with the emotional turmoil.
Enjoy sinners.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Her Saturday began with the stark realization of just how badly she’d fucked herself over.

Despite the fact that she hadn’t set her alarm, Marinette’s eyes still popped open nearly a half hour before she was set to work downstairs — and for perhaps the first time in six days, she wasn’t instantly assaulted with tears. No, instead she woke to the ever-present guilt in her head as it whispered scalding truth down the back of her neck.

The voice spoke of mistakes. It described Adrien’s anguish as Marinette pushed herself from the covers, it illustrated his hurt as she pulled on her clothes. ’You’re the problem here,’ the sinister speaker murmured, managing to make itself heard even as Marinette furiously brushed at her teeth, ’you’ve always been the problem.’

Needless to say, her week of thinking was going just swimmingly.

The day was long, with too much quiet that left too much room for reflection. Marinette would have preferred to work up front where needy customers would require her undivided attention, but unfortunately her duties lay in the kitchen, helping her father prepare the seasonal sweets that were in high demand now that autumn had rolled around. Her shift positively dragged, minutes stretching into hours as the teen tried not to let her thoughts spiral away from her tasks, but the recollection of that night wouldn’t leave her.

The recollection of Chat’s shattered expression wouldn’t leave her.

And every time Marinette recalled their confrontation, her stomach only churned in shame.

Adrien’s first response — his very first response — to having his identity exposed was to try and put her at ease. He didn’t point fingers, hell, he hadn’t even taken a moment to process the implications this would have on his own life. The boy had just immediately fallen into that protective stance, wrapping her up in easy words and soothing promises as he worked to assure her that everything would be all right.

‘And what did I do?’ Marinette thought, moping around the bakery and kneading her sorrows into the yeasty paste beneath her rolling hands. ’I was silent. Then I yelled! Then I basically told him I didn’t want to see or hear from him before bolting away like a coward!’ There was a loud smack as
the dough was thrown against the powdered surface of the pastry table, and Marinette felt her ribs twinge in response.

“Woah, does that phyllo owe you money or something? I don’t think I’ve ever seen you work with that much ferocity!”

“No, Papa,” Marinette sighed, scrunching her neck down into her shoulders as the large man pressed a forceful kiss to the top of her head. “Just getting some pent-up feelings out is all.”

“Oh, I know how that goes,” her father said, dusting off his apron before sliding up alongside her at the work space. “Baking is a great way to work off one’s troubles… So what’s wrong, kiddo?”

Well, wasn’t that just the question of the day?

Somehow Marinette didn’t think “my latex cat-suited boyfriend, whom I’ve been sneaking out at night to see every week for the past four years, turned out to be the same guy I’ve been pining after for the same amount of time and now somehow I’ve managed to shove both of them away despite the fact they are two of the most important people in my life” would go over particularly well, but a part of her reasoned that maybe she did need to talk this over with someone besides Tikki.

“I kind of got into a fight,” she replied, ducking her head as she continued to work, “with someone who’s really special to me… a-and I think I really messed things up between us.”

To say things were merely "messed up" between her and Adrien was a gross understatement, but it was the most accurate description she could come up with at the moment.

“I see,” Tom said, bending to catch her eye as she snapped from her reverie. “And this special person, they mean something more than just a friend to you, I’m assuming?” Marinette nodded, gauging her father’s reaction with a measured glance. The man just looked thoughtful, giving her a sincere look of understanding before continuing on. “I thought that might be the case… Do you want to talk about it? I promise not to pry any more than a father should.”

“That depends. How much prying constitutes ‘what a father should’?” she asked warily.

“You don’t have to name names, but I’d still like to know a bit about this person who’s seemingly got a grip on my little girl’s heart.” Marinette let him swipe a line of flour across her nose, relaxing at the playful gesture and breathing deeply to steady her nerves. Her father was an excellent listener, having lent her his ear for many a crisis before. So she gathered up her thoughts, trying to present her situation in a way that was vague enough to avoid any more trouble but truthful enough to warrant some applicable advice.

“So I’ve known this person for a long time,” Marinette started slowly, “but it was just recently that we began to talk about our deeper feelings for each other…”

‘Well, at least on my end, anyway.’

“It was kind of overwhelming at first. I never really saw myself falling for someone like him but… I mean… here we are. Years later and somehow everything is all messed up.” She sighed, leaning into the familiar presence beside her until another kiss plopped itself onto the crown of her hair.

“Well, as frustrating as it sounds,” her father began, his voice filled with a gentle compassion, “I’m sure you and Alya will—“

The man cut himself off, screwing up his brow and peering down at her in concentration.
“Wait, did you just say ‘he’?” A nod. “Really now? I could have sworn…” Marinette cocked her head at her father’s apparent confusion, watching as he just gave a shrug. “Ah well, I guess that means I owe your mother a foot rub.”

Realization dawned on the girl, and she gave an incredulous gasp. ‘They did not…’

“Unbelievable!” she yelped, throwing her floured hands up in defeat. “You two have a running bet on my—” She floundered, brain adamantly refusing to use the term “sexuality” around her father. “—my orientation?!” Marinette finally sputtered, eyes bugging in disbelief. She knew her parents had a habit of making wagers as a way to pass the time, but this was just outrageous.

“No really a ‘bet’, per se… well, okay. Yes, we made a bet.”

“On whether I like girls or guys?” Marinette prodded, stabbing a finger in his direction.

“Amongst other things,” Tom said with a hearty laugh, seeming to thrive off her stricken expression before settling back into a paternal stance. “But anyway, that’s not the point. This boy… You said you had a fight and you think you messed things up?” Marinette let out her breath in a whoosh of air, turning back to her work as a silly bet suddenly seemed the least of her worries.

“I found out something about him… something I didn’t want to know. And I didn’t really react all that well.”

“The thing you found out was bad I’m assuming?”

“Not…exactly?” Marinette said, tilting her head in consideration. “It just came as a pretty big shock to me, is all.”

“So you found out something surprising about your… let’s go with friend. Then, when you confronted him about it you two argued?”

“More like I argued…” she muttered, the guilt bubbling up to boil in her stomach just as it had every day since she’d spoken with Adrien.

“Ah, let me guess,” her father said with a knowing look. “Alternating bouts of screaming and silence before ultimately avoiding your friend altogether?” Marinette stiffened.

“…Papa, have you been following me?” she accused. Tom laughed again, putting his hands up in the presence of his daughter’s pointed stare.

“I don’t have to follow you around to know you are the very reincarnation of your mother,” he said, seeming to grow a tad melancholy in the next second. “Trust me when I say I’m very familiar with the situation you find yourself in, having been on the receiving end of that treatment many a time before.”

“How does it feel?” Marinette asked quietly, chewing her lip as she recalled Chat’s downright wrecked expression. “To have someone treat you like that?”

“Oh, it hurts to be sure,” her father said, capturing her eyes as the girl let out a wince, “It’s not poetic in any way, fighting with the person you care about, but it will happen from time to time.” The man gave a smile then, one that was sweet and sad and looked to have years of memories behind it as he placed a comforting hand atop his daughter’s shoulder. “Obviously, I don’t know the entire situation, so I can’t tell you what to do. I can’t hand you a magical answer to all your problems, even if the dad in me wants nothing more than to do just that.”
“I wouldn’t mind some magical answers right about now,” Marinette murmured, imagining her father riding in on some shining steed and delivering an all-powerful solution on a silver platter. The ridiculous mental image almost made her laugh despite the tightness in her chest.

“Listen,” Tom said, hunkering down so they were eye to eye. “You’ve grown into a responsible, smart, and resourceful young woman, and I trust you to make the right choices for yourself. But if I could give you one piece of advice, it would be this: Talk it out. I’ve seen too many good relationships, both friendly and otherwise, fall to pieces purely because one or both people refuse to sit down and be frank with each other.” Here he stood again, drawing up to his full height and throwing a hand out to gesture to where his wife stood at the counter up front. “Your mom and I have been married for more than twenty years now, and that’s all thanks to the fact we continue to tell each other things. Sure, the conversations sometimes turn into arguments, but at least we talk. We tell each other what we’re thinking: no guessing games, no avoidance, just simple communication… and that has made all the difference.”

“That sounds reasonable,” Marinette said, processing his advice as her mind ticked away.

The words coming from her father’s mouth seemed obvious, seemed like the type of cliché lines you’d hear in a self-help video, but somehow their simple knowledge resonated with the girl, and Marinette felt herself flare up at her own foolishness. ‘Tell each other what you're thinking... no guessing games... just simple communication.’

“And it’s not even that hard,” Tom said, breaking through her musings, “just sit the boy down and tell him why you’re feeling the way you are. If things are still bad between you after that, well then at least you know you tried.” He paused, looking up with a wry expression. “Of course if you need me to break out the gruff father persona and have a sit-down with him, I’ll be sure to iron my tough guy pants.”

“Papa, you are the least gruff person I know,” Marinette said, giggling at the thought of her sweet father attempting to be intimidating. “But I’ll be sure to let you and your tough-guy pants know if I need someone to father him into oblivion.” She slipped her apron over her head, hanging it on the peg by the door before regarding the clock. She wanted to…

“Go ahead,” Tom said, releasing her from her shift despite the fact it wasn’t quite five o’ clock yet, “Seems to me like you have some scheming—“

“Only mama schemes.”

“—Seems to me like you have some scheming to do, Sabine Jr.” Marinette swallowed a grin at his tease, unconcerned by the comparison (there were worse things she could be than her mother) as she made her way towards the staircase, mind doing sprints. Right as she was about to ascend, however her fathers voiced called out once again, halting her mid-step. “Oh, and Marinette?”

“Yes?” she questioned, itching to go get some well-needed planning done.

“After you two are done talking… tell Adrien to come over any time he’d like.”

Marinette gulped, avoiding any response to her father’s keen observation and instead giving the man a shallow nod. She raced her way up the stairs, heart beating a nervous staccato along with her banging feet as the girl made for her room. Upon reaching her loft, Marinette immediately sought out her kwami, launching into discussion with the tiny red creature as she ruminated on her newfound knowledge.

Five minutes later, her head was clearer than it had been for nearly a week.
Ten minutes later, Tikki was assuring the girl she wouldn’t mind transforming later that night.

And fifteen minutes later, Marinette was tapping the little ‘C.N’ in her contacts.

It wasn’t the worst week of Adrien’s life (no, not by a long shot), but boy did it hold a spot near the top of his list.

The days were mostly filled with silence, keen and familiar. It was the same silence that Adrien had grown used to in his years of relative solitude, the kind broken only by the occasional “Lift your chin, Mr.Agreste” or “Dude, are you feeling all right?”

His cavernous bedroom only seemed to amplify the sensation, the panes of his windows throwing prison-bar-like shadows in the dying light of the evening as Adrien’s phone sat maddeningly silent. At times, the absence (of sound, of contact) grew oppressive, and more often than not the teen had to fight down the urge to yell in some last-ditch attempt to counteract the stillness. To make something happen.

But Adrien didn’t yell any more (there had been plenty of that on Monday, feral yowls that had all but drowned out the sound of rusting metal and ripping canvas as the wreckage had fallen to the earth around him).

Adrien didn’t cry any more (there had been plenty of that on Tuesday, blubbering tears that worked their way past his eyelids at the most inconvenient of times as her last murmur of “us” drew a seemingly unending pulse of sorrow from the ventricles of his heart).

In fact Adrien didn’t even get mad any more (there had been plenty of that on Wednesday, a building frustration that’d all but fled the second Ladybug had intercepted the blow meant for him).

No, Adrien didn’t do any of that and instead pushed on, unceasing… unaltering… Unfeeling.

His lived his days unfeeling, stitching himself together with twine spun of false assurances only to feel his strenuously-held composure unravel the second he found himself alone at night. It was a practiced way of existing, one Adrien kept in his back pocket for when life came close to stomping him out, and it was what kept the model from toppling due to the worries of his alter ego. Well, that, and the whispered thoughts he repeated to himself each time things grew especially bleak.

‘Ladybug never said she was disappointed by you, she just needs some time to think is all.’

‘Ladybug promised she wasn’t breaking up with you, she just needs some space is all.’

‘Ladybug is probably reeling just as much as you, she just needs to make some choices is all.’

God, he wished she would make her choices already.

Because in all honesty, Adrien had never truly grasped how deeply Ladybug had become rooted in his daily routine until he had to cut her out of it. There were hiccups in his schedule now, little points throughout the day that ticked disjointedly in reminder as he fought against the urge to contact her. Every morning came with the instinct to text her awake, every night with the struggle not to send off...
a wish of sweet dreams, and Adrien still found himself reaching for his phone nearly every hour only to be met with an absence of notifications. The silence was maddening.

Saturday is when he began to feel again.

It was also, coincidentally, the day Adrien had discovered he could sync his phone up to his surround-sound speakers.

“Oh would you make it stop?!”

Plagg bobbed around their shared room, watching as Adrien laid spread-eagle atop his large bed with unseeing eyes staring up at the ceiling. A truly terrible soundtrack of angsty music [x] swung into its tenth repetition of the night, and Plagg was seriously considering chewing through the wires in an attempt to quell the infernal noise. But one look at the utter loneliness painted across his chosen’s face all but dashed his destructive urges, and the tiny catlike creature instead decided to attack a different source in his quest for silence.

“All right, you’ve worn me down,” Plagg said with a dramatic sigh, hovering above the mattress and glancing down at the human’s prone form. “We’re going to talk about your feelings until I finally get my peace and quiet back.”

“You hate talking about feelings,” Adrien mumbled, not bothering to meet his kwami’s eyes as he continued to sulk.

“Well I hate this music even more.”

“My music is applicable to the situation.”

“It’s horrendous.” The teen didn’t argue, merely shrugging as he absentmindedly picked at the blanket beneath him. Plagg huffed, feeling a deplorable swell of actual concern rise up at the sight of his friend so broken up. True, emotions weren’t exactly his strong suit, but even a being made of concentrated bad luck could identify inner turmoil when he saw it, and Adrien was the very picture of a lost kitten. So the kwami channeled his other half, putting on a Tikki-like expression of concern that felt foreign on his mischievous features as he plopped himself atop Adrien’s chest.

“I don’t like that look,” the boy said, dipping his chin down to regard the creature. “That is a very worrying look.”

“This is the look of someone who is about to pull you from this funk, so suck it up and start talking.”

“You’re serious? You really want to talk this out with me?”

“I’m may be gruff, but I’m not cruel,” Plagg said, throwing a paw out to gesture before him, “and I’m certainly not blind. Ladybug did a hell of a number on you, kid, and it seems to me like it’s going to take something more than trashy music to help you through it. So tell me, what’s eating you up?”

“Well, that was a loaded question,’ Adrien thought, tossing his gaze back up at his bedroom ceiling, mind whirring. He decided to start with the obvious.

“Ladybug is angry with me.”

“Wrong.”

“That’s not how people talk about their feelings, Plagg!”
“Well I’m not people,” the kwami countered, “and I’m telling you you’re wrong.”

“In that case, why is she avoiding me?” Adrien asked, voicing the question that had been gnawing away at him for five days now, “Why did she say she didn’t want to hear from me?” His tiny friend heaved a massive sigh, floating so he could grab Adrien’s chin with a firm tsk.

“You’re really going to have me break this down for you, aren’t you?”

The blank stare he received was confirmation enough.

‘Note to self: Next time, pick a Chat Noir who’s a bit more perceptive,’ Plagg thought, swinging into his explanation.

“What do you think would happen when a girl who’s too self-conscious to let her own boyfriend see her face finds out that said boyfriend is a famous supermodel?” Adrien tensed at the hypothetical, but Plagg wasn’t finished. “How do you think that girl would feel when she was immediately asked to drop her transformation and introduce herself to her aforementioned supermodel boyfriend?” Now the teen sat up, face twisting in thought as he contemplated the words coming out of the kwami’s mouth. “And lastly, why do you think that girl would want some time to think after going through such a jarring discovery? Because she wasn’t interested any more???”

“Well—“

“Oh, please!” Plagg cut in, waving off Adrien’s attempts at explanation, “That girl is still head over heels for you! I’ll bet she wants nothing more than to come running back into your arms right now.”

“Then why doesn’t she? Why doesn’t she make up with me??”

“She’s scared,” Plagg said simply, shaking his head as if it were the most obvious thing in the world. Adrien’s brow furrowed further, pinching his face into a mask of disbelief as he rushed to correct his friend.

“No, Ladybug isn’t scared of anything.”

“See, that right there is exactly why she can’t come running back to you.”

“And just what do you mean by that?” Adrien questioned, lifting himself from the bed and pacing across the room in an attempt to outrun his tumultuous thoughts. ‘I didn’t drive Ladybug off, she ran away on her own…’

“I mean you’ve put the girl on a pedestal!” Plagg scoffed, following the boy as he trekked across the floor. “For years you’ve idolized her, made her feel like she was some sort of otherworldly goddess.”

“She is!”

“No she isn’t, she’s a human just like you!” Plagg practically yelled, zipping in front of Adrien’s face until two pairs of green eyes were locked in silent confrontation. “And just like you can’t be Chat Noir all the time, she can’t be Ladybug all the time. She can’t always be the superhero you worship and that scares her!” The kwami then snapped his jaw shut, breathing through the strange burst of protectiveness he felt for Tikki’s chosen as Adrien just continued to stare. After a few seconds of quiet absorption, the teen seemed to gather himself, making his way back to the bed and slumping down onto it with a huff.

“So, what you’re telling me is…” Adrien began, rubbing the back of his neck as he continued to mull over his kwami’s theory. “You think Ladybug is avoiding me because she’s self-conscious?”
“Exactly.”

“You’re telling me she thinks I’ll reject her purely because she’s not the same when she’s out of the suit?”

“Yep.”

“…well that’s dumb.”

“I never said she was the brightest of thinkers,” Plagg said with a humorless chuckle. Adrien just threw his hands up in frustration.

“No, I mean that’s really, really dumb! Of course I don’t expect her to be some flawless being made of good luck and sparkles and shit. Hell, *I’m* a borderline *disaster* without my transformation!”

“Agreed.”

“God, did I really make her feel like she has to be perfect?” Adrien moaned, burying his head in his hands.

“Maybe calling her a ‘divine ray of light that guides you to the very heavens’ *was* a bit overkill.”

“I’m an asshole.”

“Also agreed,” Plagg piped up, flashing his chosen a dry smile before his voice grew serious. “But you should know this is as much Ladybug’s fault as it is yours. You two are both young and prone to acting stupid, so it’s going to take both of you to fix this mess you guys created for yourselves.” Adrien seemed to take the words to heart, chewing his lip in concentration.

“How do we do that?” he asked, letting his mind work at a mile per minute. ‘*Ladybug isn’t mad. This isn’t anyone’s fault. We can fix this.*’ Those whispered thoughts brought out the first sliver of hope he’d felt in nearly a week, prompting his heart rate to climb with tentative longing.

“I say you start by treating her like an actual person,” Plagg said, subtly edging his way towards the bedside table. “No hero worship. No sugar-coating. Just confront her about how you’re feeling.” The idea seemed almost hilariously easy, and Adrien had to fight down an incredulous snort at its simplicity.

“I think I can manage that,” he conceded with a shrug. “But what about—”

**BLEEP.**

Both teen and kwami alike jumped at the loud alert, the sound cutting through the music to blare out of the speakers stationed around the room. “What did you do?” Adrien asked, eyes narrowing to where Plagg hovered atop his phone as the boy bounded over to the table.

“Don’t look at me,” the creature cried, putting on a look of pure (fabricated) innocence, “I was just trying to stop the first racket when the other racket started.”

“I swear, if you texted someone, I’ll—”

The words died on his tongue the minute he caught sight of the (1) next to “L.B <3”.

[ can we talk tonight? ]
Adrien grabbed for the device, snatching it off its charging deck and pausing the music mid-croon. Plagg heaved a sigh of relief, flying off with murmured thanks as the teen set out to reply. Ladybug’s message didn’t inspire its usual flurry of excitement — he was still hurting a bit too much for that — but it did alert Adrien to the fact she seemed to have reached a few conclusions herself, and that notion did elicit a modicum of relief from the boy.

For better or worse, they were communicating.

[ can we talk now? ]

[ I don’t want to do this over the phone… ]

‘...this...’

He was really getting tired of her using that word, but Adrien found he was too drained to worry about her ambiguity. His fingers were apathetic in their reply.

[ what’s “this?” ]

[ my apology ]

Now that took him aback, and Adrien blinked down at the text for a solid two minutes as he ruminated on its implications. ‘Ladybug feels like she owes me an apology...’ He didn’t know how to feel about that. He didn’t know how to feel about any of this.

[ im free after 9 ]

[ meet you at the usual place? ]

[ k ]

Adrien didn’t want to type “k”.

He wanted to respond with paragraphs of reassurance, wanted to tell her everything would be just fine because they were Paris’ mightiest heroes, capable of getting through anything life threw at them, but Adrien didn’t do any of that. Instead he let his phone lock up with a click and slipped it down into his pocket.

He didn’t do any of that because (as Plagg had so wryly pointed out) he and Ladybug weren’t merely superheroes, they were also teenagers. Two brash, emotionally-driven teenagers who’d let their inexperience blow things way out of proportion, and frankly Adrien was tired of it.
He was tired of them dancing around each other like this, tired of having to guess what his partner was thinking instead of just letting her speak. He was tired of fixating on the girl out of the suit when he hadn’t even begun to understand the girl in it.

Adrien loved Ladybug far too much to continue keeping her atop a pedestal. He of all people knew just how lonely that kind of treatment could be.

So instead of sending Ladybug some pussy-footed reply, Adrien treated her like he would any friend who had hurt him. No sugar-coating and no idolatry, just a frank response to a frank inquiry.

[ k ]

For the second time that week, Marinette saw Chat before their scheduled meet-up.

When she’d spotted the story trending under the #Ladybug tag on Twitter, the girl had to fight the urge to look away, to pretend that the akuma simply didn’t exist and go back to her evening of contemplation. But responsibility had won out yet again, drawing Marinette from her task with a sigh. She’d looked down at her handiwork one last time, knotting off her simple slipstitch and admiring the shiny new eyes affixed to her grinning cat pillow before calling out to her kwami.

The seamstress had decided to use green buttons this time.

Turns out Hawkmoth hadn’t gotten the memo that Paris’ heroes were going through a rough patch, as evidenced by the raging monster plowing its way through downtown. ‘Or maybe he did realize we’re in a bit of a rut and he’s just being a dickhead,’ Ladybug thought, touching down at the scene before assessing the situation. True to form, her partner was quick to follow, obviously having gotten her message despite the fact he hadn’t responded, and Chat wasted no time in falling in beside her.

Marinette’s ribs ached throughout the entirety of the fight, and not wholly as a result of her still-healing injury. Sure, the two of them were more in synch now than their last disastrous attempt at crime-fighting, but there were still stumbling blocks in their tandem, little moments that were overwrought with side-eyed glances and silent questions. ‘Tonight,’ the heroine reminded herself, summoning her Lucky Charm as Chat continued to dance around their target. ‘You get to talk to him tonight. Do your job first.’

A taunt, a maneuver, a half-hatched plan that somehow pulled through.

A shatter, a shriek, a snap of her compact.

‘Easy’ wasn’t the right word to describe the confrontation; ‘manageable’ seemed to be more accurate. They managed to take down the akuma, in the very same way they had managed everything in their partnership up until now.

Together.

After allowing the cleansed butterfly to pop free of her yo-yo, Marinette turned for their usual fist bump from force of habit alone. When her outstretched hand was met with Chat’s cross-armed stance, she flushed and quickly lowered the appendage. Thus ensued an awkward shuffle as the boy simultaneously raised his own fist in a delayed reaction, prompting them both to flutter their arms in indecision. The heroes eventually settled on exchanging thumbs up, Marinette wincing out a huff of
air as her partner rubbed at the back of his neck.

To say things felt awkward between them would be like comparing a puddle to a pond.

“So… I guess I’ll see you in two hours?” Chat Noir prompted, slicing through the heavy silence of the street corner. He shifted, belted tail swinging in a mindless dance behind him as the boy looked up between the strands of blonde hair curtaining his face. ‘God, I wish he could turn off the whole model thing,’ Marinette thought, devastated to find that her partner looked good even when he was upset.

“Y-yeah,” she responded, swallowing the unbidden anxiousness that had taken root in her throat before continuing on. “The regular spot, right?”

“Yeah.”

Ladybug’s Miraculous spared her from having to craft a response, the sound prompting both heroes to take a step back with murmured goodbyes. Marinette turned, breathing through her flood of emotions as she scanned the sunset skyline for her exit route. She wanted to go home, wanted to make use of every second she had between now and their scheduled talk to organize her thoughts. Her eyes caught on a likely ledge, her hand winding up the shot before Adrien’s voice halted the yo-yo in her grasp.

“Hey, wait!” he called out, digging around in his pockets as she swiveled back to face him. “I know this is probably late but I didn’t really get to see you on the fifth so…ugh…”

‘He didn’t...’ Marinette thought, feeling her stomach clench in response to something so very different from her earlier trepidation. She watched Chat glance up with the barest hint of a smile, and its whispered presence sent of flurry of akuma flapping around her insides. His look was a tentative thing, as were his gloved fingers as they extended an offering out before him — and if the fluttering expression hadn’t already done her in, his next words certainly finished the job.

“Sorry about your uterus,” Chat murmured, the dying light of the evening glinting off a familiar foil-wrapped treasure as it sat perched atop his palm.

‘She isn’t doing anything,’ Adrien observed, straining to keep his polite expression from crumbling off his face as Ladybug continued to gape. ‘Why...why isn’t she doing anything??’

The morsel in his hand grew heavy, looking more and more like a bad idea the longer it sat unaccepted. Adrien hadn’t meant it as a joke or flirt (true, he was still a bit socially oblivious, but even he knew this wasn’t the right occasion to be messing around); he’d simply brought Ladybug chocolate because he knew she liked it. Nothing overly-reverent about that, was there? Nothing that could be construed as hero worship?

Yet his partner’s wide-eyed reaction to the innocent gift inspired a jolt of panic in the boy, and her silence hearkened back to that night by the billboard.

A.k.a. the last time he had majorly fucked up.

A.k.a. the last time they had nearly broken up.
Adrien backpedaled immediately.

“Sorry,” he choked, retracting the truffle as he fought down a wave of disappointment. “I guess I’ll just see you—mmfggtf!”

The tail end of Adrien’s sentence was mangled as a mass of polka dots crashed into his torso. He staggered for a second, trying to force the wind back into his diaphragm as Ladybug clung to waist in a rib-splitting hug.

**BEEP!**

“I’m s-so sorry…” she said, the words muffled against his collarbone and nearly drowned out by her fourth Miraculous chirp. “I’m sorry I yelled, a-and I’m sorry I ran from you… oh god, C-chat…” Adrien allowed himself only a moment to be stunned before his brain kicked back into gear, registering both the single dot on her earrings as well as the crowd advancing towards them from across the block.

“Ladybug,” he began gently, equal parts joy and fear mixing in his stomach as the situation pressed in around him, “we really can’t do this right now.” The only response Adrien got from the shuddering girl was a shake of her head as it burrowed further into his chest, and suddenly his worry outweighed his relief. “Bugaboo, I’m serious, your Miraculous—“

“Chat Noir, what’s wrong with Ladybug?” A abrupt wave of reporters rushed the duo, and Adrien dragged his near-incoherent girlfriend closer as his mind scrambled for a reply. ‘Not good. This is really, really not good.’

“Was she injured in the fight? Were you injured?” The paparazzi shrieked and swarmed, speaking over each other like a band of harpies as they descended on the heroes. “Why have you two yet to leave the scene? What is that noise?”

**BEEP! BEEP!**

“I’m so s-sorry…” Ladybug continued to blubber, seemingly oblivious to the way her earrings were now shrilling out their last frantic warning. “I’m so…I-I’m sorry… I didn’t…”

Too much.

There was too much happening at once. Adrien felt himself being stretched out in million different directions, heartbeat thudding as he tried to take control of the situation.

“We need to go,” he hissed, wrapping an arm around Ladybug’s waist as the other grabbed for his staff. He planted the end of the sterling baton into the pavement, vaulting them over the raucous crowd to land on an adjacent rooftop.

Immediately after touching down, Adrien was sprinting. One hand cradled the back of his partner’s head, rubbing soothing circles into the dark locks as she hooked her legs above his hips. The other stayed pressed against her lower back, pinning the now-sobbing girl against him as frantic green eyes searched for a private alcove to duck into.

**BEEP! BEEP! BEEP!**

‘She’s not ready,’ Adrien thought desperately, heart breaking with each new shiver that echoed across their joined bodies. ‘She’s in no place to do this right now.’ The realization was less jarring now than it had been a week ago, the notion inspiring concern rather that irritation as Adrien continued to run.
‘There!’

His eyes snagged on a convenient alleyway, boots skidding to a stop as he approached the drop-off. Ladybug’s Miraculous was dangerously loud now, pulsing in his eardrums as Adrien more or less dove off the roof. He swiveled in midair, using his claws on the brick wall to slow their descent while the girl strapped to his torso gasped.

**BEEP! BEEP! BEEP! BEEP! BEEP!**

‘She’s not—’

A flash of light enveloped the pair as they crashed down into the dark side street.

Chapter End Notes

I need to write a cliff hanger like every other chapter or I wither and die. Hope you all understand.
Chapter 31

Chapter Summary

In which we exit the P A I N T R A I N and hop aboard the "Make-Up-And-Kiss-You-Two Express".

Chapter Notes

I've been thoroughly angst shamed, so ive decided to release the ladybug fandom from hell in light of the hiatus we are all now facing. Who's excited to descend into shitpost madness? Boy howdy I know I am! Enjoy sinners.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

As she watched her Miraculous fall apart around her, Marinette came to the verdict that pink was no longer her favorite color.

The girl felt the air whoosh from her lungs, dragging the last of her sobs along with it as Chat clawed his way down the wall. They landed hard, Marinette clinging to her partner's stumbling form as bursts of pale light shot across her limbs. The magic shattered wherever the light flared, chipping away until scarlet and spots yielded to fabric and flesh.

The de-transformation was far from normal in its approach, and the contrast was jarring. Typically her shift from hero to civilian was instantaneous, Ladybug one second and Marinette the next. Now it came in stuttering spurts, as if Tikki were desperately trying to hold the costume together for just a few more seconds — but even the kwami couldn’t hold out forever.

One hand rendered bare.

A single hair tie falling away.

Piece by piece the heroine was unravelling, in more ways than one.

‘It just had to be now,’ Marinette thought, resignation and dread mixing with her previous bout of penitence to form a numbing sensation that nearly made her throat close up. ‘Once again I’ve screwed myself over because I’m incapable of listening.’

For the second time that week, she was facing an accidental reveal.

‘Lucky me…’

Shaking off the selfish wave of self-pity, Marinette found herself sandwiched between a warm suit and biting brick, her body pressed against Chat’s as the boy continued to pin her head against the crook of his neck. His breathing mimicked the erratic pace of her own — most likely due to the fact he’d just sprinted nearly four blocks with 110 pounds of crying girlfriend strapped to his torso.
Marinette dimly heard him whisper something, but the words were muffled by how tightly he threaded her against him, pulling her close until her damp cheeks rubbed salty trails along the side of his neck.

‘Well, there’s nothing to be done about it at this point,’ Marinette thought, resigning herself to the fact this was apparently going down right now. ‘No use in putting off the inevitable.’

Steeling herself for whatever came next, be it rejection or celebration, she tried to extract herself from Chat’s vice grip. It took some coaxing (against both his grasp and her own desire to do nearly anything else) but Marinette finally managed to draw herself out into open air, catching an exhausted Tikki in her shaking palms. She paused a moment to collect her courage, then looked up.

To her utter shock, she was not met with an expected green-eyed stare.

The teen blinked away her tears, brow furrowing in confusion. Tucking Tikki into her collar with slow and careful movements, she took in her boyfriend’s screwed-up expression.

“Chat…?” Marinette prompted, heart still beating dangerously fast as her mind raced in an attempt to process his astonishing reaction. She was right there, caught in his grasp as her civilian self… so why wasn’t he looking?

“I didn’t see anything,” Chat Noir rushed to assured her, shaking his head with a flurry of blonde locks. “I-I swear I kept my eyes closed the entire time and I didn’t see your face.”

‘He didn’t look?’

Marinette felt her chest clench tight at his incredible sensitivity, knees giving out as she slumped back against the wall behind her with a small “Oh…” Her hands were braced against Chat’s shoulders, his arms still encircling her waist, and the tight embrace was perhaps the only thing that kept her from sliding down onto the dirty pavement beneath their feet. A million different questions begged to be let out, yet only one managed to work its way between her quivering lips.

“Why?” Marinette asked, voice hardly above a whisper as the word slipped into the sliver of space between them.

“You aren’t ready,” Chat answered simply, softly.

“So you… y-you aren’t going to o-open your eyes?”

“Not until you’re 100% ready, my Lady.”

“Why?” she repeated, unable to wrap her mind around his reasoning. ‘This is what he’s been waiting for, isn’t it?’

“You’ve already had one reveal sprung on you,” Chat began, dipping his head, “and… I’m not…” He cleared his throat, the next words a bit gravelly. “I won’t let you go through that again.”

Marinette felt her heart shatter and then stitch itself back together, making her work against a second wave of tears that threatened to pour out over her lashes at the sight of his tightly-shut eyelids. A mix of relief and guilt bubbled up in her throat at his gesture, sticking there as she struggled to work past her shock.

It was astounding, mind-blowing in a way Marinette could hardly conceive. After all the hell she’d put this boy through, after all the yelling and the running and the ignorance, he still somehow found it in himself to put her first.
Sure, Chat Noir had always been the self-sacrificial type... but this? This went beyond mere chivalry, and the depth of his compassion nearly drove Marinette to ignore her fear and beg him to open his eyes.

But she didn’t.

She didn’t because Adrien was right: she wasn’t ready.

Marinette hated that she wasn’t. She hated, abhorred, loathed the fact that despite his endless understanding she wasn’t prepared to give up that part of herself just yet. But he’d granted her a choice, one she wasn’t about to squander with her indecisiveness.

‘This doesn’t have to happen tonight,’ her tiny shoulder devil exalted, tempting the girl back to her comfortable ledge of anonymity. ‘You can go back to how it was before... go back to having him love you as Ladybug.’

‘But it needs to be soon,’ the creature’s more holy counterpart insisted, ever the realist. ‘He deserves to know. You owe him that much...’

“T-thank you,” Marinette garbled out at last, willing both little voices away in order to focus on the now. “Thank you, f-for all of this. You don’t deserve to put up with someone like me...” Chat’s throat buzzed with a considering hum, the sound vibrating across the tip of her nose to fan out across her unmasked face.

“Maybe not,” he relented, tucking his chin atop her head with a weighty sigh, “but that doesn’t change the fact that I still want to put up with you.” Marinette’s heart latched onto the words like a drowning man to a life preserver, clutching them tight as his voice floated in the evening air. “And even though you can be stupid... and brash... and stubborn—“

“...I know...”

“Not done!” Chat chirped out, keeping his tone light but insistent as he cut though her soft interjection. “Even though you can be stupid and brash and stubborn and a whole lot of other words I can’t think of right now, you make up for it by also being honest and real and... a-and flawed.”

Here he pulled back, giving Marinette a bittersweet smile that so perfectly mirrored her father’s in its subtle sadness that she found herself floored by the similarity. His voice grew softer still. “You, my Lady, are one perfectly infuriating girl, but you’re my perfectly infuriating girl... so I’ll continue to put up with you, even if it means I only get to know your Ladybug side.”

The alley fell quiet, cool air rushing across the pair as Chat trailed off into silence.

‘He just had to be a poet,’ Marinette thought, making a sort of mangled sound in response to his perfect, piecing words. ‘I’m dating a model and a goddamn poet.’

Chat’s eyes squeezed tighter, face scrunching up as he leaned towards her. “I can’t tell if that’s laughter or crying without looking at your face,” he admitted, sounding concerned by her less-than-coherent reply. “Did I say the wrong thing again?”

“No, y-you’re fine,” Marinette assured him, letting her head thump against his broad chest as she fought to control her breathing. “You’re... you’re perfect actually. It’s just a... little bit of both.” Adrien stayed silent, seeming to sense that she needed a moment to process everything.

‘Not until you’re 100% ready...’
They stood quietly for a few minutes more, allowing their heartbeats to steady and their emotions to settle. Exhausted by the past hour — hell, by the past week — Marinette felt her tired thoughts begin to drift, lulled by the warmth of the protective body curled around hers. A flitting realization occurred to her, hilariously trivial in light of their current situation, but one that still made her irrationally upset.

“I think I dropped my chocolate a few buildings back…” Marinette mumbled against his collarbone. There was a surprised intake of breath. Then the black material against her temples began to quiver, and Chat/Adrien’s tell-tale chuckles filled the empty side street until she couldn’t help but join in on his infectious giggling.

“I’ll bring you another one later tonight,” he promised, eyes still screwed shut but lips stretching into a tentative smile. “Maybe three or four.”

“T-thank you…I’d like that.” She felt Adrien press his hands against her back, worry touching his features as he likely registered the way she was trembling.

“You need to go home, Ladybug,” he murmured. “Go do whatever you have to do in order to calm down, and I’ll see you in two hours, okay?”

Okay,” Marinette whispered, trying and failing to pull herself from his comfortable grasp. The feeling of being in Chat’s embrace after their time apart verged on the addictive, and the added thought that she was also being held by Adrien made an already difficult action nearly impossible to tackle.

A long moment passed in that intoxicating haze before his voice rang out again.

“You do realize you have to let go of me in order to leave, right?”

“I’m working up the courage,” Marinette replied in a small voice, burying her nose against the crook of her boyfriend’s neck. “Give me a minute.” ‘He always smells so clean,’ she mused, losing herself in the familiar scent of his aftershave and trying to cook up some excuse to stay.

“No rush, Bug,” Chat murmured, sounding equally entranced as he continued to let her cling. Gloved fingers carded their way through her hair, careful claws tangling amidst the dark strands as the sounds of the city echoed down the corridor. “It’s down,” he noted. Marinette hummed in reply, taking the opportunity to snuggle a little closer. “That’s cute. You’re cute.”

Needless to say, the sound of Adrien whispering compliments against the crown of her head didn’t do her blood pressure any favors, but Marinette found it in herself not to squeak. ‘He’s your boyfriend,’ she reminded herself, fighting down an irrational bout of shyness. ‘He’s been your boyfriend for weeks, so pull it together, girly.’

After a few more moments of indulgence, she finally willed herself away, drawing back as his hands slid out from around her.

“I’ll wait here for five minutes,” Chat said, leaning against the wall with his eyes still dutifully shut. “That should give you plenty of time to scamper out of sight.”

Marinette nodded, then gave an affirmative sound when she remembered he couldn’t see her. Taking one last look at the now almost comically familiar face (‘Yep, that’s literally just Adrien Agreste wearing a mask’), she reluctantly turned to leave.

She’d taken one step when a last-minute decision struck her, and before she could think twice about it, Marinette swiveled back to plant a peck on Chat’s cheek. It was quick and incredibly chaste, but it still inspired a roiling wave of bashfulness that lit up her skin as she removed her lips.
'You can do that now. Just… just kiss Adrien whenever you want.'

Middle school Marinette would have had an aneurism.

But that wasn’t who was standing in the alleyway, and Lycée Marinette just flushed, watching as her boyfriend swallowed a grin.

“‘Til later, my Lady?”

“‘Til later, chaton.”

…

‘Til later, Adrien.’

“So… I guess I’m the one in the hot seat now, huh?”

Adrien swiveled atop the chimney at the sound of Ladybug’s voice, arranging his face in a businesslike expression despite the way his heart fluttered at her arrival.

The past two hours had been torturous for the boy, though in a way that had been very different from the rest of the week’s torment. Upon reaching home Adrien had immediately been summoned to his father’s office for a grueling address about his upcoming show schedule, then directed towards the wall of monitors to take part in some video conference he had no interest in, then sent to the kitchen to consult with the head chef on his new high-protein diet, then—

Well, you get the point. He was a busy guy.

So busy, in fact, that he hadn't found the time to actually sit down and process his encounter with Ladybug before nine o’clock snuck up on him. He hadn't had the time to work out whether he was still upset or relieved — or maybe even a little of both — before Chat Noir had to be leaping off to their meeting place.

Somehow he'd managed to arrive first, and the hero had helped himself to their judge’s podium.

“You are indeed in the hot seat, my Lady,” Adrien responded to her greeting, crossing his legs at the booted ankle and regarding his partner through narrowed eyes. “So start chatting.” Ladybug gave a slight wince, scuffing her toe against the rooftop before peering up with a contrite expression written across her adorable face.

“I brought you croissants?” she tried, drawing his attention to the white box clutched in her grasp.

Adrien’s eyebrow twitched, his heightened feline senses picking up the warm scent of butter as it rose from her offered parcel. “Resorting to bribery now, are we?” he teased, willing his growling stomach to behave. ‘Talking now, eating later…’

“Well, you did bring me chocolate first.”

“I brought you chocolate because your body is tearing itself apart. You bought me croissants because you feel guilty.”
“All right… you’ve got me there,” Ladybug conceded, making a move to pitch the box off the roof and into the dumpster below. “Guess I’ll just toss them—”

“Wait!” Adrien shrieked, nearly leaping from his perch as Ladybug paused mid-throw.

She quirked her lip. “Yes?”

“…I didn’t say I didn’t want them,” he grumbled, straightening with a huff as Ladybug passed the offering up to him. Chucking his self-control out the window, Adrien fished a hand in and stuffed a pastry into his waiting jaw as he returned his attention to his girlfriend. “We’re still talking by the way,” he reminded her, spewing crumbs with each word. “You are not off the hook.”

“I didn’t think so,” Ladybug sighed, planting herself below him and waiting until he’d inhaled his first treat. Adrien watched her shift from side to side, reveling in the comfort of her sorely missed company while he tried to organize his thoughts.

They needed to talk, that much was abundantly clear. Now it was just a matter of knowing where to start.

Ladybug had mentioned an apology earlier, but Adrien found that despite his air of fabricated aloofness, he’d already mostly forgiven her. Her actions after the akuma fight had all but confirmed what Plagg had told him earlier: Ladybug’s reaction to his reveal had been a purely knee-jerk response, not the result of some perceived shortcoming on his part. That understanding had made it remarkably easy for Adrien to let go of his lingering malcontent.

That being said, he wasn’t about to let her off that easy.

“I don’t like it when you run away from our conversations,” Adrien began, jumping right into the discussion with a brutally honest confession. ‘No hero worship. No sugar-coating. Just confront her about how you’re feeling.’

Ladybug swallowed, eyes snapping to his.

“Yeah, that’s something I really need to work on.” The heroine stilled, tilting her head. “Wait, no. That’s something I will work on.” Adrien nodded, feeling the knot he’d tied himself into over the past week begin to unravel at her frank response. For the first time in a long time their conversation didn’t feel like a game, and the sensation was liberating. “I’m sorry I didn’t do a good job of explaining myself that night, but things were just a bit crazy for me at that point… what with you being you, and… a-and I know that’s not a good excuse but—”

“Ladybug,” Adrien cut in, fearful she was winding herself up again, “it’s all right. We have time now, so you can explain whatever you feel like sharing and I’ll listen.” The girl deflated, chewing her lip in concentration before lining up her thoughts.

“I was never disappointed in you,” she began, “and I’m so sorry if I ever made you feel that way.” Hearing her say the words was like having a dead weight lifted off his chest, but Adrien dutifully continued to pay attention through his soaring relief. “I’m sorry I can be bad at talking things out sometimes and I’m sorry you have to take the brunt of my hurt feelings. I’m sorry I ran and I’m really sorry about ignoring you all week.” Ladybug dragged both hands down her face, peering up at him between latticed fingers as she mumbled against her palms, “Basically, sorry for being a total bitch.”

Adrien tried not to snort.

“You weren’t being a bitch.” Blue eyes narrowed. “Well, you weren’t being a total bitch.”
“I was though!” Ladybug moaned, now pacing listlessly below him. “I made you feel like you were the problem when really it was just me having all the issues! I’m an absolute jerk!”

“Agreed.”

“I’m a hypocrite who let things get way too out of hand!”

“Yep.”

‘No point in arguing it,’ Adrien thought, allowing his girlfriend to blow off some steam as he reached for a second croissant.

“I’m a… a…” Ladybug twirled her wrists, seeming to claw at the air for the right word.

“A stupid teenage girl?” Adrien suggested helpfully, taking a big bite of his pastry. ‘These are good… almost familiar.’

“Yes!” she exclaimed, firmly planting her feet as she half-shouted her declaration into the night. “I’m a stupid teenage girl who couldn’t get over the fact her stupid teenage boyfriend was also her stupid childhood crush!”

…

Adrien felt himself shoot straight up to heaven.

Ladybug looked as if she’d plunged into hell.

He swallowed abruptly, abandoning his munching in favor of stretching his mouth into a comically wide grin. ‘Oh Lord, this is too good to be true…” Adrien thought, tossing her confession around in his head as his girlfriend balled her hands into fists with a whispered curse.

“Excuse me, my Lady,” he said, shaking his head in wonder, “but did you by any chance just say—“

“Nope!” Ladybug squeaked, turning as red as her mask as Chat broke the still atmosphere with a whoop.

“Yes, you did!” he cried, swinging his legs with utter glee as he leaned forward atop the chimney. “I most certainly did just heard you say you had a childhood crush on me! Oh, I can see it now. Little Ladybug with her pigtails and missing front teeth, twirling around her bedroom with a magazine clutched to her chest!”

“I-It wasn’t— a-and— you—!”

“Did you scribble tiny hearts in your journal, tacking my last name onto the end of yours?”

“Oh, for the love of…”

“Did you name our kids yet?”

“CHAT NOIR YOU STOP TEASING ME RIGHT NOW!”

“Chat Noir? Who’s that?” Adrien sang out, riding his wave of giddiness as he slid down to the roof below. Quick as a flash, he gripped Ladybug’s arms where they crossed over her chest, bending down to look her straight in her sourpuss face as he let his words roll out in a cocky exclamation. “Why, I’m Adrien Agreste! Your childhood crush, remember?”
‘Kill.’

Marinette was amazed that her mask hadn’t melted off her face; she was sure that the heat of her blush would have reduced a less-magical disguise to pure ash at this point. Pseudo-murderous thoughts were stewing in her head once again, but she managed to avoid stomping on the roof like a child in favor of grinding her teeth in embarrassment.

Her boyfriends just continued to pull that goddamn smirk.

She knew the two boys were the same — of course she knew — but having Chat Noir outright declaring himself as “her childhood crush Adrien Agreste” was a little disorienting to say the least.

“That was years—‘Well, a year. ‘—ago!” Marinette shot back, avoiding those glimmering green eyes as if her very sanity depended on it (which it totally did). “It was just a silly little infatuation is all, and I can assure you my tastes have matured since then.” She ended with a sniff, still refusing to meet his magnetic gaze.

“Reaaaallllyyyyy now…” Chat—

Adrien?

She didn’t know what to call him at this point.

“Reaaallllyyyyy now…” her partner drawled out, playfully twisting her upper body side to side. “So what you’re saying is, your tastes have evolved from young me… to slightly older me?” The boy laughed, long and free in a way that almost made Marinette crack a smile. “I hate to say it, my Lady, but I think you have a type.”

“You wouldn’t be the first to point that out,” she admitted, letting the blush ease off her face with a deep breath.

“So you have a track record for falling for gorgeous blondes, do you?”

“Mostly just you in particular if I’m being candid.”

“You know, I think I like this whole ‘honesty’ thing,” Chat mused, finally managing to catch her eye. “I’m learning so much already.”

“I can’t lie, this ‘talking things out’ routine is pretty refreshing,” Marinette conceded, giving him a tentative smile. For the first time the two noticed how close they’d drifted towards each other, now only inches apart with Chat’s hands resting on her upper arms. Marinette felt a tiny spark light in the pit of her stomach at their proximity, deliciously similar to the fluttering she’d felt when their relationship was first blossoming and so exciting in its resurgence.

It was the lingering butterflies of her buried Adrien crush mixed with the bursting heat of Chat’s endearment. It was dangerous. Deadly, even.

It seemed as though he had killed her first… but she couldn’t find it in herself to complain.

“Are we going to be okay?” Marinette asked, breaking the silence that had begun to envelope them.

“Of course we are,” Chat responded, letting his thumbs skate across her suit. “We always are in the end.”

“But I don’t want this to be the end.”
“Well then, it isn’t. In fact we can call it our new beginning if you’d like.” Marinette nodded, prompting his head to bob alongside hers.

“I would like that,” she said, the idea of opening a new chapter sounding simultaneously exciting and nerve-wracking. Frankly, Marinette didn’t know what would come of her deciding to keep her identity a secret. She didn’t know if it would ultimately save or break them. The millions of different questions from hours before came flooding back, poking the inside of her skull with their insistent inquiries.

What would change between Ladybug and Chat?

What would change between Marinette and Adrien?

What could come of two people pursuing a four-sided relationship where only one person held all the chips?

What—

“Can I hold you again?” her boyfriend asked, his voice snapping her from her musing. With a shake of her pigtailed head Marinette glanced up at him, a sweet grin breaking across her face at the care she found written in his handsome features.

“Yes please,” she replied, meeting him halfway as Chat drew her towards him. The way they intertwined was effortless, Marinette slinging her arms around his neck and Chat allowing his to settle behind her waist. Exhaling in tandem, the duo melded into each other with a silent conversation that flowed across their bodies in a mutually understood exchange.

Her fingers in his hair were the most eloquent of apologies, spelling out everything words couldn’t convey against the surface of his scalp.

His cheek nuzzling against her neck was its own kind of forgiveness, expressing something beyond simple acceptance with an imprint that was both physical and emotional.

The shared heartbeat that thrummed across their chests was a promise, simple in conception and without any cumbersome expectations.

“Can I kiss you again?” Chat requested, nosing his way up until he was situated in front of her face.

“Yes please,” Marinette breathed, meeting him halfway once more as their lips rejoined in a caress that was both tentative and sure. Their movements were practiced, his tilt of the jaw just as expected as her sigh in response, but the context was different now. They were different now.

Her fingers tightened in the hair of the boy she’d been chasing after for years, lips parting against the ones she’d caught long before she had even realized.

His nuzzling cheek was now concave, drawing the breath from the girl who had, and always would, take his away.

Their shared heartbeat was quickening now, its promise taking on a new heat as two suited chests pressed together in a mutual desire for more contact.

“Can I love you again?” Adrien pleaded, whispering the words between their momentarily parted lips.

“Yes please,” Marinette begged, meeting him halfway yet again as the boy hoisted her up onto his
hips.

Chat took four long, lumbering steps, and Marinette gasped she felt her back shoved against the cool brick of the chimney. His mouth reclaimed hers in an instant, probing and pleading but never harsh in its loving exploration, and his fiery care only spurred her to meet his every push with equal fervor. Marinette felt that name, the one she’d trained herself not to desire, lingering on the tip of her dancing tongue, but she chose to swallow it down with a groan.

She knew she could say it; it belonged to him after all. But something about acknowledging her classmate in this particular circumstance seemed wrong to her. This moment was for Chat Noir. It was for the boy who had never once overlooked her in a crowd, the partner who had never once let her down in a fight, and the young man who had never once left her wanting when she needed him the most.

She was here for Chat.

And even though it was technically Adrien’s hands skimming up and down her back, Adrien’s lips trailing kisses down the curve of her jaw, Marinette wouldn’t allow him to intrude on this space that had always been for Ladybug and Chat Noir alone.

So when her boyfriend sunk his teeth into lobe of her ear, hips canting up against hers, it wasn’t Adrien’s name that she exhaled into the night.

“Chat…” Marinette sighed, letting him wreck the side of her face for only a few seconds more before she tugged him away. He surfaced with a slow blink, pupils blown wide and entirely focused on her.

“Is this okay?” he asked, instantly dialing back his intensity for fear of overstepping his bounds.

“You can tell me whenever you want to stop.”

“This is perfect,” she assured him, heart swelling at the way he seemed to relax. “I missed you so much.” Chat’s subsequent expression reminded Marinette why she loved the way he turned things up even more than the way he dialled things back.

“Did you miss me?” the boy questioned, voice lilting in mounting desire. “Or this?” the cat continued, pitching forward to grant her a positively scorching kiss. Marinette grinned into his onslaught, letting her fingernails trace tiny trenches down the plane of his suited back as Chat coaxed her into arching against him.

“Why not both?” she both inquired once he’d relinquished her lips. “Am I allowed to have missed both?”

“Absolutely,” Chat confirmed, sounding pleased with her answer. “And for the record, I missed you too.”

“Well now I’ve got to ask, don’t I?”

“Ask what, my Lady?”

“I’ve got to ask whether you missed me…” Marinette cupped his jaw, pressing a closed-mouth kiss to his lips before whispering low against them, “…or this.” The groan Chat gave in response to her hips rolling forward was answer enough, but the following affirmation was also nice to hear.

“Both,” he said, bringing their foreheads together as his hands hitched her up higher, “definitely both.”
“Good… cause you’re about to get a lot of both.”

The space between them disappeared.

“All right… Copycat, Dark Cupid, and Rogercop,” Ladybug asked, brushing away a few stray strands of hair that had fallen into his face as Adrien mulled over his answer.

The two of them had inevitably ended up tangled together on the rooftop, abandoning their make out session after about fifteen minutes in favor of just snuggling under the moonlight. It wasn’t that Adrien didn’t want to kiss her (Lord knew it topped the list of his favorite pastimes), but turned out talking was difficult when your lips were otherwise occupied, and the pair of them had silently decided they’d rather spend their time catching up than trying to suck each other’s faces off.

So talk they did.

For nearly an hour they’d gone back and forth, discussing anything and everything from the upcoming holidays to which video game character would win in a fight to what they’d done that week. They hadn’t lingered on that last bleak topic, finding no pleasure in recounting hours of nothing but worry and sadness, and eventually the conversation had turned back in the direction of the ridiculous, leading to a no-holds-barred game of—

“Fuck Copycat, marry Rogercop, and kill Dark Cupid,” Adrien said, nodding his head decisively as Ladybug let out a snort.

“That’s a little narcissistic, don’t you think? Banging yourself? Also: why in the world would you want to marry Rogercop?”

“Technically Copycat’s my clone, so it’s more or less masturbation at that point. And seriously? He’d be the ultimate husband, always keeping me safe!” This earned him a considering hum.

“You make some valid points,” Ladybug conceded, snickering nonetheless as she glanced up at him. Adrien drew her closer, arm draped over her shoulder as slender legs sprawled across his folded ones. He gladly nestled in, stifling the yawn that threatened to bubble out of his throat. The teen hadn’t gotten a good night’s rest in some time, and with the emotionally taxing day he’d just gone through, Adrien’s body was screaming out for sleep.

“Okay, now you,” he said, electing to ignore his drowsiness. ‘There’s no way I’m cutting this short,’ Adrien decided, watching as Ladybug tossed her head in thought. ‘Not when I just got her back.’

“Hmmmm…” she mused, narrowing her eyes and tapping a finger to her chin. “I’d say, kill Rogercop—“

“Not my husband, you monster!”

“—fuck Dark Cupid and marry Copycat.”

“Okay, now I’m going to need your explanations here.”

“Easy, Rogercop is scary and I don’t like him.”

“Again, step off my man.”
“Dark Cupid literally abhors love so I doubt he’d make good spouse material.”

“Smart, smart.”

“And Copycat got akumatized because of his love for me, making us the perfect match!” Ladybug finished, spreading out her hands as if she’d concluded an important lecture.

“Yeah, or something,” Adrien said vaguely, recalling the real force that drove Copycat to become akumatized. “But are you sure you aren’t just marrying him for his good looks? You are aware you have a type...”

“The fact Copycat happens to be incredibly handsome has minimal bearing on my decision,” his girlfriend said with a sniff. “I reached my conclusions through logic and reason alone.” Adrien opened his mouth to retort, but all that came out was a tell-tale yawn he couldn’t quite smother in time. “Oooooh, I heard that. I think it’s time for us to head home, kitty cat.”

“I hate to say it, but I think you’re right.” Adrien felt his back crack as Ladybug pulled him to his feet, the boy reaching back to dust off the backside of his suit.

“Text me when you get in bed?” Ladybug asked, her voice taking on an almost pleading tone as she appeared to gauge his reaction.

‘God, I missed her.’

“As nice as that sounds,” Adrien began, leaning down to make sure she could spot his teasing smile, “I’d love to actually get some sleeping done tonight, so you’ll have to keep your sexting brief.”

Had he ever mentioned how cute she was when she blushed?

She was super cute when she blushed.

“I didn’t mean it like that,” Ladybug muttered, laying her knuckles on the center of his chest and lightly dragging them against the suit’s zipper. “I just... text me goodnight?”

Adrien felt his heart melt a bit at the hopeful way she stared up at him, their week of lost contact and miscommunication fading into a distant memory in the wake of her suppliant blue eyes. “Of course, my Lady,” he assured her, dipping down to press a kiss against her scarlet palm. “Every night, for as long as you’d like.”

Her relief-drenched smile was the perfect closer to their night.

Adrien found his trek home to be significantly easier than his trip to their meeting, motions effortless despite having to vault across Paris with a half-filled pastry box wedged under his arm. He didn't even hear any complaints from Plagg as the two separated in their dim room, the kwami merely nodding in a gesture that could almost be construed as pride before zipping off into his lofty perch.

He could feel the sting of his shower as the water cascaded across his skin, feel the stretch of his pajamas across his shoulder and the slide of sheets against his back. Adrien felt the weight of the cell phone as he gathered it into his palm just as he could feel the vibration that accompanied her immediate reply.

[ goodnight ladybug <3 ]
Adrien felt relief. He felt joy and approval... and maybe still some worry as well, but all that really mattered to him was that he was feeling again. That they were speaking again.

And he’d never felt a better night’s sleep than the one Ladybug lulled him into that evening.

Chapter End Notes

Id just like to make a PSA real quick. At this point, im getting an average of 15 or so messages EVERY DAY asking when i intend to update/begging for a new chapter. And while I know many people mean it as a compliment, I’m here to tell you that every time I get one of those messages, I make a mental note to delay the next update by another half hour.

please, please stop begging me. i will post new chapters when i have new chapters, and the constant wheedling does nothing but put added stress onto an already struggling art student.

((small voices, I am but a small bird)) <3
‘Am I a bad person?’ Marinette mused, unlocking her phone as she studied Adrien from across the courtyard. Lunch hour was just drawing to a close and, true to form, the boys had returned a scant five or so minutes before classes were to resume.

Just enough time for her to have her fun.

Nino looked to be launching into another one of his tangents, dragging Adrien along with him as they settled at one of the concrete tables that dotted the school’s main outdoor atrium, and the blonde seemed to be enthralled in the conversation, nodding in agreement as he absently toyed with his cell. Marinette swallowed a smile, deciding to let her mischievous nature win out over being a merciful girlfriend as she launched her first attack.

[ so I decided to skip lunch today ]

She was pleased to note that Adrien’s eyes immediately snapped to his device with the arrival of her message, the boy continuing to half-listen to his friend as one hand reached down to reply.

[ bad girlfriend, food will make you strong ]
[ im plenty strong, thank you very much. besides, i just wasn’t hungry ]
[ and why is that? ]
[ because I’ve got a craving that food cant satisfy… ]
To his merit, Adrien kept his face remarkable passive. Marinette squinted across the distance between them, unable to make out any extreme reaction but noting the way his shoulders seemed to stiffen just a bit. ‘That’s right…’ she thought, leaning back against her lonely bench with a smirk, ‘Here kitty, kitty.’

[ …what are you craving? ]
[ oh you know, just the usual ]
[ attention, affection… a nice pair of hands between my thighs <3 ]

Marinette was too far away to hear his exact words, but Nino seemed to be more than a bit concerned at the way his best friend launched into a hysterical fit of coughing, reaching over to thump Adrien on the back with a puzzled expression. Meanwhile, the trickster watched her boyfriend pull himself together with a shaky smile, giving a thumbs up before hunching back over his phone.

He angled the screen slightly away as Nino rolled into another conversation.

[ any particular pair of hands you had in mind? ;3 ]
[ yours, ideally ]
[ great answer ]
[ but mine can also come through in a pinch… ]
[ …and a press… and a pet… ]
[ you paint a vivid mental picture there, my lady… ]
[ i REALLY wish you would have texted me this earlier, I could have helped you out. now i've got class in a few minutes and i cant give you the full attention you deserve :( ]

Adrien shifted in his seat, and Marinette mirrored the action (though her restlessness sprung from mischief father than pent-up arousal.)

[ oh that’s fine, im sure you’ll make it up to me later. but in the meantime, i’ve got a little something for you chaton ;) ]

[ for me? ]
[ for you! ]
Marinette nearly snorted with laughter as she watched Adrien whip around, gesturing to Nino’s headset with such a look of desperation that it verged on the hilarious. A befuddled Nino relinquished his equipment with a quirk of his brow, accepting Adrien’s overflowing thanks as the blonde made a speedy exit.

Her boyfriend beelined to the nearest empty bench, walking a bit unsteadily as he positioned himself with back against the wall, and Marinette allowed herself only a brief period of pity for the boy before attaching the link with a stifled grin.

It was only a few moments before…

Adrien’s yell nearly drowned out the afternoon bell as it rolled across the busy courtyard with a frustrated fury.

‘Yes, I think I am a bad person,’ Marinette decided, gathering up her school bag as she whistled a gleeful tune en route to her next class.

“Never gunna give you up, never gunna let you down…”

Chapter End Notes

I...
This was supposed to be an April Fools thing but honestly? Canon.
Inspired by this masterpiece>>> http://bullysquadess.tumblr.com/post/141341868252/gatorlock-the-season-finale-left-me-trapped-in
Chapter 33

Chapter Summary

In which there's like no angst whatsoever wow.

Chapter Notes

I know this took a long time but LET ME TELL YOU-this chapter never wanted to end. Like, im talking the 10k word mark. Actually insane. So I split it in to two chapters! Next one should be out much quicker than this one seeing as though it's already 90% done, but I do have finals next week so I cant make any solid promises. Thanks for your patience folks! Enjoy sinners.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Marinette wasn’t an especially smart girl. (The past week could easily attest to that.)

Sure, she got good enough grades in school. Sure, she had certain talents that one could say made her intelligent. Sure, she (or more commonly Ladybug) could be exceedingly clever when the situation called for it.

…But that kind of astuteness did not equate to being smart.

Which is probably why she agreed on the date.

Technically, it was more of a double date between the semi-in-a-relationship Alya and Nino (neither of them were inclined to label whatever was going on between them), and the secretly-totally-in-a-relationship her and Adrien. But regardless, it was a date.

A bad idea disguised as a date.

And Marinette knew it was a bad idea, or at the very least an underhanded idea. She knew she needed to avoid Adrien until she’d worked up the courage to rip off her cloth— costume, she meant costume! — and declare herself as Ladybug. But she still hadn’t been able to say no.

Not when her three best friends (one of which just also happened to be her boyfriend) had cornered her in the courtyard after school on Monday.

Not when Nino had promised they could go to her favorite gelato shop — “You know, the place with the dinosaur spoons you like!”
Not when Alya had given her the “please-please-please-just-go-along-with-this” look.

And certainly not when Adrien had slammed her with those intense green kitten eyes (which looked far too innocent on the same boy who could be the very embodiment of sin when he chose to be) and offered to carry her bag as they walked.

She couldn’t say no. So she didn’t.

And that was how Marinette found herself in her current situation: dinosaur spoon in hand, frown on her face, and foot tapping absently to the upbeat pop music that carried through the restaurant.

Damn her sweet tooth… and damn her sweet boyfriend! Damn him and damn herself for not having an ounce of self-control when it came to her tall hunk of blond haired kryptonite.

Marinette simmered.

Barring this unplanned little disaster outing, her first post-makeup school day had gone about as smoothly as one could have hoped for. At least she hadn’t immediately blown her cover upon entering homeroom, hadn’t called Adrien some dumb pet name or accidentally made out with him like she owned his ass.

‘Which I do,’ Marinette thought primly, taking a long pull of her ice water and admiring the view of said owned ass as Adrien walked over to the counter. That backside looked just as good in denim as it did skintight leather, and it was a miracle that the likeness alone hadn’t revealed Chat’s identity earlier.

It had been like this all day. Her class time had mostly consisted of worksheets, checking out Adrien, group projects, checking out Adrien, a quick cram session in the library that included a fair amount of — you guessed it! — checking out Adrien, and finally, some good old fashioned checking out Adrien.

It was like being fourteen again.

Though this time her checking out was less “oh my gosh he’s so kind and handsome and smart I wish he would whisk me off my feet!”, and more “holy shit my dork of a boyfriend is sitting right there and is not actively trying to hit on me.”

It was jarring, really. Having Chat’s voice politely ask her for a pencil without offering a kiss in return. Or having Chat’s face throw her an expression that wasn’t a smirk. Half the time Marinette was so thrown off by Adrien’s composed exterior and (dare she say?) mild demeanor, she’d completely forget he was Chat Noir.

That was, until he did something like let slip a lame pun, or accidentally blind himself via disposable camera flash, for example.

(Marinette had watched him and Kim play with the cheap chunk of plastic for a solid fifteen minutes, all the while stomping down the urge to confiscate the damn thing and tell him cats have no use for photography equipment.)

Something told her it was going to be a long semester.

‘Or maybe just a long afternoon…’ she thought, letting her eyes dance across the building to where Adrien stood. The boys were leaning over the glass cased freezers, examining the tubs of gelato inside and unwittingly giving Marinette quite the view of a certain derrière.
Spoiler alert: It wasn’t Nino’s.

“You good there?” Alya asked, getting a meddlesome look in her eye as she followed her friend’s somewhat vacant gaze forward. Marinette waved her off, letting loose a frantic giggle as she mentally kicked herself for staring.

'Reminder: Ladybug may be dating Chat, but Marinette is not dating Adrien,’ she chided herself, forcing her eyes to fall upon more socially acceptable sights.

“Yep, I’m feeling fine!” Marinette chirped, with what she hoped was a casual smile.

Alya seemed unconvinced. “You sure?”

“Positive.”

Bespectacled eyes narrowed.

“Hmmm… Don’t think I haven’t noticed your strange mood this past week, Miss Dupain-Cheng,” Alya began, shaking a finger. “You know if there’s anything going on you can tell me, right? I’ll square up with anyone who tries to hurt my besties, and I’ll beat them too.”

Marinette’s mind went on an idle tangent, trying to imagine a fictitious showdown between Alya “Grand Slam” Césaire and Chat “Defender of Paris” Noir. Her partner was agile, with years of fighting experience under his belt and stealth training to boot, but her best friend was a certified berserker. Marinette had once seen Alya level an entire magazine stand (not a flimsy pharmacy display, but one of the steel beamed setups found dotting the city streets) in a fit of pure journalistic rage.

Adrien wouldn’t stand a chance.

“I do know that,” Marinette affirmed, “and while I appreciate your battle prowess, there’s still nothing going on and nobody you need to fight.”

“Who are we fighting?” Nino cut in, sliding a cup of gelato (lemon with white chocolate chips) in front of Marinette before scooting into his side of the booth.

“Mari’s mystery boy toy,” Alya answered, accepting her own serving of salted caramel goodness from Adrien as he too settled at the table.

“Except that we aren’t,” Marinette corrected, gaze fixed firmly away from her aforementioned “boy toy” as she tried to steer the conversation to a safer topic. “So what’s new, all?”

“I say we go to his house and duct tape him to the ceiling,” was Nino’s helpful suggestion, mumbled through a mouthful of what looked like orange sorbet and effectively steamrolling her attempt at a distraction.

“Too tame,” Alya dismissed. “No, the ‘Official Marinette Dupain-Cheng Protection Squad’ can do better.”

“Egg his windows,” Nino tried.

“Nope.”

“Tar and feather.”

“Too expensive.”
“Is castration an option?” Adrien wondered aloud. Marinette choked.

“I’ll add that to the list,” Alya said with a malicious smile.

“I’d like to make the casual reminder,” Marinette sputtered, eyes still avoiding Adrien’s vicinity as she gestured broadly in the air, “that this guy is nothing more than a casual acquaintance.”

‘Lies.’

“In fact, we hardly even speak any more.”

‘Double lies...’

“Please,” her redheaded friend interjected, “I never see you put down that phone.” Marinette’s mouth opened. “And before you say anything about my own addiction, need I remind you I have an important blog to run?”

A lifeline.

Oh dear sweet God, a lifeline.

“How is the Ladyblog going?” Marinette asked, spotting an exit route from this dangerous line of questioning. “Any new gossip?”

“I know you’re trying to distract me,” Alya accused. She stared her friend down and took a long sip of her soda, the two of them engaging in a particularly fierce eye battle before blue came out victorious. “But I do happen to have more gossip, so I’ll let it slide.”

Marinette let out a relieved breath, turning to her untouched treat and zoning out like she always did when her bestie put on her reporter voice. It wasn't that she didn’t support Alya — hell, she always made sure the Ladyblog got her best angles and most exclusive interviews — but one could only hear so many wild theories about their superhero alter ego before they got boring.

Meanwhile Adrien didn’t seem to find any displeasure in Alya’s rant, nodding intently along with the girl and hanging on to each word as he went in on his own giant cup of gelato.

Ignoring the way her stomach flipped at the sight of his lips working against the rich, chocolatey concoction, Marinette instead focused in on the fervor with which he ate. One could argue that Chat Noir had always been on the skinny side, but since his growth spurt, she worried if he was getting enough calories to keep up with his growing body. Adrien’s diet was probably all well and good for a model, but being a superhero required a lot more fuel, and the way he utterly attacked his bowl only confirmed her suspicions that the boy was not getting his fill at home.

And that certainly wouldn’t do.

She made a mental note to start sneaking her partner sack lunches in between akuma attacks.

(Never let it be said that a Cheng woman ever let her man go hungry.)

Marinette jolted from her thoughts as a tiny dribble of gelato slid off the edge of her spoon, cold biting into her skin where it landed on her chest. With a frown, she set her frozen treat down, only half listening to Alya as she glared down at the offending drop of yellow slush that slowly slid towards the cleft of her cleavage.
A smart, rational person with basic table manners would have grabbed for a napkin in this situation, but apparently Marinette was raised in a zoo. A zoo where they didn’t teach table manners. So of course she just had to scoop the mess up with a dainty swipe of her pointer finger. Of course she had to pop said finger between her lips with a hard suck to catch the lemony goodness found there.

And of course she just had to make eye contact with a certain someone as she did so.

Marinette froze, watching as Adrien balked at her, ahem, "display". The reaction in his face wasn’t overtly obvious (after years of runways and photoshoots, he’d developed a knack for schooling his features into neutrality), but it was there if you knew all the right places to look.

A subtle dilation of his pupils.

That small crease near his jaw as the muscle tensed.

The way his Adam’s apple bobbed as if he were the one swallowing the gelato now sliding down the back of her tongue.

Marinette had spent enough time with him to know when he was getting bothered — riling him up had practically become something of a pastime for her! — but she’d never expected to see that tell-tale reaction now of all times. Not while he was Adrien, and she was Marinette.

Not while she was unmasked and sucking on her finger like a hooker whose rent was due.

Honestly, Marinette didn’t know whether she should feel flattered or furious at the way he continued to stare (true, she was technically his girlfriend, but he currently didn’t know that), so she settled on panicked. She panicked, and did the first thing that came to mind, which involved letting her finger slide out with a pop and—

‘Why the fuck does my first reaction always have to include a wink?’ she thought piteously, snapping her jaw shut as Adrien startled at the flirty gesture.

It was a small mercy that their interaction seemed to have gone unnoticed by the table’s other occupants — Alya and Nino were too fully absorbed in whatever conversation was going on between them to notice their friends’ intense eye fucking — but that was the only clemency Marinette found amidst her sins.

Adrien backed down first, breaking their gaze to focus on just about anything but her. Marinette was quick to follow.

‘What! Was! That!’

Her mind slammed metaphorical pots and pans together between each frenzied thought, and the racket was so loud that Marinette almost missed Alya’s next question entirely. Thankfully, it wasn’t aimed at her.

“So, Adrien…” the reporter grilled, “how’s your girlfriend?”

Cookware clattered in her skull as her brain paused its hissy fit to listen. Marinette stilled externally as well, attention zeroing in on the wide-eyed boy across the table.

‘Yeah, Adrien. How is your girlfriend?’

Adrien took a moment to compose himself as all eyes turned on him.
“I… wasn’t aware I had one,” he responded coolly.

“Sure you don’t,” Alya said with a laugh. She straightened, staring intently. “You’ve been on your phone more than Mari and I put together, and I know for a fact the three of us are your only friends. So are you going to talk about her or am I going to have to beg?”

“She’ll do it,” Nino interjected with a wide-eyed jerk of his thumb. “She’s insane and she’ll do it.”

Adrien put down his spoon, rubbing one knuckle across the ridge of his brow. “I don’t—“

“It’d be easier if you just told her.”

'Shit, that was definitely my voice that just said that,‘ Marinette thought with a wince. Adrien’s eyes drifted back to her, and for some reason she elected to keep talking.

Because that had always worked out so well for her in the past.

“I mean, she’ll probably get it out of you one way or another,” Marinette babbled. “She wouldn’t leave me alone about my ‘friend' until I threw her a bone, so…”

“She’s right,” Alya crowed, swooping in for the kill. “I’m a relentlessly bad person so it might be more merciful if you spoke up now.”

Adrien looked utterly caught, eyes sliding over to Nino’s in a silent plea that went ignored by his best bro.

Marinette should have felt sorry for him, but she instead let her curiosity get the better of her. It was a golden opportunity for any girl — see how her boyfriend spoke of her when she (presumably) wasn’t in the room? Marinette wasn’t about to let it pass unexploited.

“Fine, “Adrien conceded, throwing his hands up in defeat, “I’ll tell you about the girl I’ve been texting.”

Three bodies leaned in.

“I… met her back when I was homeschooled, around the time I was eight or nine,” he began, voice surprisingly sure given that he was lying through his teeth. “Her parents worked for my dad so I would see her around the headquarters sometimes.”

Marinette couldn’t help but be impressed with Adrien’s flawless delivery. Maybe she should have been a little wary of his skill at fibbing, but the surety with which he spoke had even her second guessing whether or not they had met when they were kids.

‘Damn, he’s good.’

“We kind of fell out of touch when I started attending public school,” Adrien continued, sipping at his drink as if he wasn’t in the middle of providing an incredibly well-thought lie, “but just recently we started talking again.”

Alya raised a hand, and he gave her the green light to speak. “Name, age, height, weight, eye color, neighborhood, cup size.”

Adrien coughed, choking on his soda. Marinette only continued to eyeball him expectantly, eager to see what he would give up.

“I-I don’t think I should answer any of those questions!” he responded once he’d caught his breath.
Two girls sighed in tandem.

‘Damn,’ Marinette thought, poking at her gelato as Alya continued to pester the poor boy. ‘He could have at least exaggerated me up to a D cup.’

The inquisition continued.

“So why haven’t we met her?” Nino asked, stabbing his pterodactyl spoon at his friend. “We promise not to chase her off.”

“If we decide we like her,” Alya muttered.

“When we decide we like her,” Nino corrected with a narrow look at his not-girlfriend. Marinette hid her smile.

“It’s just... she has to stay out of the public eye,” Adrien explained, brows bunching in concentration. “Her parents are about as strict as my dad when it comes to things like dating—“

“Aha!” Alya chimed.

“Not that I’m saying we are dating!” Adrien rushed to tack on. “I’m just saying things wouldn’t go well if we showed up in public together. So we stick to texting, mostly.”

“What's she like?” Marinette asked, surprising herself with another interjection. ‘Oh, now you’re just asking for trouble,’ her subconscious lectured. She ignored it, watching as Adrien’s face melted into something undeniably soft at the question.

“Incredible,” he breathed, the single word setting Marinette’s insides aflutter.

“Yeah?” she prompted, hardly above a whisper.

“Yeah,” Adrien repeated, shaking his head with a wide grin, his gaze distant and unbelievably fond. “She’s just... just the best, really. I mean she has all the usual charms. She’s funny and smart and beautiful and kind...“

Alya rolled her eyes with a snort, only to receive a swift elbow from the entranced raven-haired girl beside her.

“But she’d also more than that,” Adrien continued. “She’s brave— so, so brave. Even when I can tell she’s feeling scared or lost. She’s... I guess you could say... poised?” He tilted his head, pondering the description before deciding it fit. “Yeah, poised. And selfless too! She always knows the right thing to say, somehow. Like when we’re texting and she can’t see my face, La—she can always tell what I’m feeling, even when I don’t know myself.”

“She sounds too good to be true,” Nino said, not unkindly. “I don’t think I’ve never met a girl that flawless.” The table jolted from what was most likely Alya’s foot slamming into his kneecap. “Hey!”

“Oh, don’t worry,” Adrien laughed, clapping his friend on the shoulder to keep him from retaliating against the reporter. “She’s got her flaws, too.”

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“Like?” Marinette pressed, eager to get down into the nitty gritty. ‘Here it comes,’ she thought, waiting for the hammer to fall. ‘Let’s hear what you really think, cat boy.’

“She’s reckless,” Adrien deadpanned. “Like, stupidly so.” He shook his head with a reflective smile. “I’ve seen her take way too many risks, usually for the sake of others and usually without any
concern for herself.”

Marinette bit down on her instinctive “You’re one to talk!” when the sight of her T-rex spoon conjured a very specific memory of her risk taking.

Okay, so maybe she could be reckless.

“She's also stubborn. And argumentative.”

Again, Marinette was about to defend herself when she realized any interjection on her part would only stand to prove his point.

She stubbornly refused to argue.

“But honestly, the worst part about her…” Adrien began, prompting Marinette to lean forward in anticipation.

‘C’mon, lay it on me,’ she thought, itching for him to drag her through the mud with a fervor that should have worried her. ‘Is it the yelling? My inability to reciprocate feelings? Is my body too—‘

“…is that I don’t get to see her every day like I want to.”

Marinette blinked, falling back into her seat.

Of all the faults Adrien could have picked (she had plenty to choose from), he chose their inability to see each other on a daily basis as her ultimate downfall?

She was caught between the urge to tear up and jump him.

‘Maybe I could cry softly while we made out?’ she distantly pondered, mouth working in wordless wonder as Adrien continued to dodge the invasive questions Alya launched his way. ‘I bet I could still get my tongue to work even if I was blubbering a bit...’

Unfortunately (or rather fortunately), Marinette didn’t get a chance to test her tandem crying/kissing skills. By the time she’d picked her jaw off the ground her friends had already scooted out of the booth and were tossing their empty cups in the waste bin by the door. In fact, she didn’t manage to get another word out for the remainder of the date, too busy gaping at Adrien to contribute to any further conversation as the group split ways on the sidewalk outside.

Alya talked her ear off on the way home, but Marinette only caught snippets. She managed to force a goodbye once they reached the bakery, and a hello as she passed her parents, but when she ascended to her room a few minutes later she was utterly silent.

This time, ‘kill’ was the furthest thought from her mind.

Because this flood of emotion was far different from the one she’d felt on that day by the billboard. It made her palms sweat and her heart race, but it wasn’t overwhelming or frightening.

It was exhilarating.

Effortless.

It was love.

Marinette threw herself back on her bedspread, grinning at the ceiling with a pillow clutched to her chest — the very pictured of an enamored teenage girl.

A spot of red darted into her field of vision, floating above her with an expression that could only be described as "done".

“It’s about damn time.”

“Tikki!” Marinette gasped, appalled at her kwami’s uncharacteristic use of language.

“Well it is!” Tikki said, crossing her arms. A tiny smile snuck its way onto her features. “When are you going to tell him?”

“He probably already knows,” Marinette said with a shrug, her stomach still churning with a pleasant heat.

“Not likely. Chat Noir is possibly the only person on earth with a thicker skull than yours.”

“Thanks?”

“And if you’re only realizing you love him now, it will probably take him another year or so to figure it out unless you spell it out for him.”

“Gah,” the teen groaned, ramming the heels of her hands into her eye sockets. “I hate it when you’re right!”

“So when are you going to tell him?” Tikki repeated.

“I—"

Marinette was interrupted by the sound of a text alert. Grabbing her phone, her heart soared at the ‘C.N’ ID at the top and only drooped at bit at the following “akuma.” She sighed, flashing the screen for her kwami to see. “Possibly tonight.”

“A box of cookies says you won’t,” Tikki sing-songed, floating backwards as Marinette stood up from the bed.

“Thanks for the vote of confidence,” the girl deadpanned, her face overtaken with a wicked smile in the next instant. “And you are so on!”

With a solid handshake (well, paw-fingertip shake), a triumphant “Transform me!” and a flash of pink light, Marinette and Tikki were replaced by Ladybug and the heroine leapt through the skylight and out into the night.

The akuma went down quick.

Like, crazy quick.

Adrien wished he’d started keeping a ledger of how long their battles usually lasted, because he was sure they’d just broken some kind of record.
The way the heroes moved had been flawless, a far cry from their prior week’s performance. All it had taken was just a short skirmish around city hall (akumatized council member), a quick acrobatics combination, and finally a snap of Ladybug’s compact before Paris was once again back to its earlier tranquility — leaving no doubt in Adrien’s mind as to whether or not he and his partner were truly back in synch.

The whole thing had lasted about 20 minutes; maybe a half-hour, tops. In fact they’d taken down the akuma so quickly that the media just barely managed to arrive before all was said and done.

It didn’t seem to lessen their numbers. A near frenzy of reporters crowded in the lobby while their heroes stood atop the grand staircase. “I’ve got them,” Chat said, gesturing to the gathered cameras with a significant glance at Ladybug’s triple spotted studs. “No more close calls for you.”

“My hero,” she replied with a smile. A flurry of flashes went off as Paris’ most talked about couple shared a speedy kiss, but that was all the journalists were going to get out of Ladybug today.

She gave a final wave, both in goodbye and as a means of ignoring the questions being called up to her, before making her exit with a flick of her yo-yo. Adrien watched Ladybug hook the chandelier and swing out of the building via a window, admiring her graceful demount as he steeled himself for yet another boring interview.

Unsurprisingly, there was no lack of questions about his partner’s supposed “breakdown.”

“Is Ladybug injured?”

“Are you two fighting?”

“Is there something you’re trying to hide?”

With a smile plastered across his face, Adrien expertly served up a heaping helping of bullshit with an extra side order of “no comment.” He’d expected the public to be curious about what had brought the indomitable Ladybug to tears, and had luckily taken some time to craft a believable cover-up.

What Adrien hadn’t anticipated, however, was the flash of red he caught in the corner of his vision a scant five minutes in to his interview. He hadn’t expected the sight of his partner, compact pressed against her face and waving cheerfully through the nearby window, and he certainly hadn’t expected his communicator to *bing* out in notification.

His mask peaked in a mixture of confusion and excitement.

“Give me…” Adrien announced, dragging his eyes from a mischievous Ladybug to address the reporters, “…give me one moment, please.”

He turned away, back to the crowd and girlfriend in his periphery as he slid the top of his staff up.

“What are you playing at?”

Ladybug’s laughter echoed out of the speaker.

“I’m not playing at anything,” came her lilting reply. “At least, not yet.”

“Let me rephrase,” Adrien murmured at the tiny screen, keeping his voice casual despite his mounting excitement. “Why haven’t you run home yet? You’ve got a deadline, Princess.”

“Not any more,” Ladybug practically sang. “I let Tikki recharge. Which means I’ve got a fresh
transformation and no one—“

She grinned. He gulped.

“—I mean, nothing to do with it.”

Adrien slid his staff shut so fast he feared he might have broken the damn thing.

“Well that’s all the questions I can take today, folks,” he piped out, returning his attention to the press and pointedly ignoring the cheeky vagrant that continued to peer at him through the window.

The next moment, he was gone.

Adrien didn’t really remember how he managed to get to the roof. There must have been some movement on his part, perhaps running or climbing or vaulting, but really all that mattered was that he made it there.

And fast.

To his utter surprise, Ladybug was still stationed where he’d last saw her; Adrien almost had to do a double take at the sight of her patiently waiting for him. Usually she’d be on the next building over by now, sending him a saucy little salute as she dashed across the skyline. Yet there she stood. It almost made him suspicious.

“I expected you to be gone,” Adrien said once he reached his Lady’s perch. “Isn’t that your whole thing? The teasing and the chase.”

“Used to be,” Ladybug replied. She traipsed over, hooking her thumbs in his belt and giving an honest smile. “But I promised no more running away and no more playing games, so here I am.”

‘Oh,’ Adrien thought, feeling a wave of happiness bubble up in the pit of his stomach.

He’d told her he didn’t like when she ran off, and she’d actually listened.

He was so in love with this girl.

“That’s… thank you,” Adrien said, peering down at his partner and resisting the urge to scoop her up in a bear hug. “But I hope you didn’t take my words to mean no games, period.” He flashed a trademark smirk. “Because I’ve grown rather fond of some the playing we do together.”

“Ah,” Ladybug mused, tilting her head in a way that made her pigtails bounce. “See, that’s what makes it different.”

“Elaborate, please?”

“It would be easier without your mouth on my jaw,” she laughed.

“Elaborate, please?” Adrien repeated, drawing back from where he’d absentely been nuzzling her. Hey, they’d gone a whole week without contact, she couldn't blame him for being touch starved.

“Games aren’t fun when only one person is playing,” Ladybug explained, “but if we both decide to play with each other…”

“Dirty phrasing,” he cut in.
“Intentional phrasing,” she shot back.

“If we both decide to play with each other…?” Adrien prompted, shivering at the way Ladybug seemed to get lost in his gaze. He felt equally as misplaced in hers.

“Then it’s not a game any more,” she whispered, voice low and inviting. “It’s an adventure. One that we get to take together.”

“Is that why you called me out here?” he asked, anticipation tripling. “For an adventure?”

“Would you be down if it was?” Ladybug asked back, getting a mischievous glint in her eye that did all kinds of dangerous things to his pulse.

“You know I’d follow you anywhere,” Adrien reminded her.

“So, say if I took off running right now. Would you chase me?”

“Gladly.”

“And you don’t have anything on your busy schedule, Mr. Supermodel?” Ladybug grilled, a single eyebrow peaking up in a way that left no room for fibbing.

“You’re the only thing on my to-do list tonight,” Chat rumbled cheekily. His partner grinned.

“Then in that case...” she said, edging dangerously close to his lips to speak softly against their velvety surface.

“...I guess you’d better catch me first.”

There was only a split second’s difference between her exit and his, one in which Adrien couldn’t help but let loose an excited whoop.

The game of cat and bug was back on, in the best of ways.

Chapter End Notes

I really wanted to get some more Alya/Nino in here but next chapter is gunna be solid makeouts holy shit.
Chapter 34

Chapter Notes

Are you ready for some meaningful conversations, relevant plot furthering and spot-on character development?!?!??!

...well then boi did you come to the wrong fic.

So basically, the first draft of this chapter was far more sinful. Like... to the point where my beta had to step in and say it was too much too fast. I had to agree, seeing as though the kiddos are still recovering from a near-breakup, so instead of smut you get this:

9.5k words of makeouts and shitposts.

I dont.... I just... Enjoy Sinners.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The hideout.

Ladybug took him to the hideout.

Though he’d realized their destination as soon as she’d crossed over into the packing district, Adrien couldn’t help but let out an excited whoop as the rusty storage hanger came into view. It had been months since he’d last seen the place, years since they’d both been there together, and the sight of it dredged up a huge flood of memories.

Upon first receiving their Miraculous, (and after those first rocky weeks of hero-ing) Ladybug and Chat Noir had decided they needed a base of operations. For planning purposes of course.

In hindsight it seemed silly, really. Their job was to come running when an akuma popped up then scamper out of sight once things were taken care of. But to two fourteen-year-olds the task had seemed monumental. So they’d set up their hideout — stocked with snacks and maps and other things they might need for the war on Hawkmoth — in an abandoned storage hanger on the docks of the Seine.

Adrien could recall hours spent there, scheduling patrols, putting pins in newspaper clippings wrapped in red twine and generally giving the illusion of having some sort of plan. It’s were they’d strategized, theorized. He even recalled the time he and Ladybug had tried tracking the akuma, following the newly cleansed butterflies for hours on end and charting their path across Paris.

(All that particular venture had yielded was two tired kids and more questions than answers.)

But Adrien’s favorite memories of the place had to have been of the moments between the half-hatched schemes, the ones in which he and his partner had simply sprawled out in the sun-drenched upper loft and talked. They’d talked for hours sometimes. They’d talked about everything and nothing, from the heaviest subjects to the most frivolous. They’d talked about their silly dreams, their secret fears… they’d wondered why they’d been chosen for this task when neither of them were
really superhero material.

His and Ladybug’s days at the hideout had been a decidedly formative time in his life. A time Adrien would never forget.

And although the duo had long since abandoned their hideout, their return sent a lick of warmth spiraling through Adrien’s chest as he touched down on that oh-so-familiar roof. The building itself was a two story barn-like structure, with corrugated siding and long paneled windows overlooking the water. It was old, and more than a little decrepit, sure… but hell if it didn’t look like home.

Sliding through the aforementioned windows with a practiced ease, Ladybug and Chat Noir touched down in the dusty loft, costumed feat creaking against the wooden floorboards. They spun in circles, taking in the space. It was mostly empty — a few crates scattered around, but not much else.

“Seriously?” Adrien laughed, letting his eyes rove over the upper beams that spanned the length of the building. He fondly recalled the hours the two had spent vaulting and swinging between them, becoming accustomed to their tools of the trade. “I don’t think we’ve been here since…”

His word trailed off as two slender arms wrapped around his torso from behind.

Behaving more like a spider than her spotted namesake, Ladybug let her hands lecherously creep up his chest. They roved his suited pectorals, feather-light and toeing the edge of tickling before tracing the seams that outlined his armpits, and Adrien chuckled as they continued their curious exploration.

“Hey there,” he said, smirking as he twisted to peer over his shoulder, “Can’t keep your hands off the goods I see.”

Ladybug rested her chin on his back, gazing up to study him with lips puckering side to side. The pale moonlight that filtered through the long panes of glass before them cast her in an almost otherworldly hue, bringing out the notes of blue that threaded through her hair, and Adrien was once again struck by how very lovely his partner was.

“Hey,” Ladybug finally echoed back, giving him a look the spawned butterflies in its wake before pressing her face flat between his shoulder blades. Her next words were muffled against his suit. “I missed you.”

Adrien popped a grin.

He spun, intent on scooping Ladybug up in the hug he’d been craving all day, but she remained rooted to his back. “God, you’re like a leach!” Adrien exclaimed, wiggling his torso in a half-hearted attempt to break her grip, “Like a crazy strong leach!”

Ladybug’s retort was a wet suck against his shoulder, followed by a giggle as Adrien wretched in faux-disgust.

“Alright,” he warned, voice far too gleeful to sound even remotely chastising, “that’s it…”

Adrien used his (only slightly) superior strength to pry Ladybug’s arms open, whipping around to ensnare the girl as she gave a cry of “not fair!”. There was a scuffle, with a few thrown elbows and sticking out of tongues, but eventually (inevitably) she came out on top.

It was a victorious Ladybug who pinned him as they sprawled across the floor, giggling helplessly at their usual brand of entanglement, yet Adrien couldn’t help but feel a teensy bit smug as he hooked his arms around the back of her neck.
He’d gotten his hug after all. As indirect, pigtail-ruffling and splinter-filled as it was.

Adrien pulled himself onto his knees, drawing a snickering Ladybug alongside him, and took a moment to simply admire her. Admire this. Admire them.

(He’d missed “them”.)

“Can I kiss you?” Adrien trailed the backs of his fingers along the smooth skin of his Lady’s cheeks, stopping just short of the mask bridging her nose before circuiting back down. ‘Perfect.’

“Are you going to ask me that every time now?” she questioned with a fond roll of her eyes.

“Yep!”

Ladybug sighed, letting her fingers twine with his as they continued to trace along the edge of her face. “I’ve told you about half a dozen times now, Chaton. I’m not mad about that kiss by the billboard.”

Adrien’s eyes flickered away as the painful memory of that night resurfaced, only to have his gaze swiftly recaptured by the girl before him.

“You didn’t force yourself onto me,” Ladybug stressed, unwilling to relinquished her hard-earned eye contact as she gave him a firm nod. “You didn’t overstep my boundaries. It was just a case of bad timing, and you really shouldn’t beat yourself up over it.”

“You tried to tell me to stop,” Adrien muttered, plagued by the recollection of her panicked tears. The way her lips curled away from his. “I didn’t listen to you.”

Her grip on his hands tightened. “Then listen to me now.”

Ladybug’s voice had taken on that Superhero Quality™. The one that halted villains, soothed civilians, and dazzled her partner. It was a mix of demanding and awe-inspiring, impossible to ignore, and Adrien’s focus locked onto her intent stare.

“I want you to kiss me,” she assured him, scooting forward to settle on— ‘no, wait, that was definitely straddling again’ — his kneeling lap. She looked up between her lashes, mouth fluttering open as if she wanted to say more, and in that moment Adrien was certain the tint across her cheeks had to be some trick of the moonlight. Perhaps a shadow?

But then Ladybug placed a single hand to the center of his chest, whispering out into the space between them, and his subsequent thoughts came to a screeching halt.

“Please kiss me… Adrien.”

Yep, that had definitely short-circuited something important.

Adrien’s breath caught in his throat at the words, heart stuttering in its rhythm. The name shouldn’t have come as a shock, they were both well aware of his identity, but gosh some warning would have nice. Because only in his most convoluted fantasies had Ladybug ever referred to him as anything other than “Chat”.

And it seemed as though the sound of her murmuring his real name was a real turn-on.

“You would defile our most precious childhood memory with your wanton womanly desires?” Adrien teased, ready to pull out the gas can and torch the place at her command.
“O-only if you help me do the defiling.”

Ladybug tilted her head, nosing along the rim of his mask as her breath raised goosebumps along its path, and each puff of air seemed to incrementally raise the temperature around them. She was close, so close, getting closer with each second, and Adrien wasn’t exactly sure which one of them made the first appeal.

“Please...”

All it took was the slight drag of her teeth along his jaw, the motion reminiscent of a matchstick to sandpaper, and it was as if the room burst into flames.

Adrien rocked forward to incite a desperate kiss, secure in the knowledge he had her full consent and eager to put that permission to use. His lips connected with hers and Ladybug responded at once, wrapping her arms around the back of his neck. She practically seemed to come alive under his touch, feeding into their kiss with the sort of carnal abandon he’d become so addicted to, and it was twin sighs that mingled between them as their lips parted in tandem.

Adrien felt himself swept up into that hazy heat of pure “her.” Her hands carding through his hair. Her lips pulsing and pleading. Her tongue sliding alongside his in silent question.

“Is this okay?” it asked, “Are we okay to do this again?”

“Yes, of course.” Adrien’s tongue answered back. “Always.”

Ladybug tasted curiously of lemon.

And something about the unexpected flavor only made things all the more intoxicating to him.

Thought this was far from the first time the pair had gotten this heated, something about this particular kiss seemed so incredibly more. More passionate. More pleading.

It could have been the fact they had come so close to breaking, those lingering worries and desperations drawing the two teens stiflingly close to each other as if fearful the other may suddenly disappear. Or it possibly could have been the simple nostalgia of their location. Could have been the palpable sensation of safety and comfort that seemed to seep up from the very foundation of the place that had always been just for them.

Hell, it might have just been the alignment of the stars or the time of year or any number of other smaller, cosmic happenstances that could have brought them to each other on that particular night. But regardless the reason, there was something much larger at work. Something emotional and fraught- something that made it impossible for the two to part for any stretch of time longer than a second.

Ladybug was downright relentless as the drew him deeper into the kiss. She was relentless, addicting and, god, she was his. She was his again, and the latent realization hit Adrien with a soaring rush of relief.

She wanted this. She wanted him.

And if the clenching hand he felt wrapped around his tail was any indication, she wanted him bad.

Grinning, Adrien withdrew slightly. Just far enough to whisper against her lips. “Someone’s needy.”

“Your h-hands,” Ladybug panted, pulling back a fraction and tilting her eyes down to where said
appendages lay idle against her knees.

“What about them?”

“They aren’t doing anything.”

Despite the heat of their entanglement, Adrien felt his lip quirk in amusement. “Well excuuuuuuse me, Princess. What would you prefer them to be doing?”

Ladybug cocked her head in challenge.

“How about,” she said, her voice a dozen different types of inviting, “you put your hands wherever you’d like… and I’ll tell you when you find the right place.”

Now that was a game he could get behind.

“Hhhmmmm, how about… here?” Adrien wrapped his palms around her trim waist, looking up to catch any sort of reaction.

“Sure,” Ladybug said with a dramatic sigh. “If you wanna be vanilla about it.”

Her face darkened into something undeniably irresistible, and Adrien took that as his green light to grow bolder. Excitement mounting, he gripped her backside, pulling the girl flush against his torso until she lined up with him inch for inch. And with a surprised (but most definitely pleased) hum, Ladybug wiggled in close.

“This closer to what you had in mind?” the hero teased, resisting the urge to rub against her like the cat he was.

“You’re getting waaaaarmer,” she trilled with a complicated little grin. A goading one. ‘You’re telling me…’ Adrien thought, gulping as he registered the fact his costume seemed just a bit tighter around the crotch than it had minutes ago.

“Do you need a hint?” Ladybug asked almost sweetly. “Perhaps a map?” Yep, she was definitely goading at this point.

“To please my Lady?” Adrien scoffed, squaring his shoulders with a sense of practiced bravado. “Absolutely not.” He focused his attentions to the challenge she’d laid out for him, palms sliding down the curve of Ladybug’s rump and along the outsides of her thighs as he fished for a reaction.

“Hot or cold?” he murmured, earning a small chuckle.

“Cold.”

“Shoot.”

Next Adrien slid his way up her back, hands coming to rest across her shoulder blades. His black mask peaked up in question.

Ladybug simply shrugged, looking far too playful for his sanity to bear. “Ehh… I’d say… lukewarm? Maybe room temperature.”

‘Now that won’t do,’ Adrien thought, a wicked and possibly disastrous idea forming in the back of his mind. Careful of the claws that capped each digit, he let his hands draw up the nape of her neck and wind in the thick pigtails resting there. His gaze flicked up to hers, hoping to gauge her reaction.
as he gave the hair a light tug.

“C-cold,” Ladybug stuttered out, prompting his grip to immediately loosen, “But I think we should… come back to that later.”

Adrien’s eyes widened.

“Alright,” he breathed, a bit stunned at that interesting little insinuation but mostly just elated by the prospect of a “later”. “We’ll… put a tack in it.” Ladybug nodded, flushed as she idly (distractingly) shifted atop him.

Suffice it to say Adrien was stumped, breath evening out as he continued to regard the girl perched in his lap. Ladybug betrayed no clues, arms draped over his shoulders and head tilted in wait, and Adrien wracked his brain for what to try next. He’d already hit most of their checklist areas, as well a few new spots, and unless Ladybug wanted him to…

…

‘Shit.’

On a wild hunch, Adrien let his hands slowly shift towards her waist… only this time allowing them to edge up towards her ribs.

“Warmer,” Ladybug breathed, diaphragm flexing beneath his grasp with each lovely inhalation.

Adrien ascended one more inch, not trusting himself to speak as he shot her another searching look.

“W-warmer…”

She wasn’t stopping him. God, she wasn’t she stopping him. His hands were now framing the bottoms of her breasts, ready to sprint towards second base, and yet Ladybug was not stopping him.

Adrien’s mouth emitted a sort of pathetic whine, his gaze dropping to…

‘Yep,’ he thought, palms frozen in place yet clammy beneath his gloves. ‘She’s definitely asking me to grope her. On the tits. On the tits on her body. On the tits on her body atop my body. On the tits on her—’

Why the fuck wasn’t he moving?

“I-if you’re not comfortable with this I understand,” Ladybug mumbled, shifting slightly backwards and bothering her lip in a way that was not at all helping his crippled cognition. She looked equal parts bashful and needy, an expression Adrien was pretty sure ought to be outlawed before it killed someone — namely him.

“It’s just, you’ve never touched me there before… a-and I thought mayb—eeep!”

At any other time, Adrien would have found her surprised squeak to be rather cute. Endearing even.

But as his hands eagerly flew up to cup Ladybug’s breasts, melding against their suited peaks with the unbridled enthusiasm of a seventeen-year-old boy, Adrien found there was absolutely nothing about his girlfriend that could be considered cute in that instance.

The way she arched into his touch, encouraging his palms to press snug against her curves was not "cute".
The low exhalation she gave when Adrien — heart in his throat and mind in the gutter — experimentally squeezed at her covered flesh was not "cute".

And, most of all, the way Ladybug felt against him — the rocking of her ardent hips as they sought the friction of his, the rise and fall of her perfect (perfect) chest as it strained against his splayed out fingers, the way she clutched his neck as if to ensure he wouldn’t retreat — was not cute in the slightest.

It was hot. She was hot.

Ladybug was hot and she was his, ripe for the taking as she wiggled atop his kneeling form.

And it. Was.

*Christmas.*

“Better?” Adrien asked, voice tinged with desire and hands greedily massaging against her. Though he could just vaguely register the fact Ladybug’s suit was fairly binding, the taut material did little to dampen the sensation of her supple breasts sunk into his grasp, and the weight and warmth of them were better than anything his brain could have concocted for his midnight viewing pleasure.

Because they were exhilaratingly real.

“Yes,” Ladybug murmured, desperate for the touch he was only too willing to grant her. “Much better.” Groaning, Adrien nudged his legs father apart, separating hers along with them as he swooped down to recapture her mouth.

Ladybug was a spitfire, with lips expertly locked with his own, hands scraping along his back and tongue lapping at all the little places that she knew got him hot. She was impossibly better than Adrien ever recalled her being, impossibly more impassioned. And with a firm knead of his left hand atop the plumpest part of her ass (the other still very much preoccupied with her chest), he melted into their roiling embrace.

In all his years of living, Adrien had found certain activities tend to bend time around him. Photoshoots stretched out every minute until the clocks seem to tick at half-speed. Miraculous timers grow shorter with each passing akuma.

And kissing Ladybug? *Groping Ladybug???*

Well that just threw out the rules of time and space completely.

He was reminded of this fact seconds (minutes? hours?) later, when Ladybug drew back with a gasp. And although Adrien’s first instinct was to complain at the loss of contact, the slight burning in his chest and swimming in his head told him that perhaps breathing was more important than kissing sometimes.

If only to insure that there would be more kissing in the future.

“You’re perfect,” he huffed, the words buzzing between their parted and panting mouths. Adrien caught Ladybug’s eyes as he spoke, reveling in the way her blue lenses darkened with each pass of his hand. “Every part of you just feels so... so good.”

She shuddered when one of his fingers dragged in a firm stroke across the peak of a breast, and
Adrien silently mapped the location in a mental file folder labelled “Girlfriend’s Sweet Spots.” Just for future reference.

“You say that… b-but you haven’t had every part of me yet,” Ladybug pointed out, words teasing but voice rasping in desire. Then, as if to unnecessarily emphasize what parts he’d yet to encounter, she rocked her hips against his in a devastating, devious grind.

‘Evil… tempting…’ Feeling his body react to her in the most physical of ways, Adrien tightened his grip on her buxom chest with a groan.

“Huh-hopefully we’ll fix that someday…” He sent a not-so-subtle message of his own, bucking his rapidly-forming erection up into the cradle of her legs “Won’t we, my Lady?”

“Yes,” Ladybug hissed, her spine curving in a way that only pressed her tighter against him. “Cha —”

She stopped herself with a shiver, teeth nibbling down on her kiss-swollen bottom lip.

“Yes… Adrien.”

A lip bite and his real name? Now that just wasn’t fair.

Adrien dove down into the crook of Ladybug’s’s neck. His tongue dashed along her pulse line, lapping at the underside of her jaw in the same instant his hips rose up to meet hers once more, and he was pleased to feel an appreciative little hum buzz up her throat. Spurred by the sound, he tentatively let his teeth come into play, granting Ladybug a flurry of loving nips along the skin exposed by her collar.

When he latched on with a hard suck, she moaned, pitched and broken in his ear.

And that’s when Adrien knew he was well and truly fucked.

It seemed as though her hands were everywhere at once, searching for some fixture to cling to as the occasional jerks of his hips turned into a steady roll against her core, and Adrien rapturously endured the heat as he undulated against her. Every place Ladybug touched him — fingers clawing at his shoulders, grappling at his neck, tracing his abdominals and gliding lower with each circuit across his body — soon became feverish beneath the material of his suit. Tight.

With each shared rock of their bodies and between his patterning of kisses, Adrien whispered encouragement into his Lady’s collarbone. They were sweet nothings, probably far too sappy given the fact they were essentially dry-rutting in an abandoned building, but the little praises seemed to spur her never-the-less.

So praise he did.

“You’re beautiful like this.”

The slender fingers laced in his hair tightened, sending little pricks of pain-pleasure dancing along his scalp, and Adrien responded with another hot, openmouthed kiss to her jaw.

“I mean you’re always beautiful, but especially like this.”

“Ah-Adrien…” Ladybug whimpered as she bore down hard upon his arousal, and Adrien struggled to keep a tight leash on the beast of an orgasm building in his groin. He vaguely felt one of her hands leave the side of his head to scrabble along the ground beside them, but was too far gone to wonder
what it sought.

At this point in their high, Adrien’s grip on his self-control was seriously waning, slipping through his fingers like a gossamer thread. The breasts in his hands, the thighs atop his own, it was just all too good. Ladybug was just too good. And, if the ever increasing tightness of his pants was any indication, it wouldn’t be long before he accidently broke that despised agreement between her and Plagg.

Life-ruiners that they were.

With a large inward sigh, Adrien readied himself to retreat. He didn’t want this to end, he wished it didn’t have to. He wished he had more stamina or she had less allure or his suit simply didn’t exi-

“Mmmmmpppphhff~”

Adrien’s forehead snapped up from atop Ladybug’s shoulder, ears ringing with her muffled cry as he turned his gaze forward. Only once before had he heard that particularly spine-tingling keen, and the sound of it—now coupled with the vision of her—nearly made him lose it right then and there.

Chin dipped low, eyes half-lidded and desperate, Ladybug was the very picture of his every fantasy…

But it was the sight of a thick leather strap, the strap of his costume’s tail, clenched between her teeth as a gag that really did him in.

‘Oh, for—’

"Claws in!"

Adrien’s reserve shattered faster than his transformation did as it burst around him, leaving him with a hint of magical whiplash as he flipped his stunned girlfriend beneath him. The tail in her mouth exploded in a flash of bright green, disappearing with the rest of his suit as civilian replaced hero, and the surprised squeak she gave when she suddenly found herself on her back was as endearing as it was arousing.

Crawling over Ladybug with unmatched desire, Adrien was intent on hearing every little sound he could possibly draw out of her…but something about the way she looked at him made him pause. He stilled, hovering above her sprawled out body, frozen despite the waves of heat still coursing beneath his skin.

Because Ladybug wasn’t just looking at him…

She was openly marveling.

Wide-eyed, slack jawed, honest-to-God marveling.

Her blue eyes marveled at his green. They mapped the expanses of his unmasked face as if cataloguing each dip and swell of his features. They slid across his brow, down his cheeks, along his chin and back again, never stopping their appreciative circuit.

Quite simply, Ladybug marveled every inch of him, gaze tactile in a way that made the model feel
like he’d never truly been looked at before that moment. It was a little heart-stopping.

Usually when people (photographers, designers) stared at him, Adrien felt like a commodity, an object to be posed and presented. They saw a pretty face to smile beside their products. A nice body to drape with their clothing. A canvas waiting to be completed.

But with Ladybug?

With Ladybug he felt like a person. He felt like a finished masterpiece. And if her dazzled expression was any indication a damn good one at that.

“Like what you see?” Adrien couldn’t help but tease, earning a startled blink from the entranced girl below.

Her continued silence planted tiny seeds of unease in the pit of his stomach.

Ladybug and his civilian self hadn’t interacted out of costume since the Jackady incident a couple of years ago. It wasn’t a stretch to believe that his sudden change in appearance would come as a bit of a shock. Adrien mentally kicked himself for springing it on her mid-makeout.

Letting the cocky grin slide off his face, his expression melted into something much more tender.

“Hey Bugaboo,” he crooned fondly, hoping the nickname would help her reconcile that fact it was still him beneath the shiny new coat of paint.

It took a moment, a few slow blinks and more than one shake of her head, but Ladybug eventually found her bearings. As well as her voice.

“H-hey,” she said, in a tone so incredibly soft and reverent it nearly stopped his heart. Adrien grinned.

“Hey,” he repeated, equally soft and twice as reverent. Now Ladybug grinned.

“Hey.”

Despite their compromising position, they couldn’t help but let out a pair of incredulous giggles.

“Yes, we all know each other!” came a disdainful call, neither soft nor reverent. “And you two definitely know what each other’s faces taste like. Now where’s my food?”

Adrien stopped grinning.

Biting back a curse, he ripped his gaze from the lovely image below to settle on a decidedly less-lovely image- the image a tiny black mass, floating around with a devious expression that proved the creature knew exactly what it was he was interrupting.

“You know,” Plagg began, surveying the scene before him, “I think—“

“All you want for fifteen minutes of you being gone,” Adrien deadpanned, drawing back to sit
on his haunches. He loved his friend, he really did… but he also loved his girlfriend. And the way he wanted to love her right now just couldn’t be done in polite (he used the term loosely) company.

“Fifteen minutes? Now that’s being generous,” the kwami scoffed. “Due to unfortunate personal experience, I know for a fact you never last—“

“Plagg!” Adrien hissed, letting out a long groan of displeasure as Ladybug choked on her spit. After a moment she reeled in her coughing spell, giving him a weak thumbs up that only further fed the flames of embarrassment creeping up the back of his neck.

“Can you just… like… go take a little walk? Or a fly? Basically be anywhere but here? Fifteen minutes, that all I’m asking.”

“What are you going to do with the extra fourteen and a half?”

This time the noise Ladybug made sounded suspiciously like a mix between a snort and a squeak. Suspiciously like a stifled laugh.

“I don’t know!” Adrien yelped, voice growing pitchy and eyes flitting down to where Ladybug lay in a flushed pile beneath him. Plagg’s remarkable ability to extinguish his chosen's most carnal, depraved desires had already set to work, and sadly even the sight of Ladybug (his sexy, sultry, teenage dream Ladybug!) looking positively ravished did little to prevent the softening Adrien felt in his jeans.

He’d worked hard for that boner, dammit! Hell, they’d worked hard for that boner!

That boner had had hopes and dreams, a promising future. That boner was an outstanding citizen, cut down in his very prime. Killed by pussy, in the very worst of ways.

Oh, the irony.

“What if I don’t want to go for a walk?” Plagg said, cutting through Adrien’s mental eulogy with a sniff. “What if I want to have a friendly chat with Ladybug?”

“You don’t like friendly chats,” Adrien reminded him, eye twitching.

“Course I do,” Plagg said with a wave. “You just aren’t that good at having them.” He swung his attention on Ladybug. “Hi there! It’s been a while, huh?”

Blue eyes blinked in bemusement. “Uh, yeah,” Ladybug replied, peering up as she shifted around on her back. “It’s… good to see you, I guess?”

“Nice talk great talk I loved that talk!” Adrien piped out, using two fingers to make a sort of shooing motion towards the kwami. “But now that we’re done talking—“

“I’m impressed you’ve managed to keep your side of the bargain this long,” Plagg continued, steamrolling Adrien’s attempts to halt the conversation as he darted between the teens.

“Yeah, well,” Ladybug said, sounding devastatingly less aroused by the minute, “I do try and keep my promises.”

Adrien bored his palms into his eye sockets, reeling in a frustrated groan as Ladybug and Plagg continued their idle chatter.

‘No, go ahead,’ he thought sourly, ‘please keep talking. Not like there’s anything better I could be
doing right now. Alone with my hot girlfriend. Alone with my hot girlfriend and my bare hands and my removable clothing. Nope, this is definitely what I wanted to happen right now.’

Adrien really needed to start thinking over his spur-of-the-moment decisions more carefully.

“Ah, an honest soul,” Plagg sighed. “How refreshing. Tikki is a lucky gal to have gotten someone like you.”

“Thank you,” Ladybug said, seeming genuinely pleased with the praise.

Figures they would get along just swimmingly.

“Well true to my word, your face is safe with me,” the kwami promised, “so feel free to drag this whole ‘secret identity’ thing out for as long as you like. It’s almost getting funny, really.”

“I—“

“But are you absolutely sure there’s nothing you can do about the whole sleep talking thing?” Plagg gave a huff. “Because let me tell you, that boy has a mouth on him, and I wouldn’t mind making another deal if you could stop all the incessant moaning.”

“Plagg,” Adrien warned, not liking the direction this “friendly chat” was headed.

“You wouldn’t believe some of the things I’ve heard him mumbling at night!”

“Plagg you—“

“It’s always ‘Ladybug’ this and ‘God’ that,” the kwami chuckled. “I’m starting to think he’s getting the two of you mixed up.”

“Plagg I’m seri—“

“Though at least he has that Ladybug body pillow to—”

“I DO NOT—“

Adrien cleared his throat from where it had cracked at the volume of his outburst, arranging his face in what he hoped was a composed expression of maturity as he glanced down at his incredulous girlfriend. She looked like she either wanted to laugh or cry, and even he wasn’t sure which he’d prefer at this point.

“I’d like to make it clear that I do not own a Ladybug body pillow,” Adrien enunciated.

“Any more…” a smaller voice mumbled.

Unflappable as ever, Plagg didn’t even flinch when his chosen snatched him from the air with a shriek. In fact he seemed downright leisurely as he met Adrien’s pointed stare.

“New offer,” Adrien ground out, shoving his unoccupied hand through his hair in some kind of nervous tic that probably had something to do with the mental breakdown he was experiencing. “You leave us alone for ten minutes and I won’t feed you Kraft Singles for the rest of my miserable life.”

Two pairs of green eyes narrowed at each other, human and deity silently waging war Ladybug looked on in bewilderment.
“You wouldn’t dare,” Plagg threatened.

“You want to test that theory?” Adrien shot back. “You really want to take that risk? I’m crazy, I’ll do it!”

A beat.

“Fine!” Plagg conceded, worming his way out of Adrien’s grasp to flutter on his own. “Enjoy your nine and a half minutes of talking about feelings. Just throw me out into the cold, cold night. Throw me out to the wolves—"

“There aren’t any wolves in Paris,” Adrien sighed.

“—and the rabid cats—“

“You… do realize you’re also a cat, right?"

“—and all the other rabid animals that eat cats!” Plagg finished, flying dramatically towards the open window with one paw draped across his forehead.

“Okay bye have fun,” said Adrien, giving a wave for good measure. ‘Leave, leave, leave, leave—’

And, miracle of merciful miracles, he did.

Plagg gave one last roll of his eyes, muttering something about humans and their hormones before making his exit, and Adrien couldn’t help but slump in relief. He’d catch hell from the kwami later, that was a given, but he couldn’t find it in himself to worry about it at the moment. Not while he sat kneeling between Ladybug’s spread legs.

And certainly not while she continued staring at him like he was the very moon and stars.

Adrien grinned, a gesture that was equal parts awe and triumph, as he watched her watch him.

“You’re ogling,” he stated, somehow managing to sound nonchalant despite the giddy giggle trapped in the back of his throat.

How many days/months/years had he spent shamelessly admiring Ladybug, wishing those blue eyes would linger on him just a bit longer? How many patrols had involved him face-planting in the pavement, distracted by her shimmering hair or paralyzing smirk? How many nights had he gone home, thrown himself on his bed and wondered what her appreciation might feel like?

Suffice it to say he’d done his waiting for this moment, and Adrien would be damned if he didn’t allow himself to enjoy Ladybug’s speechlessness while it—

“I-I am not ogling!”

—lasted…

“Pardon me for being a bit thrown off by my partner deciding to release his transformation while we were mid-makeout!” Ladybug skewered him with what was probably meant to be an admonishing glare, but the way her ears still flushed an adorable shade of pink ruined the effect.

His smile grew wider still.

“You were the one who kept saying my name,” Adrien tutted back, dropping into a more comfortable crossed-legged position before her. “I figured that was a sign you wanted to see the face
that goes with it.” He smirked, leaning down to her eye level. “You know, the face you pinned to the ceiling above your bed.”

“I d-did not say that!” Ladybug sputtered and Adrien howled at the way her face lit up at the tease.

“You didn’t have to,” he said, making a show of wiping away imaginary tears of hilarity. “I just guessed. I was right wasn’t, I? Please tell me you had a poster of me above your bed.”

“I-I… and you… you had a Ladybug body pillow!”

“Had being the key word here. Do you still have my face on your ceiling?”

“Shut up.” Ladybug mumbled, ducking her head and giving his snickering shoulder a playful smack. “I can’t help that you’re handsome.”

Adrien’s eyes snapped up in interest.

“What was that?” he teased, scooting forward on his butt and leaning down until they were practically nose to nose.

Handsome.

Ladybug thought he was handsome.

“I said you look like a twink,” Ladybug muttered into her collarbone, pulling another laugh from his thumping chest.

“No, no,” Adrien said, heart rate increasing despite his projected aloofness. “I definitely heard the word ‘handsome’ in there somewhere.” He ducked, attempting to draw her gaze, but Ladybug continued to look petulantly away. “Go on, say it again.”

“You look like a twink.”

“Nope, wrong.”

“A goody two shoes.”

“I’ve got all day, Bugaboo.”

Ladybug made fleeting eye contact for the first time since he’d detransformed, lips curling into the tiniest of smiles, and Adrien gave an encouraging “go ahead” gesture. She straightened her back.

“You look like someone who has a subscription to Cat Fancy,” she said, voice taking on a subtle teasing quality.

“Never miss an issue,” he chirped back.

Ladybug inched forward, smile growing. “You look like the 'After' picture on an infomercial about curing teen baldness.”

“Thanks?” Adrien cocked his head in consideration before giving a decisive nod. “Yeah, I think that one was a compliment.”

“You look like the second runner-up in a Macaulay Culkin lookalike contest.”

“I’ll take it.”
“You look like young Santa Claus.”

“That’s a… baffling comparison. Give me a sec, I’m trying to decide on a pun here.”

“You look like the protagonist of a romantic comedy set on a farm.”

“Which would you prefer?” Adrien mused, unable to stomp down his grin at the return of their easy banter. “The lap sitting angle, or a joke about being on the naughty list?”

“Lap sitting,” Ladybug decided after a brief deliberation. “I like lap sitting.”

Then, as if to solidify her answer, she rocked forward, crawling into his lap and perching sideways atop one of his folded legs.

“Ho ho ho,” Adrien said with a waggle of his eyebrows, pleased to note the cheek he pecked was no longer red beneath his lips. As much as he’d enjoyed Ladybug’s star-struck reaction, it was also nice to see her unwind around him.

Especially when her unwinding entailed draping her arm around his neck and her legs spilling over his lap.

“You look like the love child of a Ken doll and another Ken doll,” Ladybug giggled, apparently not finished with her analysis of his features.

“Wouldn’t that just make me another Ken doll?” Adrien asked, snaking his arm comfortably around her waist. He noted that the texture of Ladybug’s suit was entirely unique, unlike anything he’d seen in his years of being surrounded by textiles, and his bare hands got sidetracked as he mapped out the circular indentations that patterned her costume.

“You look like a Ken doll, then.”

“No fair,” Adrien whined, giving an expert pretty-boy pout for emphasis. “I’m hotter than Ken.”

For a second Ladybug looked ready to agree, but she stopped herself with a playful shrug.

“You look like,” she went on, fingers drumming against his chin as she tilted his head side to side, “the poster boy for a summer camp that teaches abstinence.”

“I might as well be…” he muttered with a good-natured roll of his eyes.

“You like the entire junior’s section at Nordstrom’s gained sentience and congealed into a person.”

“I would get disowned if I wore anything from Nordstrom’s.”

“You look like the guy who shows up fifteen minutes early to the party, brings carrot sticks and french onion dip to share, doesn’t stop petting the dog for the entire night and then helps clean up when everyone goes home.”

“Wow, these are getting more and more specific. You have a very colorful imagination, my Lady.”

“Thank you,” Ladybug said primly, clearly proud of her expert appraisal. Those devious (‘kissable,’ Adrien’s mind tacked on) lips twisted into a smirk, parting to spout her next comparison. “You look —”

His hands flew into action, one sealing over her mouth and the other tickling her ribs, and Ladybug cut off with a muffled yelp.
“You know what?” Adrien sang out joyously, keeping a tight grip on the writhing girl as she continued to squeal beneath his palms. “Unless the next words out of your mouth are ‘incredibly handsome’, I don’t want to hear it! Either ‘incredibly handsome’ or ‘absolutely breathtaking’. You can take your pick.” His hands lifted.

“All right!” Ladybug gasped the second Adrien released her, batting away both his fingers and his “I’m watching you” expression.

“You l-look…” Her words were punctuated by little pants and giggles, eyes swirling with a buried mischief as she wiggled atop his leg. “You…”

Adrien leaned forward until their noses were pressed together, hands poised around her midsection and eyebrow arched up in a dare.

Ladybug took a comically deep breath.

“You look just like Adrien Agreste!”

The moment the words left her mouth, Marinette leapt to her feet and shot off with a bark of laughter that echoed in the cavernous space, dodging the tricky hands that threatened to snag her as she made her escape.

‘Leave it to him to zero in on the fact I’m ticklish as all hell,’ she thought, scrambling across the wooden plank flooring with a sputtering Adrien hot on her heels. Marinette tried not to feel too smug over the symbolism at play (something poetic about the chaser becoming the chased), and instead allowed herself to enjoy the simple pleasure that came from goofing off with her partner as they crawled around their hideout.

It didn’t matter that said partner just happened to have the same face she’d been fantasizing over for years. The same name she’d lovingly scratched in the margins of her sketchbook. She’d buried the version of herself who got tongue tied around Adrien Agreste months ago — had smacked the girl over the head with a shovel and had even worn a spicy little black number to her funeral.

The ceremony had been lovely, the tears had flowed, but that Marinette was dead and gone.

And this Marinette was not about to let the lingering ghost of some middle school daydream get in the way of her high school reality. Adrien was here now. He wanted Ladybug… and she was the closest thing he was bound to get.

Using the fact she was still very much in costume to her advantage, Marinette flipped herself over the edge of the loft and into the main hangar below. The drop was nearly ten yards, child’s play for a kwami-powered superhero, and her denouement was flawless.

However, the distance was a bit more challenging for a certain supermodel…

“No fair!” Adrien called down, peering over the landing with a pout. “I don’t have my staff!”
“Whose fault is that?” Marinette shot back at him, leisurely pacing around with her hands clasped behind her back. “Maybe you should start thinking things over more—“

“Catch!”

Ladybug’s whipcrack reaction time was probably the only reason Marinette didn’t end up with an Adrien-shaped pancake at her feet. Her hand lashed out the second she registered him leaping from the loft, yo-yo snaking around the building’s upper beams and lifting her from the ground. She swung forward, snapping her damsel midair, and Adrien had the audacity to laugh as his arms cinched around her neck.

Marinette had the insatiable urge to drop his ass.

And drop him she did, waiting until the pair of them dangled about five feet off the ground before unceremoniously dumping her boyfriend in a snickering pile.

“What the hell!” Heart still rocketing against her ribs, Marinette remained suspended upside down as she rained her lecture upon him. “You did not just Mary Sue me! I know I didn’t just watch you jump from a fucking ledge!”

“You’ve thrown me off the Eiffel Tower before,” Adrien pointed out, the shit-eating grin he wore as he staggered to his feet looking strangely at home on his boy-next-door features.

“I threw Chat Noir off the Eiffel Tower before,” Marinette corrected, willing her pulse to even out. “There’s a difference. An important one! I know Chat Noir can take a hit, but Adrien is far more…”

Words.

There were supposed to be words coming out of her mouth, but Marinette couldn’t recall a single one of them while her boyfriend regarded her with that distractingly sexy smirk.

“…he’s…”

‘Handsome?’ her mind not-so-helpfully supplied, caught off guard by the way Adrien’s eyes glimmered dark in the low light.

“…y-you’re…”

‘Incredible? Sensitive? Kind?’

The fact that he was inches from her face wasn’t helping matters. Neither was the fact that she was still strung up at perfect eye level.

“How many minutes do you think we have left?” Adrien asked, voice soft and words oh-so-inviting. He had no business looking that put together after being dropped face first onto a dusty storage hangar floor, and Marinette cursed his perpetual state of tidiness as she swung gently before him.

“Probably enough for a bit of fun,” she whispered, letting his desiring gaze fuel her boldness. Adrien’s eyes widened just a smidgen, darting first to the lips she definitely wasn’t biting on purpose, and then to the chest she definitely wasn’t sticking out for emphasis.

“Can I kiss you again?” he breathed.

“I’m always going to say yes,” Marinette assured him, just as quiet in the sudden lull that had enveloped them.
Adrien gave a crooked smile that did a number of dangerous things to her pulse, its effect not at all dampened by being viewed upside down, before lifting his hands to cup her cheeks.

“And I’m always going to listen,” he breathed, seconds before their lips rejoined.

It was a simple kiss.

It was less, in the best of ways. It was less desperate, less questioning. There was no buried fear of attempting too much too fast, since they’d both made it obvious this was so incredibly wanted. It was sweet, even if the strange position led to some awkward nose and chin collisions.

It was the type of kiss young Marinette had always fantasized about sharing with Adrien, sappy and corny and oh so perfect. Almost saccharine in its predictability. The knight in shining armor accepts a kiss from their fair maiden!

(Never mind that their roles had usually been switched in her head. This was almost better.)

Adrien kissed her unabashedly. He kissed her gently enough to demonstrate his care but passionately enough to confirm his need. The tongue that slid between her lips was not demanding in its entrance; it simply arrived because she asked it to, and hers was just as cordial in return. They fed off each other, built off each other. They gave and received in equal measure and with equal desire.

It was a simple kiss. It wasn’t fire.

Until it was.

Drawing upon a sense of grace even unusual for Ladybug, Marinette managed to flip herself right side up with only a momentary break in the kiss. Her hips swung forward, legs twining around his waist, and Adrien immediately gathered her up in arms. Their kiss never ceased as she reeled in her yo-yo with a metallic clang, both of them too thoroughly invested in the rising intensity of their embrace to do anything more than cling, and Marinette soon found her fingers balling into the fabric of his t-shirt with a sort of carnal fervor.

Meanwhile, Adrien became (rougher wasn’t the right word, never for him) more impassioned with his ministrations, pushing and pulling and pressing just a bit more in each place they touched. The hand not supporting her bottom quickly reconnected with her right breast, and Marinette melted into the caress. She was absolute putty in his hands, bending and forming to his careful touch as she tangled her fingers in his hair. She couldn’t have stifled her contented keen if she’d tried.

Marinette slid to the ground, landing on shaky feet but keeping her body glued to his as the hand on her ass began to knead in time with its partner on her chest. ‘Like a cat,’ she mused, having the irrational urge to voice her observation even though they had better things to do than banter.

Much better things.

Marinette’s hands left their silky nest to explore all the expanses rendered bare by his (lack of) covering, desperate to trace every inch of newly exposed skin Adrien had so graciously laid before her. They slid across his broad shoulders. They gripped the side of his neck. They skated down the thin cotton of his chest and then—

Adrien broke the kiss when her fingers snuck their way up the hem of his shirt, pulling back just far enough that their noses could still touch and shooting her a questioning look. A look that, to her, seemed more like he was waiting to see if she was comfortable with the new territory.

Marinette, for her part, took a calming breath, reminding herself there was no need to blush at the
sight of her own goddamn boyfriend. Even if he was sporting a fairly obvious semi just inches from where her hand was exploring.

“This isn’t too much, is it?” she whispered. Her fingers itched to trace the shallow trenches she could sense along the bottom of his abdomen, to worm their way along the warmth of his ribs, but she wasn’t so desperately wanton as to forget he needed to have a say in this.

“Like I told you before,” Adrien said with an encouraging smile, hands slowing in their motions to become more of a lazy caress than anything, “I have literally no physical boundaries when it comes to you.” He pecked at her lips, oozing assurance with each increasingly heated press, but Marinette couldn’t help but quirk a brow.

“None?” she probed, mind running through all the physical maladies she could inflict on him with that kind of permission.

He was basically giving her the green light to kick his ass.

“Let’s just say,” Adrien no less than purred, hips swinging just slightly beneath her wandering hands, “if it were up to me and your costume had a zipper…”

He let the sentence dangle with a rakish look, but Marinette wasn’t about to let him get off that easily.

When had she ever?

“If it were up to you?” she prompted, eyes wide and expectant. Her fingers began to work small circles along his abdomen, drawing a semi-nervous laugh from her partner.

“I…”

“What would we be doing, Adrien?” Marinette continued in her best alluring drawl (a pretty damn good one if his gulp was any indication). “If my costume had a zipper?”

“We w-would… that is… If you… a-and…” Adrien wrestled with his mouth, trying and failing to craft a coherent response, and Marinette decided right then and there that she liked it when he stuttered around her.

Emboldened by his uncharacteristic loss for words, she hooked the tip of her pointer finger under the waistband of his jeans. “Cat got your tongue?” she teased at his continued silence. “You know, I’ve found it’s not such a bad sensation once you get used to it.”

“The cat’s not here right now,” Adrien intoned cheekily. “Can I take a message?”

“Yeah,” Marinette said, tapping one index finger to the bow of her lips and letting the other delve lower into his waistband. She wasn’t sure which motion drew his shiver but frankly she didn’t care. “Let my boyfriend know he still hasn’t told me what we’d be doing if my costume had a zipper…”

At her hand’s suggestive little yank, Adrien seemed to regain control of his motor functions, letting his hip cant into hers and—

‘Oh that is definitely not a semi any more,’ Marinette thought, eyes snapping open as a tell-tale bulge pressed against her thigh. ‘That is a 100% confirmed erection right there, boy howdy. The most precious Agreste asset wrapped in the highest quality designer denim.’

She'd always did have a thing for couture.
A measure of flushed excitement must have crept onto her face, as Adrien was quick to recover his Chat-like swagger. His mouth twisted into a Cheshire grin, his hands resumed their feline motions, and he leaned down again to capture her gaze.

“You really want to hear what I’d like to do with you?” The words buzzed across her lips, lilting in invitation. “If there was no costume to get in our way?”

Adrien’s hips rolled slow and deliberately into her own, but Marinette forced herself not to buckle. She nodded, not trusting her voice in her current state of arousal, and Adrien bent down to press a kiss against the line of her jaw. They exhaled in tandem, his lips parting to whisper—

“I almost died!”

…

No, Adrien did not whisper “I almost died!” into the crook of her neck.

But Plagg did loudly announce it as he whizzed about their heads.

“There was a crow,” he went on, either unaware or unconcerned by the way his chosen was nearly vibrating in displeasure just below him. “It was a mean one too! With giant talons and…”

“If you kill him, you can’t be Chat Noir any more,” Marinette whispered, reeling in an incredulous giggle she didn’t think Adrien would appreciate if his sour expression was anything to go by.

“…so it swoops down, cawing like crazy… “

“We had a good run as partners,” Adrien bit out, hands stilling before shifting to settle atop her hips. “I trust you to take care of Paris on your own.”

“…and by the time the feathers had settled…”

“Nope, I still need you, kitty cat,” Marinette said, chest shaking from the strain of holding in her snorts. She would have felt just as disappointed about having her playtime cut short, but Adrien’s absolutely hilarious pout all but erased her annoyance at Plagg’s return.

He was practically frothing.

“…so I hope you had fun doing your weird human mating rituals,” Plagg finished, heaving as big a sigh as a four-inch-tall cat could manage before fluttering down to eye level, “because I almost died!”

“Oh no,” Marinette crooned, detangling herself from their embrace and stepping forward to scoop the little creature up. “Did you hear that? He almost died!”

Adrien’s sputter was almost drowned out by the kwami’s languid purr.

“Finally, someone who appreciates all I sacrifice!” Plagg nestled between her suited fingers, shooting his chosen a smug glance when Marinette brought him up to nuzzle beneath her chin. The look he got in return would have killed a lesser god.

“I cannot believe this,” Adrien said, crossing his arms and regarding them with brows cinched together. “You two have turned on me. Conspired to make my life an unceasing hell.”

“See how dramatic he is?” Plagg sighed, eyes rolling to gaze adoringly up at her. “Not even worried about the fact I almost lost my life.
Marinette nodded kindly, feeling a corner of her heart soften at the cute little kwami’s flickering tail and bouncing whiskers. Say what you will, but she was convinced she and Plagg were kindred spirits.

Maybe she was a cat person after all.

“Well thank you for risking your well-being for me,” she cooed, bring him up to drop a kiss on his forehead. Adrien noticeably bristled. “You really are my hero.”

“That’s me,” Plagg sighed proudly.

“I’m hallucinating.” Adrien muttered. “I’m dreaming. I’ve got to be dreaming.”

“But right now you’ve got to help Adrien get home for me,” Marinette appealed, scratching under Plagg’s chin for good measure and lifting him to hover in the air.

“Will we… I mean… not that it matters, but…” Plagg wavered before her, his expression taking on an almost hopeful quality before he manually replaced it with one of forced aloofness. “I’m hoping we’ll get to talk some more later,” he sniffed, and if kwamis could blush, Marinette had no doubt he’d be looking more like Tikki at this point.

“But right now you’ve got to help Adrien get home for me,” Marinette appealed, scratching under Plagg’s chin for good measure and lifting him to hover in the air.

“Will we… I mean… not that it matters, but…” Plagg wavered before her, his expression taking on an almost hopeful quality before he manually replaced it with one of forced aloofness. “I’m hoping we’ll get to talk some more later,” he sniffed, and if kwamis could blush, Marinette had no doubt he’d be looking more like Tikki at this point.

“Of course we will,” she assured him, genuinely pleased by the toothy smile her answer won. “Just let me know when you’re free and we’ll make it a date.”

“Hallucinating!” Adrien interjected.

With the promise to see him soon and one last scratch behind the ears, Marinette ushered Plagg towards his Miraculous. “Make sure he doesn’t fall off a roof or anything,” she said. “I’m trusting you both to get home in one piece.”

“Can do!” the kwami piped out, giving her an almost familiar wink of his green eyes before spiraling into the silver ring on Adrien’s finger.

Adrien jolted as his transformation took effect, yelping in surprise as the flash of light skated across his body, but Marinette just sat back and marveled as Adrien Agreste turned to Chat Noir right before her eyes.

Ken doll one moment, kinkster the next.

“How…” Adrien (or should she say Chat Noir?) took in deep lungfuls of air, glancing over his body as if trying to comprehend his sudden shift in appearance. “He just… he listened to you. You asked Plagg to do something… and he did it! With a smile no less!”

“I’m good with cats.”

“I can’t believe he has you pinned beneath his scheming little paw,” Adrien huffed, tail flicking in annoyance. “My kitten eyes never work that well on you.”

Marinette grinned. “He’s cute.”

“I’m cute!”

“Well…”

Adrien grumbled again, something indistinct about mangy strays and flighty girlfriends, and Marinette laughed as she padded over.
“I hate to say it, handsome, but you have to run back to the Dream House.” She sighed, giving him a peck on the cheek just because she could. “Barbie must be getting worried, what with you being out this late.”

“Barbie can meet me in the fucking pit,” Adrien muttered darkly. Marinette rolled her eyes, giving him a second kiss, then a third. By the time her lips connected with his cheek for a fifth time, his fabricated mask of annoyance had fled, replaced with an unmistakable look of bliss.

Yep, definitely a cat person.

They parted ways not long after that, Marinette well aware that they both had homework due the next day, but the last kiss they shared was no less exciting than any of the others they’d experienced that night. Shorter, most definitely, but just as electric.

Marinette positively floated all the way home, mind whirling with thoughts far too romanticized for her own good. That she reached her house without accidentally running into a wall was a miracle in and of itself. As was the way she managed to slip through her hatch window without stopping to pluck the petals off of every flower that dotted her balcony.

‘He loves me… he loves me not… he lo—’

“Shit!” Marinette hissed as her suit fell around her, Tikki giving a sweet (but smug) smile as she popped free of her Miraculous. “Shit, shit, shit, shit, shit…”

The memory of the night’s goal splashed cold water on her lingering desire, and Marinette had to fight the urge to smack her own forehead. Recharging her transformation, bringing her partner to their old hideout— she’d had a plan! One that had been effectively derailed by Adrien’s disgustingly cute (not to mention distracting) requests for kisses.

After she fought herself, Marinette was going to fight Chat Noir.

“You know,” Tikki said about an hour later, reclining in her now-empty box of cookies and regarding the way her chosen lay face down in bed, “you can always tell him you love him tomorrow.”

Marinette screamed into her pillow.

Chapter End Notes

Well wasn’t that just a FUN RIDE!

On another note, I’ll be attending Orlando Megacon next weekend so feel free to some kick my ass if you attend. I’m the one dressed like a huge nerd.
Chapter 35

Chapter Summary

In which memes are referenced and blankets are shared.

Chapter Notes

I’d like to make a public apology to my beta reader/babysitter Mirthalia because boy does she have to go through alot. My end goal is to slowly descend this fic into a borderline crack humor and her editing is the only thing keeping it from doing so. She is a blessing I do not deserve.

That being said, frick off mom I do what I want and my memes are funny

#NerfThis

Enjoy Sinners

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Marinette swore by the power of alt rock as a cure all.

Sad?

Perfect soundtrack for letting it all out!

Partying?

Awesome, turn it up!

Spent the last week coming to terms with the fact your superhero boyfriend was your supermodel classmate, and past couple hours catching up on all the homework you missed while you were agonizing over said superhero/supermodel boyfriend?

Yup, nothing a good dose of rock and roll couldn’t fix.

Jagged Stone was the world’s best study buddy, and Marinette’s slim fingers reached out to turn the stereo up.

With a massive pile of books laid out before her and a pair of old reading glasses perched atop the bridge of her nose, her look just screamed "responsible student", and for once Marinette found herself actually wishing her parents would pop into her room unannounced, so they could congratulate her on being so studious. But that five A.M. wakeup call was a real bitch and the two bakers had turned in hours ago, so her dedication went without praise.

‘Good for you, Marinette!’ she thought, scribbling away at the homework she’d put off during her prior week of “thinking”, feet kicking idly beneath the desk. ‘Why thank you, Marinette! I do try my
She sighed, eyes crossing as she reached the tail end of her second straight hour of work.

She missed her boy.

Adrien hadn’t been at school that day, which had left Marinette both relieved and a bit put-out. His absence was a blessing considering she might have thrown herself across his desk with a rose in her mouth and a love sonnet on her tongue the second he walked into the classroom… and a curse for the very same reason.

She couldn’t bring herself to call last night a failure, per se. It’s not like she regretted the time they’d spent giggling away in their hideout. If anything, it was an… incompletion.

Plagg had personally seen to that.

But still, the fact of the matter was Marinette had let her feelings get the best of her again. She’d let that damn cat woo her away from the one goal she’d laid out for herself that evening, and she wasn’t about to let that happen again.

Marinette was certain the very next words she’d speak to Adrien would be “I love you”.

Her phone chose that exact moment to let off a familiar ringtone.

‘Miraculous…’ she thought drolly, digging through her pile of worksheets and extracting the vibrating device with its flashing “C.N <3”. ‘Well… maybe not the very next words.’

She tapped accept.

“Hello?”

“I almost committed arson today,” Adrien said by way of greeting.

Marinette arched her brow, a little caught off guard by the topic but glad to hear his voice none-the-less.

God, she loved his voice.

And him.

She really, really just-

“Well hello to you too,” Marinette said slyly, pinning her phone to her ear with one shoulder as her hands fluttered about her crowded desktop, “My day was great, thanks for asking.”

“Oh… sorry.” Adrien sounded tired, the strain evident in his speech even buried as it was beneath that cheery front. “Hi Ladybug, how are you doing today my beautiful, radiant angel of sunshine?”

Marinette closed her book, brow furrowing at his tone. A slight frown crossed her lips. “Tell me about this attempted arson.”

“It’s not really anything important,” Adrien brushed off with a groggy laugh. “Just a little stress from work stuff, no big deal. What are you up to, Bugaboo?”

“Adrien…” Marinette coaxed softly, kicking herself for her initial dismissiveness when it was obvious he needed someone to talk to. “You can tell me what happened, you know. I didn’t mean to
make it sound like I wasn’t interested in hearing about your day.”

“No, no, it’s fine! I shouldn’t bog you down with my problems.”

“I’m your girlfriend and your partner. Your problems are my problems.”

Silence.

“You don’t mind if I just… complain in your general direction for a few minutes? I can hang up if you’re busy!”

Marinette let out a quiet sigh, though her frustration was hardly aimed at him. She crossed her legs atop her office chair, gently spinning herself away from the desk.

“I was just doing homework, but you take priority,” she assured him, trying to make her voice as non-judgmental and inviting as possible. “Complain away, kitty.”

And after a brief hesitation, he did.

Over the next fifteen minutes Marinette managed to pry the full story from her hesitant boyfriend. Though it was an uphill battle both ways—barefoot and through the snow, even.

Some things, like his irritation over being kept from school, Adrien was more than willing to share un-prompted. Other things, like the frustration that came with being used more like a company asset than a person, took some urging on her part to get him to spill.

He told her about his day, from the grueling six A.M. wakeup call to the fully-loaded schedule he’d found taped to his door the moment he was finally allowed back home. He talked and Marinette let him, staying silent for the most part until she sensed he was glossing something over for her sake.

She would not stand being coddled.

Every time Adrien paused she would gently nudge, and at her urging he’d continue on, but in a way that made it obvious he was still sugar-coating things. More than once an incident set off major red flags in Marinette’s mind — lunches too meagre to sustain a child, much less a growing young man; hours spent being manipulated into hard-to-hold poses under scorching floodlights. But time and again Adrien would brush off her concern with a too-casual chuckle.

“It’s just the life I lead,” he’d say, as if that were any excuse.

Regardless, she was fuming. And by the time Adrien had finished recounting the way his father had skipped out on the family dinner he’d promised his son, citing more important affairs took precedence, Marinette had ripped every scrap of Gabriel brand magazine clippings from her inspiration sketchbook.

Those weren’t the actions of a man fit to be idolized.

In fact, over the course of their conversation she came to realize nothing about Adrien’s life was enviable. There was nothing glamorous about being dressed up into designer clothes when every fastened button was a reminder that his figure was everything. There was nothing swoon-worthy about dodging fans only to slip into an empty back seat for yet another silent car ride between shoots. Missing school now and again might have been a fun notion for Marinette, but for Adrien it was his whole life.

And he hated it.
Stilling in the center of her room, curled up on her chair with a lump in her throat and a waste bin full of utter (if couture) trash, Marinette came to the startling realization that Adrien hated what he did. Listening to him hollowly narrate the way his runway coach had drilled him for hours on the proper way to walk, voice devoid of the life it always carried, she realized for the first time ever that her so-called “golden boy” took no pleasure in his forced line of work.

He didn’t overlook the downsides because he was passionate about what he did. He didn’t simply have an off-day every once in a while.

Quite simply, Adrien Agreste hated being a model.

And quite simply, Marinette Dupain-Cheng was pissed.

“…now to top it all off, I’m ruining my girlfriend’s academic career by distracting her from her homework,” he ended with a humorless chuckle, his tone far too light for the massive emotional baggage he’d just revealed (probably just a drop in the bucket if she knew him as well as she thought).

She was going to hunt down Adrien Agreste’s emotionally repressed ass and hug him until he burst.

“Don’t worry about me!” Marinette snapped, instantly following up with a hushed apology. It wasn’t him she was pissed at, after all.

She shoved her chair back and stood to pace about the room.

“What can I do?” she asked helplessly, resisting the urge to take out her anger on her oft-abused cat pillow. She could just picture the ratty thing, cowering in her loft after years of physical and psychological abuse.

“No, no! You don’t have to do anything! Actually, just listening was probably the best thing you could have done for me right now.”

“You sure? I could suit up and knock a few skulls if it would make you feel better.”

“As borderline erotic as the mental picture of Ladybug beating my father to a pulp is... no. I think that would be an abuse of power.”

The joke was on him, because Marinette was more than willing to abuse her status as Ladybug to defend her sun-haired prince from harm. In fact, the only other person she’d ever wanted to punch harder than Gabriel Agreste at that moment was Hawkmoth himself.

If only there was some way to beat the shit out of both of them at the same time...

“You’re pacing again, aren’t you?” Adrien sighed through the phone.

“Of course I’m pacing!” Marinette exploded with a stomp. She froze, willing herself down from her murderous streak with a deep breath. “Sorry, just... Is there anything else bothering you? I’m all ears.”

“Only that you aren’t here for me to drape myself across right now.” She could almost hear his relieved smile, and it helped her to shelve the rest of her fury for a later date. “What about you?”

“The only problems I’m dealing with are the ones on my history homework,” Marinette sighed, glancing over at her cluttered desktop with distaste. The god-awful worksheet was really the last thing she wanted to be doing right now, especially in her keyed-up state. Luckily, it wasn’t due until
next Monday.

“That so?” Adrien began, sound more cheerful as each second passed. “You need some help? I’m as smart as I am handsome.”

“No, I’d like to actually pass my class,” she teased, giggling as he gave a playful hiss. “It’s a sweet offer, but I don’t think there’s much you could help me with unless you were here.”

“Yeah, I guess I could see— Hey, wait! I have a bedroom!”

Marinette quirked a brow. “What a coincidence — I do too.”

“Let me rephrase: I have a bedroom and no secret identity to hide from my partner.”

A beat of silence.

“Oh,” she said, understanding dawning.


“Uh, actually, I just finished the last problem,” Marinette lied, gnawing her lip. She couldn’t let Adrien help her with the same homework he himself had probably done hours earlier. That would raise far more questions than she was willing to answer at that point.

“Oh, well… all right then.” The disappointment in his voice was palpable, and it broke her heart.

“But that doesn’t mean I can’t just come over to hang out,” she nudged, swallowing her unnecessary (and at this point downright annoying) bashfulness. “I mean, if you don’t have anything— “

“YES!” Marinette yanked her phone away from her ear, caught between wincing and giggling at the way he’d nearly screamed through the speaker. “Sorry— yes. I’d really like it if you could come over to hang out.”

She almost didn’t hear his reply, distracted as she was by the image of her and Adrien giggling over the video games she’d beaten him at years ago before he leaned over to give her a winning kiss. Or her and Adrien lounging before a crackling fire (did he have a fireplace?) as they looked longingly into each others’ eyes. Or her and Adrien falling asleep in each others’ arms by candlelight, twelve-piece orchestra gently lulling them into a blissful slumber as the stars shone—

“A-all right,” Marinette said, shaking her head clear of those overly sentimental fantasies as she began shutting off the lights in her bedroom. They were going to hang out!!! “Give me about ten minutes to grab some food for us and I’ll head over.”

“God, I love you.”

Marinette gulped, pulse spiking. “I…”

She couldn’t. Not over the phone.

“I’ll see you soon.”

If Adrien noticed her hesitation, he gave no sign, cheerily bidding her goodbye after confirming she remembered where he lived (as if she could forget). Pressing her phone’s locked screen against her forehead, Marinette took three deep, steadying breaths.

Tonight was the night for sure. It had to be.
“Tikki!” she called, climbing her loft with hands shaking in nervous excitement. “Spots on!”

( ~ Oh hey look, middle of the fic author’s note! Seems like I have to go back to 2008 fic writing logic because there are still people incapable of reading my actual authors notes. Heres the deal- I’ve had people commenting, sending asks on tumblr, posting Instagram comments and even spamming my work email asking me when I intend to update. Bottom line: I write this fic for fun, and when I have people breathing down my neck, it no longer feels fun. You may phrase it as a compliment but just know that every time I get an “OMG PLS UPDATE” comment, I mentally put off the next chapter release by another half hour. Requests like that stress me out, and make it very hard to write. Please be considerate. I am one person reaching my wits end, and I will no longer tolerate the excuse of “I didn’t know”, seeing as though im expressly announcing this mid-fic.)

(please please please please please stop)

(please)

“LADYBUG IS COMING!” Adrien yelled, dragging a vacuum cleaner through his bedroom door before kicking it shut.

“Not if she’s with you she isn’t.” Plagg mumbled, only to sputter as a thrown dust rag knocked him from the air.

“Plagg, if you haven’t cleaned up your bed, throw it away. It’s too late.” Adrien wrangled with the power cord, spitting curses under his breath each time he failed to properly plug it in. Finally, his frantic hands managed to get it in the socket, and Adrien let loose a shout of anxious triumph as the vacuum roared to life in his grasp.

Ladybug was coming over. Ladybug was going to be in his room.

Granted, this wouldn’t be the first time his partner had been to his house, but it would be the first time she’d visited since they’d started dating. And if their luck held (probable, considering who she was), they wouldn’t even have an akuma to deal with this time. Just him and her. Alone at last and—

“Where’s my kwami??!!??!”

Plagg tunneled his way out from his terrycloth prison, only to be greeted with the sight of his screaming human friend searching frantically in circles. It was almost enough to make him worry.

“Don’t you think this is going a bit overboard?” the kwami asked, floating towards the chaos.

“I need bird feeders!” Adrien exclaimed, a little unhinged as he swung the roaring vacuum nozzle about the room. He wasn’t quite sure what or how to vacuum; he only knew the device was used for
cleaning. Which was what he was currently attempting to do. “I need a bird feeder in every window.”

“You have like thirty windows though.”

“I need you to get me thirty bird feeders.”

“Sure,” Plagg deadpanned. “Let me just check my stockpile of bird feeders real quick.”

Adrien narrowed his eyes, turning mid-swipe like a mother cat scorned. “Keep that attitude up and you’re going back into the Shame Orb.”

“Oh, you mean the one with the soundproof walls and warm comfy bed?” Plagg clarified flatly. “You wouldn’t dare be so cruel.”

“You asked for it,” Adrien warned, walking to his bedside table and lifting the glass fish bowl that rested upon it. “Get in.”

With a roll of his eyes, Plagg dove into the pile of cashmere bunched atop the table, sighing in content as Adrien lowered the bowl top-down around him. Adrien knew Plagg didn’t really see his time-out spot as any particular punishment, but it allowed the two some much needed time apart, so the practice remained.

Having gotten his kwami adequately squared away for the evening, Adrien fully focused on the mission at hand. He flew around the room, straightening anything that looked crooked, dusting anything that looked dusty, and generally losing his mind, all the while lugging the roaring vacuum around with him as if to cleanse the very air he breathed. Nathalie poked her head in at the noise only to step back out without saying a word — Adrien didn’t even notice.

He worked with the single-minded fervor of a housewife on cocaine, muttering to himself between each sweep of his rag. He was persistent, ruthless and utterly unforgiving to any unlucky piece of filth he happened to come across. He struck fear into the hearts of stray socks. He stopped dust bunnies dead in their tracks.

He completely forgot to keep an eye on the clock.

“Is that a ponytail?”

Adrien shrieked, dropping the vacuum as he whirled toward the source of the voice. It crashed to the floor with a bang, shutting off with a pitiful dying noise that didn’t sound good at all. Well, that would be coming out of his savings account, but Adrien couldn’t find it in himself to care.

Because there, outlined in the window pane, stood the very angel herself. Smiling down at him, a parcel tucked under one arm and body shifting slightly from side to side, Ladybug was the definition of a vision.

And she was in his room.

(His room!!)

Adrien willed his heart to start again.

“L-Ladybug, hey!” he said, aiming to lean nonchalantly against the couch but ending up at somewhat of an awkward hunch as he bent down to brace his hand against the arm. “Welcome to this place!”
Her mask peaked up in silent question, lower lip trembling with stifled giggles.

“I MEAN… uh… welcome to our— MY room. Welcome here to my room… please stay?” Adrien slid one palm down the front of his face, resisting the urge to throw himself out the open (bird feeder-less!) window. “Sorry, you said something when you came in but I didn’t really hear it over the sound of my inner eight-year-old girl.”

“I asked,” Ladybug said, grinning as she examined the cleaning supplies strewn across his room, “if you were wearing a ponytail.”

Eyes wide, Adrien ripped the bit of elastic from his hair so suddenly it almost snapped, flinging it somewhere behind him with a nervous chuckle. “Nope!”

“That’s too bad, you would have looked cute like that.”

‘Well now...’ With a roll of his shoulders, Adrien vaulted the couch in search of his discarded hair tie, scrabbling across the floor on all fours. He heard Ladybug snort.

“Found it!” he cried, hands snatching the loop and thrusting the tiny treasure up into the air. “Let me just— “

*SNAP*

“—fuck…”

As he watched his very last elastic sever between his fingers, Adrien suddenly had the strong desire to crawl in bed and start his whole day over. But as he clambered to his feet with another curse, taking in the sight of a now hopelessly giggling Ladybug as she pressed one hand to her chest, he couldn’t help but think there was at least one bright spot to his otherwise disastrous day.

At that, Adrien felt all his worry drain away, leaving only pure excitement for the evening ahead of them.

“It looks like a janitor’s closet exploded in here,” Ladybug observed, hopping down from her perch to stalk through the graveyard of cleaning supplies.

“I wanted to make sure our first date was perfect, but it turns out I’m really bad at cleaning.”

“Is this a date?” she squeaked, blinking in surprise. God, she was cute.

“I…uh…” Adrien gave a bashful sort of chuckle, wiping his suddenly clammy hands down the front of his jeans. “I was hoping it was. Is that okay?”

“Yes! Yeah, no, of course that’s great! I just wish I’d dressed up a bit more,” she joked, smiling timidly up at him as she indicated her trademark spotted suit. He broke into a relieved beam.

“You look ravishing,” he assured her, finally closing the distance between them for a hug.

The instant his arms wrapped around her, Adrien found himself lost in her scent — warm sugar mixed with something vaguely citrusy — and considered the merits of just burying his nose in her hair for the remainder of the night. But beneath that came the tell-tale aroma of baked goods, and it wasn’t long before he’d sniffed out the box of pastries wedged beneath her arm like some carb-tracking bloodhound.

“They’re all for you,” Ladybug said brightly, transferring the aromatic box into his eager hands. “I
“ate earlier.”

“What kind of boyfriend would I be if I didn't share?”

“The kind who I know hasn’t gotten nearly enough calories today.”

“I knew it,” Adrien gasped, fishing out an éclair and shooting her a look of utter scandal. “You’re trying to fatten me up, aren’t you?”

“You got me,” Ladybug giggled, poking him in his sides with a considerate tilt of her head. “So, are you going to give me the grand tour or…?”

Adrien vehemently nodded, setting the package down on the coffee table before snaking an arm around her waist.

“Couch,” he said through a mouthful of pastry, gesturing to the piece of furniture as Ladybug rolled her eyes.

“All right, smartass…”

“Television,” Adrien continued with a snarky little grin. He took another big bite before drawing her across the room. “Basketball hoof.”

Ladybug peered up at him in challenge. “You got game?”

“Oh, I got game,” he assured her with a wink, throwing in an eyebrow wiggle for good measure when she didn’t immediately swoon into his arms. She remained unconvinced.

Adrien made a mental note to dunk on his girlfriend sometime in the near future.

“Oh, what else?” she prompted, darting in to take a tiny nibble of éclair. Self-preservation told him to rip the pastry out of reach, but kindness forced him to let his girlfriend steal his precious food.

‘Good thing, too,’ his libido remarked, not at all displeased at the sight of Ladybug licking crème filling from the edges of her lips. Adrien pushed the thought away.

“Climbing wall, parkour ramp, zip line.”

“Ah yes. All the things any normal teen bedroom should include. Mine has three skateboard ramps and a waterfall.”

“Then our next date will just have to be in your room,” Adrien retorted before he could really consider the impossibility of the statement. Ladybug went silent, and he rushed to gloss over his slip of the tongue.

“Um, my book collection is up in the loft!” One arm extended upward. “That’s where Plagg keeps most of his stuff too.”

Ladybug nodded in interest. “Speaking of Plagg,” she began politely, “where is he, anyway?”

The words had hardly left her mouth before her eyes alit on…

“Why is he in a fish bowl?!” Ladybug asked, a little dumbfounded as she strode over to the bedside table. Inside the glass globe Plagg lay peacefully snoozing.

“Bad kittens get sent to the Shame Orb to atone for their sins,” Adrien explained with a resolute nod.
Ladybug threw him a narrow-eyed look over her shoulder.

“You can’t send a literal god into time-out, Adrien,” she chastised, tapping at the glass. “And why doesn’t he just phase— “

“Ladybug!” Plagg exclaimed, shooting out from his so-called prison to tangle himself in her bangs with a loud purr.

“So now you decide to get out the easy way,” Adrien muttered.

“He doesn’t usually?” Ladybug asked, a slow grin spreading across her face at the way the kwami continued to rub against her forehead. Her fingers came up, plucking Plagg from the air to settle in her palms for a kiss atop the head. “Awww, I missed you too, kitten!”

“No, he usually scratches at my door to be let out at 2 A.M.” Adrien sent his friend a poisonous glare, partly in response to his utterly annoying antics and partly because Plagg continued to nuzzle against his Lady with a smug little smile. “He’s woken me up every night for the past three years. Even though he’s more than capable of leaving on his own!”

“If I’m going to be treated like a house cat,” Plagg began with a sniff, “I might as well act like one too.”

“What kind of house cat gets his own tablet and enough cheese to feed a small army?!”

“I’ve told you before, I…”

It took about two solid minutes of squabbling, a near cat fight, and finally a soft appeal from Ladybug, but eventually Plagg agreed to give them their privacy. He melted under her suppliant blue eyes, promising he’d be right up in the loft if she needed him, and Adrien would have found it comical how soft-hearted his kwami was when it came to his girlfriend if not for the fact that he himself was equally smitten.

‘Or, that is to say, kitten.’

Damn, he was losing his edge.

“So anyway!” Adrien continued, shoving the last bit of éclair past his lips and quickly polishing it off. “Let’s conclude the tour, shall we?”

“After you,” Ladybug said with a nod.

“Okay, well, we kind of skipped the bed, so…” Adrien swiveled them around with a sweep of his arm. “Bed.”

“Looks comfy,” she quipped, stepping forward to run her fingertip along the crisp line of his blanket. Adrien gulped hard at the image, mouth having gone dry in an instant.

Perhaps Ladybug didn’t know the effect those kinds of words would have on him, or maybe she was all too aware of the insinuation. But regardless of whether the tease was intentional or not, it was devastating. Just seeing her standing so close to the stage that dominated the majority of his fantasies was getting Adrien a bit hot under the collar, but having her speculate how it might feel?

Now that was downright torturous.

“Yeah, it’s pretty— ack!” He nearly hacked up a lung as Ladybug plopped herself down on the edge
of his bed, hands stroking the comforter in a way that did little to cool his ardor.

‘Oh no. Oh bad,’ his mind chanted, Adrien trying to keep some semblance of composure as he watched his girlfriend shift atop his mattress. ‘Ladybug. Ladybug on my bed. Ladybug smiling as she sits on my bed. Ladybug grasping at my sheets as I pin her down and…’

Then, as if the sight wasn’t morally compromising enough, she bounced.

And Adrien damn near choked on his tongue.

“Springy, too!” Ladybug giggled, jostling up and down with pigtails bobbing.

Adrien could only nod, not trusting the next words out of his mouth to be anything other than, “Wanna see if it’s unbreakable?”

“Sorry,” Ladybug apologized, slowing to a stop as she took in his shell-shocked expression. “Uh… got distracted.”

‘Don’t be sorry, just keep bouncing.’

“Guess I should get up…”

‘Or I could join you.’

“…wouldn’t want to ruin the rest of the tour.”

‘What tour? Tour’s over. This is the final stop.’

Adrien just stared dumbly as Ladybug stood, resisting the urge to tackle her back onto the plush surface. ‘The night is still young,’ the endlessly hopeful part of his personality reminded him, conjuring images of he and Ladybug tangled atop his oh-so-springy mattress.

Adrien couldn’t tell if the figures in his mind were merely cuddling… or engaging in activities far less G-rated.

One look at her happily marching over to examine his arcade games and he decided it was best not to dwell on it.

After letting her (he said, as if she wasn’t more than capable of winning with two hands behind her back) thoroughly own his ass for a solid twenty minutes, Adrien coaxed Ladybug back to the couch, kicking the discarded vacuum out of the way before laying his extensive Blu-Ray collection out before her. To his utter delight, she settled on Howl’s Moving Castle, a personal favorite. To his further delight, she also decided to disregard her own blanket in favor of invading his own, sliding up against his side with a bashful smile.

“C-can I?” she asked, as if she even had to. Adrien swore his heart almost burst.

Leave it to him to get this worked up over cuddling the girl he’d nearly orgasmed beneath just yesterday.
“Absolutely,” Adrien breathed as he cocooned them beneath the fleecy barrier.

With a contented sigh, Ladybug slotted herself along his side, curling her legs up onto the couch beside her and allowing one hand to twine with his own. After pressing the play button and quickly tossing the remote onto the table, Adrien retreated back into their little bubble of warmth, unable to keep what was most likely a dopey grin off his face as he squeezed Ladybug’s fingers beneath the blanket.

It was a scene right out of one of his cheesiest romance fantasies. Pastries, Ghibli movies, and Ladybug snuggles?!?! Adrien was in heaven. Two minutes in and he was already planning ways to get her back again tomorrow night, as well as the night after that.

Things were comfortable — perfect, even, and Adrien found it a real struggle to focus on the (admittedly familiar) plot with his girlfriend nestled so comfortably against him.

Well that, plus the fact Ladybug was incapable of going more than two minutes without offering up some sort of reaction.

“Wait… is Howl evil or…?”

“I’d like to think he lies in a moral grey zone.”

“Why is the kingdom at war in the first place?”

“Well, they—“

“And how come Sophie is only sometimes old?”

“She—“

“Does Calcifer’s spirit possess the castle? And if so, does that make it a sentient bein—mmfgt!”

Adrien had made a vow to never shut his Lady up with a kiss again.

Luckily, that promise did not extend to cupcakes.

He came to discover that as long as her mouth was otherwise occupied, Ladybug’s interjections would be kept to a minimum, and Adrien could think of no worthier sacrifice for his precious hoard of sweets. Still, she laughed at Howl’s tantrum, gasped at every twisting plot point, and even got a little teary eyed at some of the more tender scenes. By the time they were approaching the tail end of the movie, every muscle in Adrien’s body had unwound.

The tensions from work, from his father… they all seemed inconsequential now, and Adrien decided right then and there he’d gladly a face a million more bad days if only they all ended like this. Girlfriend warm against his side, stomach blessedly full, and soft lamplight illuminating the room that no longer felt like a prison to him.

Even the sudden arrival of a rainstorm, which would usually put him right on edge, couldn’t dampen his spirits. In fact, Adrien probably would have missed it altogether, caught up in the moment as he was, had Ladybug not murmured something about loving the rain. She’d looked up at him as she said it, eyes dancing with a tenderness Adrien couldn’t exactly place and mouth curved into a smile just as dreamlike, but he didn’t have long to ponder the almost knowing expression before she’d nestled back in.

He found solace in the warmth of Ladybug, of the blanket still wrapped around them. He found
comfort in the chest that rose and fell alongside his. His room, Adrien noted, felt much cozier with another human body to help fill it.

(That said human body was more less on top of him certainly didn’t hurt matters, either.)

Rain fell, thunder rumbled, hands were held and baked goods were consumed. His day from hell had concluded with a trip to heaven, and Adrien was content. He was happy and free and downright giddy as he settled his head in the crook of Ladybug’s neck.

Well… tried to settle his head into the crook of Ladybug’s neck.

“You’re too tall for that,” she grumbled, her voice entirely without venom as Adrien continued his attempts to burrow into her collar. Their height difference, not at all reduced by the fact they were both sitting, made the task a veritable feat, but he was nothing if not resilient.

“Maybe,” he conceded, shimmying down as far as he could manage without disappearing under the covers completely. “Or maybe you’re too short.”

In the end, it was Ladybug who solved the problem, most likely growing tired of being pawed at. Eyes still trained on the tv, she slid into his lap and Adrien responded by drawing her back to his chest with a nuzzle of thanks.

He tried to focus on the movie, he really did. But watching an anthropomorphic bird flap around after a sentient scarecrow couldn’t hold a candle to the inviting skin of the neck stretched before him, and it wasn’t long before that notorious Chat Noir attention span started to wander.

Leaning towards his original destination, Adrien pressed his face flush against the spot where Ladybug’s hair met skin, nose twitching as it met with the dark strands along her neck. Once again, he found himself overtaken by the trademark scent of her, of his Lady, though this time there was no all-encompassing hunger to distract him from the aroma.

(Well, no hunger for food, at least.)

His first kisses were lazy, tiny little pecks that patterned up Ladybug’s neck as she watched the movie reach its conclusion. Had Adrien been in a more lucid headspace, he might have realized the kind of messages his actions could give off (inviting a girl over to hang out, snuggling up on the couch, putting the moves on her right as the film drew to a close), but in that moment he could find no proper reason to pull away from her inviting warmth.

Ladybug didn’t object, so he didn’t stop.

Next his kisses turned to tastes, little flicks of his tongue in order to see if perhaps he could lick the sweetness he smelled off her very skin. He pressed, insistent and hot. No, it turned out Ladybug wasn’t sugarcoated, but Adrien decided the subtle taste of sweat and skin and girl he swallowed instead was undeniably more filling. He felt her gulp, watched as goosebumps rose along the path he traced, and her body’s little reactions alone were their own sort of permission.

And yet…

“This okay?” Adrien whispered beneath the dip of her jaw, needing to hear Ladybug’s verbal consent despite all the non-verbal cues that hinted this was more than okay. Call him a stickler, but he would not be having a repeat of the billboard incident.

“That’s nice,” she replied, the words vibrating the skin beneath his lips as they spilled from hers. After a brief pause (an implied deliberation) he felt Ladybug shift, the blanket tangling between them
as she turned to more comfortably straddle him.

Grinning at the new position, Adrien’s mouth leisurely, almost lazily, found its way to her cheek, then ventured on to her earlobe. He tongued the edge of her Miraculous stone, as if paying tribute to the magical item responsible for bringing them together, and she shivered as his teeth toyed with the studs.

“Don’t break them,” Ladybug cautioned without a trace of actual warning. Her voice had dropped an octave.

“I wouldn’t dare,” he mumbled back, equally as low.

Their mouths reconnected, and neither of them felt the need to speak anymore.

It was as though they existed in a bubble, the muffled sound of the outside storm as it thrummed through the walls was the only noise besides their occasional breaths and the soft, melodic chime of the DVD start menu. There was a sense of intimacy in the soft light of the TV screen as it cast hues of blue across their entwined forms. In the taste of cream and sugar that passed between their lips with each new caress. There was a sense of peace and rightness and ‘this is what we should be doing always’, but above all, there was an unmistakable sense of time.

Time to wander across every mark and freckle he’d probably glanced off his Lady a hundred times over but swore he was seeing anew in the comfort of their private embrace. Time for her nails to chart a course across every hair on his scalp until he practically melted into the couch beneath her. Time for idle exploration and breathy pauses and stretches of near-stillness before their hovering lips reconnected again and again.

They had time.

Because this wasn’t some back alley quickie. They weren’t constrained by Miraculous beeps or semi-public locations or the ever-present fear of being caught. This was her and him. Private, alone, and (for once in their lives) with all the time in the world.

They could afford to take it slow… and something about the notion made everything seem remarkably easy.

Almost too easy.

It was too easy for them to unknowingly ramp themselves up until they tip-toed across the line of their usual boundaries. His mouth sucking bright (obvious) patterns along her throat was mindless. Her hand creeping up his clothed inner thigh to territories never before breached, was unthinking. Sweet nothings (“You’re soft” “You’re precious”) turned into charged somethings (“I want you” “I need you”) in the span of a few minutes, and everything began to move with a hazy, dreamlike speed.

Everything was his lips and her hands (or was it her lips and his hands?) pressing and teasing and coaxing with an almost drugged-up sense of ease. Everything was numbing nips and suppressing caresses and—

It was when her fingers balled into the hem of Adrien’s very removable shirt, intent on, well… removing it, that Marinette knew she needed to escape.

Movements slow, as if pulling herself from a long slumber, she peeled away with an audible pop as Adrien’s mouth disconnected from her skin. Her hands disengaged to the backrest of the couch, gripping the cushions as she initiated a full-fledged retreat.
“I’ve gotta…” She fought to craft an acceptable excuse, tongue heavy with the words and mind still swimming in about twelve different layers of bliss. “Gotta… pee.”

At that, Marinette sobered, eyelids snapping open like someone had thrust a tube of smelling salts beneath her nose.

‘Gotta pee? Gotta pee??!?’

Boy, she just loved to die.

“Uh… all right,” Adrien said as he stared up at her in mild shock. He looked as though he’d just been snapped from a coma, eyes glazed over and hair still mussed from her thorough petting. “The bathroom is—“

“I remember!” Marinette squeaked, promptly turning on her heel to stomp around the couch. Had her voice always been that pitchy? She didn’t have the willpower to think on it further as she more or less sprinted to the door across the room.

Reaching the bathroom, Marinette flung herself in, the frame rattling with the force of her slam and the cool tile floor seemed to sizzle as she slid down upon it. The atmosphere was too bright, too stark after the muted glow of the bedroom proper. It hurt her eyes and her chest was heaving and—

Plan!

She had a plan!

Not only did she have plan, but also an endlessly smug kwami who’d somehow managed to convince her to go double or nothing on their bet. She had two (two!!) boxes of cookies from her already dwindling stash riding on tonight, and she’d be damned if she let her hormones or her partner's romantic gestures get in the way once again.

She was going to declare her love for Adrien Agreste, by God. And she was going to do it tonight.

A solid seven or eight minutes passed by Marinette’s count before she sobered up enough to leave her hideout. Using the closest of the two sinks to splash water on her face had helped… the realization that Adrien had likely been naked in that room countless times before did not. Drying off with a handy bath towel had helped… the insinuation of the little A. A. stitched into the corner and the whiff of body wash she picked up off the cotton did not. Looking herself over in the mirror and delivering a pep-talk befitting a superheroine helped…

…catching sight of her already-forming hickies did not.

He’d marked her! He’d never marked her before!

(Marinette found she liked the notion of being claimed far more than she cared to admit.)

In the end, only the fear that Adrien would come asking after her health was enough to propel Marinette from the bathroom. As nervous as she was over the task at hand, that anxiety was nothing compared to the sheer mortification she’d have to face if Adrien assumed she was constipated or something.

With that in mind, she slid out the door and back into his bedroom.

After the fluorescent brightness of the bathroom, Marinette almost had trouble seeing in the sudden dim, but her eyes (so used to weekly midnight patrols) were quick to adjust. She padded across the
hardwood, costumed feet silent as she made her way towards where she saw a tall, vaguely boyfriend-shaped figure stowing her unused blanket in a cubby near the wall by the bed. The shadow straightened, thumbs hitching into the waistband of his—

Wait, when had he changed into sleep bottoms? And was that…

“Are you wearing Ladybug pajamas?”

Adrien jolted, turning to her with metaphorical claws out and a hiss on the tip of his tongue. Still acting like Chat Noir… despite his contrasting wardrobe choices.

“Jeez, I forget how sneaky you are,” he gasped, one hand pressed to the center of his chest as he quickly recovered a regular breathing pattern.

“Didn’t meant to scare you,” Marinette tittered, eyes roving his polka-dotted attire and heart constricting at the unfair cuteness of it all.

Adrien stood before her in a fitted black t-shirt — one she knew for a fact only came in children’s sizes, because she’d tried tracking one down for Alya’s last birthday. Printed across the front in a bubbly crimson font was her superhero name surrounded by a flurry of ladybugs, not unlike the swarm that rose up to cleanse the city each time she flung her Lucky Charm skyward. It was a sophisticated design, though the composition was thrown off by the way it bunched up around his armpits and fell a good four inches too short.

Contrasting that, the bottoms (red with black polka dots, of course) were actually meant to be worn by adults. Marinette knew this because she’d watched her mother pick up an identical pair from the women’s section of a popular retail chain three months ago. They fit better — not great, but better. The only hangup was the general bagginess and still too-short hem.

All that was missing was the matching pair of Ladybug slippers.

If Adrien held any ounce of shame regarding his choice of attire, it didn’t show. In fact, he seemed downright giddy as he posed before her.

“We’re matching!” Adrien said, grinning as he twirled with arms thrown wide. With each inch his hands rose, so did his shirt’s hemline, and the pants fluttered without a pair of flared hips to fill them, but somehow he still managed to make the ill-fitting ensemble look like the season’s hottest buy.

‘I LOVE YOU,’ Marinette screamed in her head.

“You look like a dork,” her mouth said instead.

Awesome, things were going so well already.

“Like I said, we’re matching,” Adrien teased, sending her an exaggerated wink that had no business speeding up her pulse like that. Marinette ducked her head so he wouldn’t spot the pleased blush that spread across her face.

This was Chat Noir for Pete’s sake! This was the partner she’d watched get his tongue stuck to a lamppost last winter because he “was too hot for the laws of thermodynamics”. This was the boy who regularly made a habit of running around on all fours for no reason other than it made him look more like his fursona. This was just some goofy teenager dressed in kids’ clothes for the express purpose of looking like his girlfriend.

And yet she found herself undeniably kitten—
Smitten! She meant to think smitten!

—with him.

She was going to skin this cat. Right after she said…

“So just out of curiosity, what time is it?”

Nope, that wasn’t it either. ’Dammit Marinette, get yourself together!’

“It is…” Adrien fished his phone out from his pajama pants pocket, tapping it to life before flashing her the screen. “9:23. Why, you need to leave?”

“No, no,” Marinette murmured, hand reaching out almost of its own accord to trace along the edge of the device. Smiling from his screensaver were four very familiar teens, faces cast in a purple glow and eyes excited for the concert ahead of them. She felt a pang (of longing perhaps) at the memory, one of the happiest she could recall. “Tell me about them? Your friends, I mean.”

She knew she was stalling, but it did nothing to dampen her curiosity. Besides, Adrien looked as if she’d just asked him for his hand in marriage, as nerve-flaying as the comparison was. Who was she to deny him a little gushing?

“Well, that one’s Nino,” he began excitedly, sliding up beside her and tilting the screen so she could properly see the picture she’d glanced at a hundred times before. “He was akumatized into the Bubbler, if you recall crashing my birthday a few years back.”

“Eh, that party was lame,” she said as an attempt at humor.

’Jokes are good. Jokes are safe. Jokes are not love confessions and therefore GREAT.’

“It was until you showed up,” Adrien replied, dropping a quick kiss atop her crown. “Anyway, Nino’s probably my closest bro. He can be a little neurotic sometimes but he puts up with my social cluelessness, so I guess that makes us even. In fact, I’d say we’re about 40% gay for each other.”

Marinette did her damndest to hold in a snort. ‘You and I both know that number should be closer to 70%,’ she thought, recalling the pair’s close-knit (possibly bordering on homoerotic) friendship.

She found she didn’t mind playing second fiddle to Nino. Brohood was sacred, after all.

“And I’m sure you recognize the girl taking the picture,” Adrien went on. “Lady Wifi, AKA the author of the Ladyblog, AKA Alya Césaire. She’s been my friend for about as long as Nino has.”

“They look pretty darn comfortable… are they?”

“Oh, definitely, though I’m not sure exactly what their relationship is. Nino’s been weirdly tight-lipped about the whole ‘Alya situation’.” Adrien shook his head, mirroring her own confusion at their friends’ supposed entanglement. “Ah, well. Marinette and I will wrangle the truth out of them eventually.”

’And there we go.’

“Marinette…?” she asked innocently, trying not to leap out of her skin.

“Yeah, you remember that girl who helped us take down Evillustrator? She actually goes to my school.”
“You don’t say.”

“I do say! In fact, she’s my third best friend— er, actually. I should call her my first best friend. She was the first person I ever really saw as friend.” He shrugged, thoughtful. “But then again, I think she only just started liking me back recently.”

“What!” Marinette exclaimed in a near shout, and Adrien jumped. She cleared her throat, affixing her face with a neutral expression of curiosity. “I-I mean… why do you say that?”

“We didn’t exactly meet on the best of terms,” Adrien said with a wince, no doubt recalling their fabled gum incident. “There was a bit of a social misunderstanding, just me being my dumb homeschooled self, and it took a long time for me to make up for it.”

Marinette could only gape.

He thought she didn’t like him? How in the world could he not know she was head over heels incomprehensibly smitten?! Marinette had assumed her crush was as obvious as the nose on her face, but apparently she’d underestimated Adrien’s ability to misread a situation.

Suddenly, all of his behavior over the last three years seemed to snap into dizzying focus.

Adrien was a nice guy, a gentleman, the “let-'em-down-easy type”, and she'd taken that to mean he knew very clearly she had a crush him but didn’t want to break her heart. That had always been the best case scenario. That was what she’d come up with to explain his behavior towards her.

Now Marinette couldn’t decide whether this reasoning was better or worse.

“But things are all good between us now!” Adrien said, puncturing a hole in her jumbled inner musings. “Or at least, I hope they are.”

‘They are! They're great! We’re great!’

“Marinette is… well…” He paused, giving a considerate tilt of the head. That devastatingly genuine smile was not good for her blood pressure, Marinette decided, and she made a mental note to get the alarming flutter in her ribs checked out by a doctor. Stat. “She’s just loved by everyone, really. In fact, she’s probably one of the most popular girls at my school.”

That was news to her.

“You make her sound l-like she’s perfect,” Marinette said, internally cursing the return of the stutter that only illustrated how utterly un-perfect she really was.

“Well… I don’t think anyone’s truly perfect.”

Marinette waited for the inevitable “Except for you, my Lady!”, but to her surprise it didn’t come.

She found she didn’t mind at all.

“And yeah, I guess Marinette has her faults just like anyone. She has this habit of taking on too many things at once and she sometimes gets her words mixed up.” Adrien chuckled. “I remember one time, when she was in the middle of running for class president re-election and setting up a bake sale fundraiser and making her neighbor’s wedding dress. She walked right into homeroom, looked me in the eye, and said, 'Hello sunshine morning, how day are you?' Oh god I would have fallen out of my seat laughing if she hadn't looked so embarrassed!”
Marinette wanted to interject, possibly with shriek or long series of unintelligible noises, but Adrien was on a roll.

“She also does this thing where she scrunches up her face when she’s bothered. I’ve learned to get out her way when that expression shows up.”

“Must b-be weird looking, huh?”

“Nah, it’s actually pretty adorable.” Was she breathing? Sources said no. “In a vaguely terrifying way. Oh! Did I tell you she also likes fashion?”

“Y-you didn’t.”

“Yeah, she sews like half her own clothes— it’s crazy how talented she is!”

“I shouldn’t be jealous here, should I?” Marinette teased weakly, doing her best to manage a playful shake of her finger in her cloud of utter elation.

Adrien had stars in his eyes. Why did Adrien have stars in his eyes?! “You should be very jealous, and not just because you’re super gorgeous when you’re all green with envy.” The eyebrow he wiggled assured her he was just teasing. “See, not only is Marinette selfless…”

Was she?

“…and kind…”

He was talking about her, right? Marinette Dupain-Cheng?

“…and beautiful…”

Fuck the doctor’s visit, she was going to need an ambulance.

“… she also lives in a bakery,” Adrien finished rapturously, sighing as if the very notion was an instant deal-sealer. Knowing him, it probably was.

Marinette had to take great care not to melt right into her polka-dotted boots.

“Oh,” she managed through a squeak (though just barely). “T-that’s cool.”

It wasn’t cool. None of this was cool. She wasn’t cool and he—

Adrien cared for her.

He cared for Marinette.

He noticed things about her. He’d called her selfless and kind and beautiful. The whole notion was entirely, overwhelmingly exciting, and Marinette probably would have sung… if her tongue hadn’t been squarely lodged somewhere between her liver and gallbladder.

‘Probably for the best. Never did me much good anyhow.’

“She is cool,” Adrien hummed, grinning down at his phone and pressing the lock button when the screen grew dim. Marinette dizzily watched her face pop back into color, recalling the night they’d taken that picture with a flutter of nostalgia.
It was less than two months ago that she’d sat propped atop his shoulders, body buzzing from Chat’s kiss and Adrien hands and the thrum of music around them, yet it still felt as though everything had changed since then.

In a way, it had.

“I think you guys would really get along with each other if you ever happened to meet,” Adrien sighed, his words punctuated by the low rumble of far-off thunder. He looked contemplative. Longing. “I know it’s important for you to keep your identity a secret, and I meant it when I said we can wait as long as you’d like, but I just wish I could… show you off, you know? My friends would love you just as much as I do, I’m sure of it.”

‘…love you…’

‘Now,’ her mind urged. ‘Do it now.’

“Alya would talk your ear off about how great she thinks Ladybug is, and would want to know everything about you. She’d probably sit you down and wouldn’t let you leave until she’d uncovered your whole life story. She’s good like that.” Adrien chuckled, resuming his idle pace around the room as he slipped his phone back into his pocket. “I already know you and Nino would gang up immediately. I could just see you two now, plotting my demise. And Marinette…”

“Yes?” she wanted to answer, wanted to drop her guise and slide into his arms with every declaration she longed to make. She wanted to love him and thank him and make up for every little transgression she’d ever made against him. She wanted to give him her whole self, or at least something, because lord knew he deserved all that and more.

Her throat. She needed to make her throat work.

Her tongue had made its way past her stomach and back up to her throat, inching its way towards where that three syllable admission sat in wait. She silently egged it on, fists clenching in anxiety.

“Marinette would just make your life a thousand times brighter,” Adrien breathed. Marinette didn’t. “The second she saw you, she’d give you that trademark smile of hers, and I know you’d instantly have a new best friend. The pair of you would be unstoppable together, inseparable.”

A wondrous shake of one head and the delirious swim of another. Was it okay that she wanted to cry?

“Marinette and Ladybug,” Adrien spoke in awe, the words a swan song as they sailed out from his grinning mouth. “Two of my very favorite girls in the worl—“

“I love you, too!”

With a blinding sense of sincerity — of relief — the declaration launched from Marinette’s newly-recovered tongue…

…just as a brilliant flash of light lit up the room around her.
Yeah yeah I know, come kinkshame me over my cliffhanger fetish. But tbh I'm really excited about the next chapter????? Because boi do things pick up.

SHIT IS GOING TO START HAPPENING AGAIN
Chapter 36

Chapter Summary

In which the word "love" is mentioned 63 times. (I english real good)

Chapter Notes

I swear I have a really awesome reason for not updating in two months lmao.

Since my last chapter, I have:
1. Had my identity stolen and used to re-post my fics onto Wattpad! (I love the internet!)
2. Undergone heart surgery! (Again!)
3. Gotten a new job as a Costume Specialist for Universal Studios! (yay! money!)
4. Started my fall semester at UCF! (Eww! School)

The good news is, things are finally starting to calm down a bit, so hopefully these updates will start being a bit more regular. As it is, the next chapter is already about 75% done, but im hoping to update either DD or Sugar before i get around to finishing it.

As always, thanks to Mirth for holding my hand throughout the chapter and thanks to those of you that have been patient in waiting. <3

Enjoy Sinners!

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Love was something of an abstract concept for Adrien.

It was like a rare, mythical creature — far more elusive than the kwami who regularly slept in his pocket, and about twice as farfetched. It was a genre printed on the spines of the library books his eleven-year-old self would read under the sheets at night, or a theme in one of Plagg’s awful reality TV shows.

It was a fantasy.

A trope.

Of course thats not to say he didn’t love! Because boy, did he love. Adrien loved deeply and with his whole self. He loved his father, and his friends, and obviously Ladybug… but in his mind it was a one-sided affection. Something he could project onto others without expecting anything in return.

Truthfully, a part of him had forgotten that love could, in fact, be reciprocated. That it was meant to be reciprocated, even.

But then, lightning stuck.

(Literally, as well as metaphorically.)
Adrien's heart lurched into his throat as a sudden bolt of pale light refracted off his stark bedroom walls, but the accompanying thunder crack was only half to blame for the way his blood pressure instantly shot through the roof.

Because he could have *sworn* Ladybug had just said—

“Shit!” The heroine clapped one hand over her mouth, eyes bulging as she muttered through her latticed fingers.

“Shit, shit, shit, shit, shit, that was *not* how I planned on saying it! I-I had this whole big confession planned out and it was going to be super romantic but then you went and kissed me yesterday at the hideout so I forgot, and then Tikki bet me more cookies so I thought ‘all right! I’ll just tell him tonight!’ but then you kissed me *again* and I got distracted with the pajamas and the cuddling and uuuggghhh!”

She groaned and marched up to jab an accusatory finger in the center of his chest. “I love you, but you’re just too goddamn cute for your own go-ooogghff!”

As strong as she was, Adrien often forgot that his indomitable Ladybug was still capable of getting the wind knocked out of her.

Don’t ask him *why* he felt tackling her onto the bed was an appropriate response (he wasn’t exactly in the most lucid of head-spaces at the moment) but tackle her he did. Before his brain had even caught up with the situation, Adrien was flinging himself at Ladybug, grabbing her around the middle and launching them onto the mattress.

The soft *whumpf* of their impact mixed with the sound of distant rainfall, both noises nearly drowned out by Ladybug’s squeal of surprise, and with her hair fanned out around her like two Bastille Day fireworks, she was beautiful. Stunning, even. But Adrien could hardly focus on the sight because—

“You just said you love me!” he exploded, voice threaded with wonder and skepticism but mostly just unadulterated joy.

“Actually,” Ladybug wheezed from beneath him, smiling despite the lack of air in her lungs, “I said it twice.”

‘Twice!’ Adrien’s mind whooped, cracking a metaphorical bottle of champagne over his cerebral cortex. ‘She said it twice!’

“You love me? Like… *love*-love me?” he insisted.

He had to confirm that he’d understood her correctly. He had to *prove* this wasn’t one of those warm happy dreams that ended in cold, empty sheets.

“Oh my God…” Ladybug slapped both hands over her face, but Adrien was quick to peel them off, eyes pleading. Upon seeing his desperate expression, she softened, fingers coming up to stroke his clenched jaw.

“Yes, Chaton,” she assured him in an almost-croon, her gaze confirming what her mouth was saying. “I love-love you.”

Tensing, Adrien braced himself for the shrill reality of his alarm clock.

…
It didn’t come.

“You… love me,” he repeated in a dazed whisper, as if to convince himself of the words' truth. “You love me and I love you back.”

The burning in the back of his throat was the first warning Adrien got of the oncoming tears.

“We’re…”

The sniffle he let loose was the second.

“We’re in love?”

Then, the most amazing, incredible, miraculous thing happened.

Ladybug nodded. “We’re in love.”

And Adrien disintegrated.

Blinded, knowing only that he needed to be as close to this girl (his girl) as possible, he snagged Ladybug in a crushing embrace, drawing the perfumed air around her into his lungs before letting it out in a choked sob. His hands warred with themselves: Should they stroke her hair? Cup her cheeks? It was an impossible decision, and in the end the only real answer was all of the above. So Adrien, certified Blubbing Mess™, was reduced to patting his girlfriend down like the world’s most emotionally attached TSA agent, and Ladybug (sweet, understanding Ladybug) allowed him to do so all the same.

Returning his fumbling pets with her own much more soothing caresses, she kept alternating which name she pressed into the kisses atop his head. Adrien found he couldn’t care less which one she settled on; both sounded unfairly sweet when paired with her care-laden voice. Both belonged to the boy she’d somehow, impossibly, managed to fall in love with. And most importantly, both belonged to him—just as he belonged to her.

Just as they belonged to each other.

“I l-love you,” Adrien sniffled into Ladybug’s shoulder, because he wasn’t quite sure if he’d told her that today. Even if he had, it was important that he reminded her.

(He’d always remind her.)

“I love you too,” Ladybug replied in an instant, the genuine honesty (the eager relief) in her voice prompting Adrien’s next sob to escape in the form of a hiccup. Nearly a giggle, really. He pressed a quick kiss to her shoulder as she continued, “I can’t believe I waited until now to finally tell you, but I do. I really love you. I’ve loved you for so long and I…”

She trailed off, prompting sliver of Adrien’s unbridled joy turned into confusion at her sorrowful undertone.

With extreme reluctance, Adrien extracted himself from beneath her chin, wiping his nose and studying Ladybug as she fidgeted below him.

“I’m sorry I’m so stubborn sometimes,” she whispered, hands toying with the tips of his hair and eyes settling just about anywhere that wasn’t his own. “A-and I’m sorry it took me so long to say what I was feeling.”
Her voice grew quieter still, body drawing back into the mattress as she shied away.

“I’m sorry it’s taking me so long to do a lot of things…”

Oh, that again.

Adrien would be lying if he said he wasn’t at least a little bit… frustrated… with his girlfriend’s continued secrecy regarding her identity. He’d said he’d wait till she was ready, and that promise still held true, but no one could blame him for being curious. Because really, who could Ladybug be past her transformation that could possibly deter him?

He’d gone through all the possibilities, ranging from simple “self-confidence issues” to full blown “mass-murderer on the run from the law”, but no explanation seemed to fit. 10-1 Ladybug’s civilian self was just a blue-eyed, dark-haired girl who didn’t wear a spotted suit everywhere she went. So why all the fanfare? Why all the secrecy?

This whole situation was a test of patience to say the least, but he was ready to hold out for her.

Because Ladybug never had and never would let her Chat Noir down.

That much he knew for sure.

“Tell me again?”

Despite the softness of his voice, Ladybug startled at the words, and Adrien swallowed the urge to laugh at her suspicious (adorable) expression. She’d obviously been expecting another one of their infamous “secret identity” conversations, or perhaps another round of him trying to convince her to let the transformation drop, but Adrien found he wasn’t in the mood to touch that topic. Not with a ten-foot pole.

She loved him. He loved her back. That was what mattered right now.

Besides, he trusted Ladybug. Implicitly. Enough to believe she had her reasons to remain anonymous and enough to believe she would reveal herself when the time was right.

Not just right for her, not just right for him, but when it was right for them.

The sudden reminder that there was most definitely a “them” brought a wide grin to Adrien’s face.

“Tell me again,” he repeated, rolling so that she now rested atop him. “How do you feel about me?”

It took Ladybug a moment, her lips thinning in contemplation, but eventually realization dawned. She returned his smile with a shy one of her own, folding her hands atop his chest and plopping her chin down upon them. “I love you.”

“Again,” he asked, stomach fluttering at the words. He knew he’d never grow tired of hearing her say them, not if she repeated it every hour of every day for the next hundred years.

(Which he couldn’t help but hope she would.)

“I love you,” she said, stronger this time.

“Once more,” Adrien urged, joy and laughter bubbling beneath his words, “with feeling!”

Cheeks turning red, Ladybug took a deep breath, held it for a second and pressed her face flat into his collarbone.
“I love you I love you I love you!” she yelled, the majority of her volume muffled by the fabric of his shirt. “I love your smile. I love your laugh. I love you even when you’re being a nerd or making puns or throwing yourself in harm’s way. I love you as Adrien and I love you as Chat and mmmmmmmm… I just really love you okay?!”

The room fell silent, save for the sounds of rainfall and the distant ringing of church bells.

(Though Adrien had the feeling that last noise was all in his head, considering that Notre Dame was usually dormant at that time of night.)

“Lovebug,” he crooned, fighting the urge to get all choked up again because **damnit he was not crying twice in one night.** “Come out.”

Ladybug shook her head.

“No,” she answered through a face full of cotton.

“Please?”

Another firm shake.

“But I really want to kiss you.”

...

Slowly, Ladybug lifted her chin, giving him a spectacular view of her five-alarm blush. Adrien might have told her she looked cute like that…

You know, if he were capable of speech.

He’d spent so many days and nights dreaming of an opportunity like this, a chance to finally express the depth of his devotion to his Lady, but now that the moment had arrived Adrien couldn’t help but feel like anything that came out of his mouth would fall flat in the wake of her declaration. Trapped in Ladybug’s gaze, he was scarcely capable of **breathing**, much less pulling off a grandiose speech worthy of his feelings towards her.

How could “I love you” ever be enough?

(It wasn’t.)

So he kissed her instead.

Adrien kissed his Lady, and through that kiss attempted to express every last **ounce** of his affection for her.

Every day spent pining. Every night spent desiring. Every minute spent hoping there would come a time when all that love (or even just a portion of it) would be sent back his way.

And when Ladybug sighed, lips curving into a blissful smile, Adrien knew it had.


She returned his kiss with equal enthusiasm — perhaps a bit more if her probing tongue was any indication — and Adrien could hardly **think** through the cartoonish thunk of his heartbeat. His chest was set to burst with affection, the heat of Ladybug’s endearments (her **reciprocation**) threatening to incinerate him from the inside out.
That is, if her lips didn’t do the job first.

As was becoming the norm between them, their kiss quickly turned heated. The pair rolled so they lay face to face, legs and hands tangling with sheets and hair, until two bodies became one indecipherable writhing mess. Ladybug’s fingers carded through his hair, stoking and lightly pulling in the way she knew he liked.

(She knew him, better than anyone else. She knew him and she still loved him.)

‘She loves me… she loves me… she loves me…’ The endless mantra made Adrien giddier by the moment, and though he usually kept his eyes closed when they kissed, he found it impossible not to drink in the sight of his lady (his love!) as she so beautifully offered herself to him.

Stray, dark hairs wisping out from the sheath of her bangs. Pale skin dusted with a faint blush and even fainter freckles. The ever present crimson mask that was equal parts a thorn in his side and one of his favorite sights.

Hers was a face he’d know anywhere.

…As was the slender hand that snuck down to grab a handful of his ass.

Despite the emotional weight of their situation, Adrien felt heat flare low in his abdomen at the touch. Like a gas line had been thrown and was waiting for a spark.

It wasn’t the time for those kinds of feelings, he knew — not with her previous eighteen (and yes, he was counting) love declarations still heavy in the air — but all the romantic notions in the world couldn’t negate the fact they were still laying on his bed.

Chest to chest. Hand to cheek. Hip to—

Aaaand there was the spark.

“Already?” Ladybug asked, traces of mischief and disbelief sneaking its way onto her face alongside the trademark flush. Her fingers paused their perusal of his ass — not that it did much to soothe the rapidly forming lump pinned between their lower halves — and with a hushed ‘Sorry,’ Adrien launched his retreat.

Only to be halted by one well-toned leg as it hitched over his hip.

“I’m not,” Ladybug whispered, in the tone of voice Adrien swore was laced with a kind of verbally administered drug tailored specifically for him.

It snared him, drew him back in for another kiss. It muddled him in the best of ways, until his tongue was licking past her lips to steal a taste of that sweet toxin straight from the source, and his hands latched themselves around her waist. It coaxed and coerced until he was powerless to resist.

(Not that he would have put up a fight anyhow.)

Truthfully, Adrien been an addict since their first kiss, but he had no intention of getting clean any time soon. As far as vices went, this was by far the best he could have possibly gotten hooked on.

Kisses couldn’t kill; not even ones as destructive as hers.

…The hand that slid under his shirt, however...

Well, that was a different sort of predator entirely.
As her lips locked with his, Ladybug’s slim fingers traced exploratory patterns up the expanse of his stomach, and Adrien shuddered as they dipped along the shallow trenches of his lower abdomen. Breathless, he drew back, raising a questioning brow. ‘Someone’s feeling frisky…’

Frisky, as well as a bit guarded, if her expression was anything to go by.

Ladybug chewed her lip, less in the “sexy, come hither” way and more as a display of indecision. Her hesitance was understandable considering they hadn’t crossed this particular line in person yet. Even though their various *ahem* phone correspondences had been more than demonstrative of what each of them was hiding beneath their clothes, the last two months of dating had been characterized by a distinct lack of undressing. Their suits were non-removable, plain and simple, meaning any flirtation beyond make outs had been confined to the realm of words on a screen. Or pictures. Or phone calls. Or—

...Anyway, there’d been a lot of bark and very little bite.

(Not that he didn’t like bark! Bark was cool and all! But Adrien found himself aching for a good dose of bi— actually, never mind, he wasn’t going to complete that thought.)

“You can take it off,” he offered when Ladybug’s hand didn’t stray from its position beneath his shirt. “I don’t mind.”

If he was being honest, his opinion on being stripped for his girlfriend’s pleasure went far beyond a simple “not minding”, but Adrien wasn’t about to beg.

At least, not unless Ladybug asked him to.

“And what makes you think I want to take it off?” Ladybug sniffed, with a dramatic aloofness belied by her blush. “Maybe I was just admiring the craftsmanship, hmm?”

Adrien snorted. His Lady had a bad habit of resorting to teasing whenever she was truly flustered... and he had a bad habit of finding it undeniably sexy when she did.

“Oh yeah? How’s the craftsmanship, then?”

She waved a vague hand, making a show of examining the hem of his shirt. Or, he realized with a frisson of excitement, perhaps the hint of his stomach she’d revealed.

“Oh, you know… factory standard. Nothing to write home about.”

A beat of silence.

“You want me to take it off, don’t you?”

“Yes please now,” Ladybug blurted, abandoning all attempts at coyness. Adrien laughed as she wiggled eagerly back, reclining against his pillows with eyes gleaming in expectation, and the sight of his girlfriend looking so positively at ease in his bed was simultaneously the most heart-warming and arousing thing.

“You wish is my command,” Adrien avowed grandly, grinning as he sat back on his haunches. He hooked his thumb into the back of his collar, dragging the material up and away from his neck. “My lady-love gets everything she wants, so the shirt… is coming…”

Something snagged.
Marinette wasn’t sure what she found funnier.

The fact her six foot some-odd superhero boyfriend had somehow managed to get himself caught up in a kid’s shirt… or the way he’d immediately began wailing for help at the realization he was stuck.

‘What a dork.’

It took some serious maneuvering on her end, a good deal of commanding him to stay still, and finally a fair amount of “stop squirming you stupid cat, you’re making it worse!”, but she eventually managed to extract him from his cotton-poly prison. Once freed, Adrien flung the shirt off his bed with a hiss, muttering something about Cataclysm under his breath and glaring at the utterly innocent pile of fabric.

And Marinette’s eyes you ask?

They were busy elsewhere.

Tanned skin speckled with the occasional freckle or mole, abdomen taut and toned from years of superhuman physical activity… Marinette of all people knew the effect akuma fighting could have on a growing body (her calf muscles were worshiped like deities back in the ladies’ locker room at school), and it seemed as though Adrien was not exempt from reaping its blessing.

He wasn’t chiseled exactly — because really, what seventeen-year-old boy was? Adrien’s strength was more the practical kind, less for show and more for applied use. With broad shoulders, sturdy biceps and a particularly impressive chest (that she had admittedly groped on more than one occasion #whoops), Adrien had truly grown into the mantle of Chat Noir.

His body was (as much as the analogy pained her) almost feline in the way his slender muscles coiled in preparation to pounce. It was powerful. Lean and lithe and…

…and…

Marinette realized once again that she was staring.

A pleased blush feathered its way across her face, one Adrien was quick to catch if his answering smirk was any indication, and he began a slow crawl across the bed towards her. He stalked forward until they were inches apart, then rose (…)and rose… and rose… God, why was he so unfairly tall?!) so they were kneeling face to face, leaning forward in a way that further showcased what he was working with. The new proximity had brought him out of the inky shadow cast by his half-pipe and into a patch of pale moonlight, illuminating for the first time the sparse hairs that dotted their way across his torso, and Marinette (despite her knowledge a good portion of males had body hair) found herself thrown off by the sight.

Since when had her kitten grown into a full-fledged cat? She’d never signed off on this!

“Quick question: how tired are you of “cat got your tongue” innuendo? I want to know if I can get
away with one without you tossing me off the bed.”

Unable to resist letting her fingers card through the golden wisps, Marinette sighed. “The last thing I want is for you to leave this bed…”

Eyes glinting, his mouth popped open, and Marinette rushed to add, “But I’ll kick you off if I must!”

Adrien let his objection be known via low grumble, brow arching as she brought both hands up to sweep across his chest. “Are you petting me?” he asked, incredulous.

“You’re fluffy.” Curious about the state of his underarms, Marinette gripped his elbows, coaxing them up to confirm yes, he was also quite fluffy there too. Adrien deflated.

“That’s not exactly the reaction I was hoping for when I took off my shirt,” he whined, sticking his bottom lip out as she continued to examine him like some rare, endangered species. Curiosity momentarily sated, Marinette dropped his arms back into place, huffing a breathless chuckle at his over-the-top pout.

“I’m sorry,” she cooed, pecking at his lips until they quivered their way into a smile. “What were you expecting me to say?”

“Something along the lines of “wow, my Chat Noir is so sexy and buff!” Then you’d maybe swoon a little bit, just to really sell it.”

Marinette laughed. “Tell you what, you manage to make me swoon, and I’ll say whatever you’d like.”

In hindsight, challenging him was a mistake.

With little warning beyond a sly grin, Adrien snapped his arms up in an exaggerated flex, and Marinette damn near choked on her tongue at the sight. Head cocked, shoulders squared, his display was equal parts absurd and sexy. So it was ridiculous, really, how fast the heat rose to her cheeks.

How many times had Chat Noir struck this exact pose? How many times had Ladybug rolled her eyes right back? There was absolutely no logical reason she should be getting worked up over a silly bit of showmanship.

And yet…

“Wow,” Marinette sighed, suddenly having trouble recalling what exactly he’d wanted her to say.

Something about cats. Something about sex?

‘Yeah, that sounded about right.’

“You… you’re….”

“Please,” Adrien said, arms still curved up in that statuesque pose, “go on.”

His expression was cocky, and oh so familiar. A reminder that beneath that cover boy surface was the same man who’d been barraging her with lame cat puns for literal years. It was at once an irritation and a comfort — enough to snap her out of her sudden speechlessness, in any case — and Marinette almost smacked her forehead at the notion she’d nearly let a Chat Noir Flex™ (of all the ridiculous things!) get to her.

Ladybug did not get flustered by her own partner. Supermodel or not.
“All right,” she sighed, shaking her head as one might shake out a dusty rug in need of airing. “What was my line again?”

Adrien cleared his throat. “You were supposed to say “wow, my Chat Noir is so sexy and buff!” and then swoon into my arms. But you’re more than welcome to improv.”

Angling his body towards her, his eyes gleamed with mischief. “Also, feel free to touch the merchandise.”

Marinette snorted a laugh, though she was quick to take him up on his proposition, and Adrien visibly redoubled his efforts at flexing as her hands closed around his upper arm. “Wow,” she simpered, squeezing his offered bicep with an over-the-top flutter of her lashes, “my Chat Noir is so sexy and buff~”

Not seeming to catch (or perhaps ignoring) her sarcasm, Adrien preened.

“Probably buff enough to sweep me off my feet…”

If at all possible, his chest puffed out further.

“Why, he might even be strong enough to lift a gallon of milk,” Marinette went on with a snicker. “Maybe two!”

“Hey!” Adrien objected, dropping his arms to grab her around the waist. Marinette’s giggles turned to alarmed shrieks as his hands came dangerously close to tickling territory, her expression equal parts warning and joy. “Careful with the sass there, missy, or I will put my shirt back on.”

“After I worked so hard to get you out of it? Not on your life!”

“I don’t know what all this talk of hard work is about. You know it wouldn’t take much to get me to strip for you.”

“Really?” Marinette inquired, with an unwavering bravado she thought herself in capable of mustering while being held by a half-naked Adrien Agreste. Deciding to push her luck (she was in the right outfit for it anyhow), she let one finger slip beneath his waistband. “In that case, what’ll it cost me to have you ditch these god-awful pants?”

“You better lay off my Lady jammies,” Adrien warned, ghosting his fingers across her ribs.

“All right! All right!” Marinette conceded, twisting away with a giggle. “Just name your price!”

Satisfied she wasn’t about to further slander his (admittedly tacky) choice of attire, Adrien tilted his head, considering.

“True love’s kiss,” he declared at last, hands drawing her close and lips pursing in anticipation.

Sure he must be joking around, Marinette snorted. “That all?”

When Adrien’s eyes softened, mouth melting into a gentle smile, she fell silent.

“It’s worth more to me than you’d think,” he said, with a bittersweet undertone that made her want to wrap him in the covers below and never let him go. Touched by his earnest expression, Marinette let her hands come up to cup Adrien’s cheeks, eyes fluttering shut as she slanted her lips softly against his own.

He would never not leave her breathless, she decided.
Every time, every kiss, was better than the last. A naturally replenishing source of happiness that would always keep her running back for more.

(The fact she was currently bartering for the removal of his pants was just a perk.)

“I love you… so much…” she announced between pecks, the admission now rolling off of her tongue with ease.

Why had she waited so long to be this happy?

“Love you more,” Adrien trilled back, lips quirking into a blissful smile.

Marinette froze. ‘Oh no… that won’t do…’

She withdrew until only the tips of their noses made contact, fingers grabbing hold of his cheeks in clear warning. “Take it back.”

“Never.” A pinch. “Ow!”

“Take it baaaack.”

“ Aren’t I supposed to be removing my pants?” Adrien mused, wincing as she delivered another light pinch.

“No,” Marinette scolded, unyielding. “No stripping until you say we love each other equally.”

“Fine, we love each other equally.” Her fingers eased up. His expression turned sly. “But I’ve loved you long-erk!”

Adrien yelped as she pinched both cheeks at once, applying twice the pressure from before.

(Though really, it was still too soft for him to be carrying on like he was. They were superheroes for goodness’ sake!)

“C’mon, it’s true!” he crowed, with a grin that belied his supposed discomfort.

“Is not,” she said with a pout.

“Oh yeah? Then when did you fall in love with me, hmmm?”

“First week I met you,” Marinette replied in an instant, not stopping to consider whether that response might raise more question than she was able to answer. Adrien immediately lit up, and she couldn’t find it in her to worry about her joke of a secret identity in that moment.

“You… since…” He shook his head, expression wondering as his eyes bored into her own. “You’ve been holding out on me, my Lady.”

‘Not as much as you’d assume,’ Marinette thought, recalling years of anonymous gifts, botched conversation attempts, and (she’d deny it if he asked) fold-out poster kissing.

“I was waiting till we both matured,” she lied. “Until I knew we were capable of being both partners and a couple without letting Paris go to ruin.”

“Translation: you waited until I got hot.”

Marinette sputtered, flushing at the semi-accuracy of his translation.
“No!” His eyes narrowed, lips twitching up into a knowing smile. “I didn’t… a-and you… well you’ve always been hot! So there!”

‘Wow, I sure told him,’ Marinette thought sullenly, enduring Adrien’s painfully pleased expression as he conjured a smirk that would put Chat Noir himself to shame.

“Yeah, yeah. You can take your pants off now,” she grumbled, earning a twinkling laugh that banished her frown.

Adrien slid off the bed with a crooked smile, the expression made adorable by the oh-so-subtle flush of his cheeks. His eyes found hers, then dropped to the floor, only to immediately soar back up. Marinette (waiting patiently at the foot of his bed) watched them make their demure circuit about three more times before speaking up.

"Something wrong?"

Adrien pursed his lips, fingers fiddling with the drawstring near his waist. "So I know this is going to sound weird… considering I undress in front of strangers every day…"

His eyes had yet to settle, and Marinette was taken by a sudden revelation.

"You're embarrassed," she guessed softly, having experienced that particular emotion often enough to easily identify it in others. Adrien nodded... then shook his head.

"I wouldn't say embarrassed, per se. Let's go with... nervous?"

"Why?" Marinette asked, unable to wrap her head around his sudden reluctance. Adrien shrugged, gesturing loosely to her sitting form.

"You're Ladybug, protector of Paris," he said, as if that was all the explanation needed.

"You're Adrien Agreste, supermodel extraordinaire," she retorted. Said supermodel snorted.

"Adrien Agreste is a dweeb."

"And Ladybug is a bigger one." Marinette pushed off the bed, standing up and placing her hands lightly atop his shoulders. She studied him, head tilting.

Chat Noir, bona fide teen heartthrob and Paris’s cockiest (well, only) cat hero, was just about the last person on earth she would have expected to have body confidence issues. Had he not flexed for her less than five minutes ago? He was perfect, the very catalyst of her sexual awakening, yet there he stood, shifting from foot to foot and gnawing his lip with a look that clearly spelled trepidation.

The puzzlement must have shown on her face, as Adrien was quick to react.

"Sorry," he mumbled, huffing a hollow laugh and reaching for his waistband. "I’m just… just being oversensitive again. I’ll—"

“Never to anyone,” Marinette stressed, with a firm nod that left no room for argument. Adrien’s lips
perked into a tentative smile "And if you don't want to—"

"Oh I definitely want to," he rushed to assure her, his grin growing wider by the second. The relief on his face was at once welcome and infuriating, making Marinette want to fight each and every person who'd ever made him feel like he didn't have a choice. "Just... momentary shyness, is all."

"Would it help if I turned around?"

"God no," Adrien laughed, reaching out to stop her from where she'd begun to spin away.

He breathed, in and out, then flashed a disarmingly wild grin so unlike his magazine cover smiles that Marinette swore she saw the shadow of black mask fall across his nose. "Though I might be more at ease if my Lady were to help me remove my pants..."

There was probably an apt metaphor for the situation, something about cats always landing on their feet, but Marinette never was good at analogy.

"So I'm your quick changer now, am I?" she asked coyly, hands slipping off his shoulders, down his chest, and around to his lower back. Adrien shrugged, breath hitching as her fingers eased beneath his waistband to settle atop the curve of his ass.

"H-hey, if it were up to me you'd be Head of Wardrobe, but we've all got to start somewhere in the industry."

Marinette hummed.

"In that case..." She shifted up onto her tiptoes, thumbs grabbing the edge of his pants and lips deliciously close to his ear. "...Allow me to assist you with that, Mr. Agreste..."

She was slow in removing the garment, allowing Adrien ample opportunity to back out. Luckily, his bashfulness seemed fleeting, and he showed no signs of hesitation as he stepped from the crimson fabric pooled around his ankles. Kicking the discarded pajamas away, he murmured a low thanks, and Marinette's heartbeat thumped pleasantly at the sight of him clad only in a pair of designer underwear.

(The white, hip-hugging boxer briefs somehow managed to hide less than his catsuit, and it was quite possible that she had begun to drool.)

"Thank you," she breathed, if only to let him know how much she appreciated his trust. This time the laugh her gave was far less nervous. Relieved, even.

"My pleasure. Honestly," Adrien said, drawing her into his arms with an easy hug and a gentle smile.

Having divested himself of most of the layers that normally separated them, he was delightfully warm against the surface of her suit. Like the sun. Marinette could feel the temperature of him seeping even through the magical material, and the delicious heat stirred in her an unimaginable need to get as close to him as possible.

She strung her arms around the back of his neck, rolling onto her tiptoes to press her breasts tighter to his chest, and felt two sets of fingers drum at the back of her legs in reply. "Up?" they asked, tracing the seam between thigh and butt. Marinette responded with a nod, stomach swooping when he hoisted her effortlessly onto his hips.

Three steps was all it took before they’d made it back to the bed, by which time Marinette had
coaxed her boyfriend back to her lips. Adrien fell into her hungry kiss, offering no resistance as she lovingly pushed him back into the pillows, and was quick to set his hands atop her hips when she straddled his thighs.

‘Good boy…’

“I love you,” Marinette murmured between kisses, branding the declaration along first his throat then shoulder. Adrien shivered when her tongue dipped into the swell created by his collarbone, then gasped as she roughly sucked at the skin, blunted nails skimming her backside and hauling her closer with an unspoken request for more.

Marinette was only too willing to comply.

Alternating soft kisses with gentle nips, her mouth travelled down the broad plane of his chest. Her tongue, wet and warm, twirled around the sensitive bud of his nipple, causing Adrien’s groan to turn breathy curse, and it wasn’t long before the flesh beneath her probing tongue pebbled with desire. Satisfied with his reaction, Marinette soon shifted her attention to the other side, hot breath puffing against that disk of dusky pink skin before it too was ensconced within the slick haven of her mouth.

“Mmm… Ladybug…” Adrien keened as her tongue laved along his skin, hips jutting up to rut along her clothed sex, and Marinette responded with pleasured noise of her own.

Though they were well outside their usual boundaries, his exciting responses were indication enough that whatever she was doing was correct. His whines, his bitten off moans, his deep masculine rumbles interspersed with higher wanton cries. Most men would be reluctant to make noises like that, instead grunting and growling in an attempt to remain as Manly™ as possible, but Marinette loved the way Adrien sounded amidst his pleasure. Loved how utterly uninhibited he was in his reaction to her touch.

He was a siren bound to land, with twice the beauty and none of the malice, and if the hardness pressed between her thighs wasn’t enough to get her aching, his noises were certainly enough to finish the job.

Marinette’s need burned along her body like a fever, pooling between the legs of her costume and tightening at the peaks of her breasts. It spurred her to feed it into her partner. To give. Take. It drew her mouth up and her hand down, until she was kissing and grooping and rocking against him in the very same manner he undulated against her. She was love drunk, and only the sensation of the ribbed elastic of his waistband against her fingertips was enough to draw her into some semblance of lucidity.

Hand tented above his… well… tent, Marinette whispered a low “okay?”

Tow which Adrien responded with a resounding “please.”

And really, that was all the encouragement her hormones needed.

Marinette acquiesced to desire, palming the bulge she had so intimately become acquainted with over the course of their relationship before giving it a light squeeze, and Adrien’s pleasure-wracked groan in response was nearly as satisfying as the sensation of him filling her grasp. Despite the two layers of cloth that separated her fingers from his cock, she could feel nearly everything. The tantalizing stiffness. The unimaginable warmth. She could make out, in vivid detail, Adrien’s exact shape and thickness, giving form to years of fantasies and whetting her appetite for more.

She loved him. She loved him, she loved him, and she wanted him.
She wanted to see him, feel him — wanted to explore him in every possible way one could explore another person, and in turn have herself laid bare for his discovery. She ached for the hot mass beneath her palm in ways she couldn’t put to words, and was surprised to find she wasn’t the least bit embarrassed to ask for it.

“Can I?”

Manhandled (‘ladyhandled?’) as he was, Adrien didn’t seem to catch the meaning of her request. Marinette paused her stokes in order to get some blood flow back up to his brain.

He blinked a few times, wetting his lips to utter, “Can you…?”

“Can I have this one?”

There was a split second more of confusion before his pupils dilated in realization.

“Y-you don’t have to!” he rushed to insist, though his hips quivered with the effort to not thrust up into her hand. His face was a strange mix of emotions: unbridled lust boiling beneath a controlled veil of consideration. Somehow the look only made Marinette fall impossibly more in love.

“Do you want me to?” she tempted, the flutter of her lashes far from accidental and the brush of her fingers along his pelvis even less so.

“Y-yes, but—“

Adrien gulped, sucking in a breath as she teased a few digits beneath the edge of his boxers.

“But you don’t h-have to,” he stammered, hands clenching and unclenching at his sides. Marinette frowned.

‘Damn this boy and his chivalrous ass… just let me jerk you off!’

Chat always had been the overly selfless type, and Marinette was discovering Adrien to be no different. So unused to having his own feelings and wants made a priority, he was woefully inexperienced with the concept of give and take.

(Though really, it was mostly the second part he had trouble with.)

His whole life had been spent giving — relenting. Now Adrien had no idea how to simply sit back and receive.

And that needed to change.

“Who am I?” Marinette asked bluntly, capturing her his gaze and refusing to let it go.

His puzzled stare made her realize the complexity of her question, and she gulped down a flash of guilt.

“I mean, w-who am I right now?” she rushed to amend. ‘Nice going, Marinette…’

“You’re Ladybug,” Adrien stated slowly, probably wondering why they were having this conversation with her hand half down his underwear.

“That’s right. And does Ladybug ever do anything she doesn’t want to?”

“…no?”
“Exactly,” Marinette chirped, hoping her smile conveyed her honesty. She wanted this, wanted him, and she needed him to understand that. “And do you think that Ladybug would let anyone, especially her own partner, pressure her into something she wasn’t already eager to do?”

His eyes brightened.

“No way,” Adrien exhaled, his voice half-lusty, half-relieved, and all that she loved. Butterflies — more than she’d ever encountered in all her years of akuma fighting — took flight in her stomach at the sound, and Marinette was unable to resist pressing a kiss to the tip of his nose.

“Then stop overthinking things and let me seduce you.” Adrien laughed at the finger she stabbed to the center of his chest, putting his hands up in mock defeat. With shoulders flushed, hair mussed, and eyes glinting with an excitement rivaled only by the bulge between his legs, he was the definition of a teenage dream.

Only better, seeing as though he was her reality.

“Now, I’m going to ask you again,” Marinette spoke, in a voice so unlike her own she nearly pulled her own tongue out to confirm it was the same one she’d woken up with. Hooding her eyes, she reared back, hips lifting off his thighs and fingers trailing back down to his waistband. “Can I have this one?”

Her words, smoky and low, hit some delicate spot between coy and seductive; as much a flirt as it was a serious question. Adrien’s answering nod was vigorous. Enthusiastic.

Their gazes locked, a mutual, heated understanding of where exactly this evening was headed passing between them as she shifted in preparation. And when Adrien, ever the gentleman, he asked once more time if she was sure…

Marinette answered with a smile, and a tug.

Chapter End Notes

sorry to everyone who truly believed Marinette was going to reveal herself, but.... do you honestly not know me?? I need to milk this sweet sweet Ladrien cow until she keels over dead, so buckle down shippers.

Also, heads up, the next chapter is about 69% smut lol #spoilers
Chapter 37

Chapter Summary

In case you forgot where we left off:

Movies: Watched.

Love: Confessed.

Adrien’s dick: Out.

Chapter Notes

Oh so... hey ya'll. How long has it been? Six months you say? No that cant be right, I would never procrastinate something that much.

... I brought smut???

(Enjoy Sinners~)

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

Contrary to popular belief and despite Marinette’s ardent desire for the situation to be otherwise, Ladybug’s miraculous did not magically grant its wielder unwavering bravery.

Badass yo-yo? Sure!

Sick costume with the matching mask? Absolutely!

The self-confidence of a literal god?

…No dice.

“So, I don’t want to pressure you or anything… but if you don’t at least look at it soon, I’m going to get really self-conscious here.”

Eyes glued to the suddenly enthralling wall just inches from Adrien’s head, Marinette let the air she’d been storing in her lungs flee as a nervous exhale. Not quite a giggle -since that would be wildly inappropriate given the circumstances- but not quite not a giggle either.

More like plea, really. A prayer to all the dick gods in dick heaven to bestow upon her some much needed courage and expertise for the situation at hand.

(The situation that should really be in hand at this point.)

“If you’re not comfortable…” Adrien began, the earnest (always so earnest) words floating up from somewhere below her.
“N-no no!” Marinette piped, voice stuttering around those pesky little not-giggles. For fuck’s sake what kind of demented individual strips their boyfriend, refuses to look, and then proceeds to laugh??

“Do you need a minute?” Adrien asked, thumbs ghosting gently across her knees. Marinette shook her head, taking a deep breath.

No. No she did not need a minute.

Marinette did not need a minute because she was a powerful, sensual young woman. She was Ladybug, luck incarnate! She was an informed, decisive individual, capable of being mature about the situation and-

And she was pretty sure looking at him was as good a first step as any.

So she glanced down.

…

Yep. That was definitely a penis.

That was a very real, very attached to Adrien Agreste, penis.

Now, Marinette was by no means an expert in the field of biology, but the French education system had not failed her. She was secure enough in her knowledge of human reproductive system to at least confirm her boyfriend possessed all the proper… parts… and they seemed to be in excellent working order no less!

(Not that their last few months of “patrols” had left any doubt in her mind over the existence of his parts and their ability to work.)

Starting at the wisps of fair (the gossip magazines could put their speculation to rest- Adrien Agreste was indeed a natural blonde) hair curling around the base, Marinette allowed herself a moment to simply admire. From the thick vein that stood in sharp relief along the underside of his length to the curious folds adorning the tip, she marveled at the anatomy laid before her, suddenly feeling very foolish to have lost her head over something so…

“Small” wasn’t the right word.

‘Oh, no,’ Marinette thought rather lewdly, biting the tip of her costumed nail. ‘Small is definitely not the right word.’

…Something so natural, let’s say.

All said, Adrien’s dick didn’t look all that different from anything she’d stumbled upon during her occasional three am incognito browsing session. No surprises. No bells and whistles. Nothing to send her screaming towards the hills.

For once her stunning supermodel was thoroughly, mercifully, average.

(Though the dedicated girlfriend in her swore his package was incrementally more handsome than others. A real stud among its phallic brethren.)

“Umm… Ladybug?”

Marinette snapped from her dick-induced musings, wincing at the realization she’d been crudely ogling Adrien’s… civilian baton… for the better part of a minute. No commentary, no attempt to
touch him, just an eerie brand of silent judgement that would probably make anyone uncomfortable.

Chewing her lips, she offered him a sheepish smile, and had just began contemplating whether a quick, “Hey, nice dick!” would be appropriate for the situation when-

“I-it moved!”

Well, in her defense, Marinette didn’t know that erections had a tendency to twitch.

What Marinette also didn’t know was whether it would be quicker to escape via the window by the couch or the one in his bathroom. The restroom was closer, but there was still the matter of that pesky door between her and sweet freedom. Plus, unlike the wall of windows in his bedroom, she had no clue how to work the bathroom latches, and couldn’t risk the chance of having to break the glass.

’Nope, it’s gotta be through the big windows,’ she decided, preparing herself for the arduous, mortifying, journey back to her bedroom and subsequent weeks she’d have to spend buried beneath her blankets.

Or in Venezuela.

Or perhaps on the moon.

Adrien cleared his throat, momentarily halting her escape plans. “It’s… happy to see you?”

…

Marinette locked up in place, nearly teetering off the bed as she did so, and one brief glance at Adrien’s face was all it took to get those nervous (though less now) giggles going again.

“What?” he questioned at her snort, breaking out into quivering snickers right alongside her. With eyes dancing, he didn’t seem the least bit upset over her rude observation. If anything, his expression could almost constitute a smile. A fluttery sort of smile, with just enough buried humor to remind Marinette that this was Chat Noir she was dealing with, the one person she knew how to handle better than anyone else on this planet.

The one she loved.

“Y-you…” Marinette shook her head, unable to continue through the laughter pouring out from her throat. Instead she rocked forward, hovering above his lips to whisper, “I just love you, is all.”

Adrien returned the endearment in an instant, even managing to work in a “so much” before her mouth sealed itself over his, and they shared a sweet kiss. Full of hushed adorations and tiny, love-struck sighs- she might have even gone so far as to call it innocent.

You know, if not for the fact one them was naked with a hard on.

Easing down from that quintessential ‘seeing your significant other’s genitals for the first time’ freak out, Marinette broke the kiss, retreating just far enough to meet his eyes. “Sorry for staring,” she said, fingers tracing across his chest, “That wasn’t very polite.”

Adrien gave a non-committal shrug, shaking his head so that their noses rubbed against one another. “I’m pretending it was because of how impressed you were and it’s doing wonders for my ego.”

Marinette rolled her eyes, but pecked him on the lips none-the-less. “If it makes you feel any better,
your dick is the most impressive one I’ve come across.”

“Hell yeah.”

“And also the first.”

“I’m still counting it as a win.”

“Allright, enough,” she admonished, wagging a stern finger as she settled back atop his thighs. “No more funny business. I’m seducing you, so behave.”

Though he was still adorably pink in the cheeks (among other places that she now had no trouble examining), Adrien managed to work up a perfectly affronted gasp. “I am behaving!” he protested, pressing one hand to the center of his chest.

“Well then tell your dick to behave.”

“Trust me, I’ve tried. It doesn’t respect me as its superior.”

As if to add credence to the words, his erection twitched again, and the teens exchanged quick, indecipherable smiles.

Marinette hummed, fingers meandering down his stomach until they broached the patch of pale pubic hair nestled beneath his bellybutton. Adrien gulped.

“Yeah?” she asked, feeling the oddest sense of satisfaction from the way her usually unshakable partner’s muscles seemed to tremble beneath her ministrations.

(It was nice she decided- to feel so desperately, physically wanted. Wanted as a young woman. Wanted as a lover. It was something she’d yet to truly experience as a post-pubescent individual, and the magnitude of the sensation sparked a lovely clench deep in the pit of her stomach.)

“Well I think your not-so-little friend here is perfectly capable of behaving…”

Adrien just barely had time to conjure a smirk before it shattered off his face, replaced by an expression of pure need as her fingers wrapped around the base of his cock.

“…you just need to use a firm hand.”

Marinette flashed a lip-gnawing grin, ignoring the cheer of ‘I DID IT I DID IT IM TOTALLY TOUCHING HIM’ that echoed throughout her head to focus on the way he felt in her hand.

Hard (harder than expected) and so warm she could feel the temperature of him even whilst suited up- rubbing against Adrien’s erection through the layers of his clothing had done nothing to prepare her for how fascinatingly thick it would be sans covering. Thicker than her finger, certainly. Thicker than three or four.

Running through a few quick mental calculations, Marinette couldn’t help but wonder: How in the world was it supposed to fit in her…?

But anyways. They didn’t have to concern themselves with that right now.

“Full disclosure,” Adrien began, the wild dilation of his pupils belying his otherwise casual tone of voice, “I’m probably not going to last long if you keep it up with the puns.”

“Seriously, Chat?” Keeping her eye glued to his face for any indication of discomfort, Marinette
tightened her grip a smidge. “If either of us is ‘keeping it up’ right now…”

Adrien huffed a laugh that was 50% air 50% pure sexual frustration and 100% her kink, rolling his eyes with a murmured “Nice”, and Marinette didn’t know what horrified her more. The fact her boyfriend genuinely seemed to enjoy punning as a form of dirty talk…

...or the fact she was was indulging him.

‘Love,’ she mused, putting her attention back towards the now in-hand situation, ‘What the hell is it doing to me?’

Testing the waters, Marinette dragged her loose fist up the length of Adrien’s shaft, and his soft gasp in response was all the encouragement she needed to do it again. She grinned, wiggled her hips, and repeated the motion, earning another, lower inhale for her trouble. Emboldened, her timid touch turned purposeful, firmer, until she’d worked up to steady kneading pace.

As a teenage internet consumer, suffice it to say Marinette wasn’t exactly clueless on the concept of handjobs. She’d braved enough rogue tumblr links and “Alya Oversharing Times” to have a pretty good idea of what she was supposed to be doing here. Grip tight, but not too tight. Stroke fast, but not too fast. Tease the head, fondle the balls- stimulating a penis wasn’t exactly rocket science.

And yet…

"Ah!"

Adrien next gasp, sucked through his teeth as she swirled her palm against the tip of his cock (that was something people with penises liked right?), sounded a tad too sharp to the result of pleasure.

Marinette froze. “Too hard?” she asked with a grimace, trying not to let her nerves get the best of her.

(‘You’ve done it now!’ her anxiety bellowed, banging the pots and pans she really should have confiscated years ago together, ‘You broke your boyfriend’s dick and now he hates you.’)

Adrien, who did not at all look like the victim of a broken dick, shook his head. “Not too hard. It’s just…” He gestured to her gloved hand. “The suit’s a little abrasive,” he admitted, sounding almost apologetic. As if the material of her costume was designed specifically by him to be a damper on this night.

Marinette bit the inside of her cheek, both relieved and not. “Oh.”

“Yeah.”

Examining her hand, she could see how the textured material of her costume might cause some problems. But how to how to fix it?

Should she call a lucky charm?

(The idea of doing a five minute handjob speedrun sounded thoroughly unenjoyable.)

De-transform and find him a blindfold?

(Nah, too trope-y.)

Maybe… maybe she could use something other than her hand…
(Oh… now *that* could work.)

Marinette swallowed at the thought, running a few more of those mental calculations as she eyeballed his flushed member. Her tongue unconsciously crept out to wet her lips. “Do you…?”

Adrien interrupted her proposal with a quick “wait”, finger popping up to signal for her patience. He twisted, groping in the crevice between the bed and the wall, and after a moment of fishing extracted what looked to be a well-used (probably expensive) bottle of lotion.

He passed it down without comment, refusing to meet her eye.

“That’s an… odd place to store beauty products,” Marinette quipped, blinking fast when she realized why he’d need to keep something like within reach. ‘*Naughty cat.*’

“Nourished skin is very important in my line of work,” Adrien grumbled, cheeks pink and mouth puckered into a pout. She snickered slightly but said nothing, depositing a generous amount of lotion to her palm and rubbing her hands together in an effort to heat it up.

“Tell me if this is better,” she said, wrapping one newly lubricated hand around his shaft. She looked up, keeping a close eye out for any sign of discomfort, and resumed her earlier soft strokes. "We can stop if you want."

Adrien was quick with a smile and a "Dont stop, you're doing great!" , but something in his expression still gave her pause. He didn’t look *uncomfortable* per se- nothing like when she’d nearly sanded half his foreskin off with her cheese grater of a costume -but he didn’t exactly look to be in utter ecstasy either. There was trepidation there, an inner debate waged behind half-lidded eyes, and Marinette perked a brow in silent question.

After a further moment of internal deliberation, Adrien reached down, wrapping cautious fingers around her own.

"This okay?" he asked, ducking his head as if waiting for her to slap him away and storm out of his room for daring to insinuate her technique was anything but flawless.

Relieved, Marinette nodded. "This is perfect."

(Listen, as a girl with exactly zero penile experience, she’d gladly take all the help she could get thank-you-very-much.)

Her eyes dipped, taking note of how Adrien guided her hand. The first thing she gathered was that she was allowed- nay, encouraged-to grip quite a bit harder than she had before, as well as pump faster. The second was that Adrien preferred it when she focused the majority of her attention on the top half of his shaft, though he wouldn’t object should she decide to take a detour to the sac nestled beneath.

Marinette’s third discovery was something she learned after Adrien left her to her own devices, his breath hitching and his fingers abandoning her own to twist into his coverlet.

Turns out, she loved giving handjobs.

It was fascinating, really. The sight of her (well, Ladybug’s) hand wrapped snug around Adrien’s flushed cock. The movement of his foreskin as it slid with each stoke. The tensing and un-tensing of his thigh muscles and the slight heaving of his abdominals. Alya had once (drunkenly) told her that a
hard-on felt like silk over steel, and Marinette wished, not for the first time, that her cockblock of a suit wasn’t in the way so she could see if that held true for Adrien.

…Though the fact he’d seemed to have rationed an entire bottle of lotion for purely crotch-related activities should have answered that question.

Marinette shook the thought off. She’d have plenty of time to fantasize about the exact softness of Adrien’s non-miraculous staff later.

You know, sometime when she didn’t already have him literally in the palm of her hand, flushed and writhing beneath her.

“You look good like this,” she mused, interrupting the soundtrack of rainfall, shallow breath, and... well... other, lewd noises that filled the room.

Adrien’s eyes (which had previously fluttered shut) drifted back open, lolling about as if not sure where to land. “You too,” he said thinly. Hungry. He peeled his gaze away from where it’d glued itself to her pumping hand, wide pupils scanning up her kneeling form with enough raw appreciation to make anyone feel divine.

Noticing he paid special attention to her chest, Marinette decided to be a bit cheeky. She grinned, brought her elbows together, and bounced just hard enough to make her tightly-bound breasts jiggle, not at all prepared for the visceral reaction that would have on the boy below.

Adrien gasped a broken moan, back bowing and nails biting as his cock twitched in her grasp.

Oh.

Now that was one beast she’d like to poke again.

“You like that?” Marinette asked, as if the answer wasn’t obvious in his expression. In the way he quivered.

Adrien- sweet, alarmingly red Adrien -nodded. “C-can-“

He cleared his throat from where it cracked.

“Can you do it again?” he requested, voice much lower than it had been before.

"For you?” Marinette bit her lip, intentionally this time. "Of course."

She withdrew her left hand from where it had been stoking along the V of his groin, wrapping it directly underneath where her right squeezed the head of his cock. Her hips wiggled forward greedily, until her wrists found her pelvis and her thumbs brush the crotch of her costume, and with the next powerful stroke her hands dragged up his length Marinette drew her whole body with it.

Up.

Adrien watched her rise like she was towering wave; Aphrodite emerging from the sea.

Down.

Marinette descended on him like she was reclaiming her throne; Persephone reuniting with her love.

At first her actions were slow, rolling. But with time came ease and with ease came mastery, until Marinette was bouncing at a pace that made her thighs burn in the best of ways. She rode Adrien,
just liked she’d promised him those two weeks ago as they laid panting into their phone, and while this wasn’t exactly the sexual act she’d had in mind at the time, the imagery and position alone was enough to get her shaking.

(She was wet. Drenched actually. She could feel her need spilling along her inseam and smearing across her knuckles every time they grazed the aching nub of her clit.)

(She would not cum in costume. She would not cum in costume. She would not cum in-)

“Adrien,” Marinette admonished when his eyes began to slide shut again, momentarily stilling her hips.

Adrien’s eyelids snapped open. “M-my Lady?” he prompted, rocking needily against her palms, his expression begging her to please please keep going.

“Watch me,” she ordered, loving the way the command made his Adam’s apple bob. Made his fingers dig into her knees. “Watch me make you cum.”

The next words out of Adrien’s mouth could have very well been anything, but whatever he said felt damn good pressed her mouth.

Adrien bolted up into a sitting position, hauling her closer by the hips until they were one undistinguishable writhing mess. The change in position (as nice as it was) meant Marinette could only fit one hand between them, so the other curled into the hair at his nape, anchoring her bucking body to his as she drove him closer to the edge. True to word, his dark eyes never strayed from her own, even as her thumb swept teasingly across his tip.

“Good boy,” she praised, their gazes locked in a heated cinch that turned her insides to liquid fire. “Look at me…”

He babbled to her endlessly, sweet everythings that punctuated each roll of her hips, and despite her inexperience, Marinette could tell he was getting close. She could see it in the way his abdomen shuddered; The way his lips worked in wordless ecstasy; The now steady stream of pre-cum that bubbled up from his slit to mingle with the traces of lotion. Adrien- her Adrien -was teetering on the edge of bliss, holding on as if waiting for some cue from her, and Marinette wanted nothing more than to deliver him to that pleasure.

(A fraction of what he deserved.)

“So good,” she repeated in an endless mantra, not overtly aware of what she was saying anymore but loving the way it made him cry out none-the-less. “Always so good for me…”

“F-for you,” Adrien agreed, all but panting as he pressed his forehead to hers. “Ah!-Anything for you. I-I love… you a-are…”

He licked his lips, searching, but it was obvious by the hitch of his breath that he was too far gone for the usual declarations, and Marinette couldn’t resist kissing him then.

Pulling back after a heated moment, she swiped the thumb of her free hand over his kiss-bitten lip, stroking until they parted with an expectant breath. “Anything?” she echoed softly, tilting his chin so he gazed impossibly deeper into her eyes. “You’d really do anything to please me?”

Adrien swallowed, head bobbing as if it wanted to but couldn’t quite nod and lips pressing a long, meaningful kiss to the pad of her finger. Marinette smiled.
“Then cum,” she bade, as sweet and loving a command as there ever was. She rose up on her knees one last time, hips rolling and fingers squeezing along the area that seemed to take him apart at the seams. “Be a good Chaton and **cum for your Lady~**”

…

Adrien’s orgasm was a magnificent thing, as sexy as it was sudden, and Marinette watched, transfixed, as he rode it out.

She watched his cock twitch in her grasp, ejaculating in pale ribbons that rained across his abdomen in short bursts. She watched the muscles in his neck tense, shoulders stiffening and fists clenching into the sheets below as his hips bucked up into her hand. She watched his teeth grit, his chest pant, but above all Marinette watched his face.

Because Adrien Goddamn Agreste- loving boyfriend, devoted partner and cat pun connoisseur- had the audacity to model as he came.

Eyes shrouded with a pleasure that only seemed to highlight their dazzling jewel-toned color, jaw clasped in such a way that put his well-bred bone structure on full display; He was devastatingly, **disgustingly** handsome in the throes of ecstasy.

And it just.

Wasn’t.

Fair.

‘**I HATE YOU,**’ Marinette’s mind screamed.

“I love you,” her mouth cooed instead.

And really, that was for the best.

The first coherent word Adrien managed to breathe after a long and stuttering stream of “Ladybug” was “Fuck”, which Marinette decided to take as a compliment regarding her handjob skills.

“Y-you…” Plopping back down on the bed, Adrien draped one elbow across his eyes, mouth twisting into a smile as he focused on forcing oxygen into his lungs. “That…”

Marinette giggled as she watched her thoroughly ravished boyfriend try and fail to craft a full sentence, feeling a flood of giddy endorphins rush through her system at a job well done. “Did I do alright?” she asked, a bit unnecessarily considering the answer to that question was currently Jackson Pollocked across the human canvas spread out beneath her.

“I love you,” was Adrien’s response, wrecked and wonderful and perhaps the slightest bit sleepy. Grinning, Marinette dismounted his thigh.

Well… **tried** to dismount his thigh.

She wobbled, almost falling over at the sudden pulse between her legs. The material of her suit, usually so breathable she hardly felt like she was wearing anything at all, chafed against her overly-sensitized skin, rubbing against her desperately-trying-to-harden nipples and positively-aching-for-attention clit. Core tight, inner thighs damp, Marinette wasn’t at all surprised to find servicing her boyfriend had brought her to a near **comical** state of arousal, but she wasn’t about to let her own need derail her plans.
Tonight was for Adrien—his feeling, his pleasure. Tonight was about letting him know how much she loved and cherished and wanted him to be happy.

So Marinette, legs still quivering like a newborn coal, crawled across the bed, ignoring that damp ache as she wiggled her way into his side. She’d worked hard tonight, dammit! She’d earned a bit of spooning for her efforts!

…It seemed as though Adrien disagreed.

The moment she settled beside him his drooping eyelids fluttered open, previously deadened limbs springing to life to pull her against his chest. His lips found hers in an instant but only lingered for a second, next making their way across her jaw and down her neck.

“Adrien…” she sighed, trying to keep her voice firm despite the way his kisses (not to mention the hand that had already found her breast) were steadily chipping away at her already-flimsy resolve.

“My love~?”

“What are you doing?”

“S’your turn,” he mumbled against her skin, errant fingers creeping down her abdomen to some very reactive places. “Gotta please my Lady.”

Well, when he said it like that…

All at once the imagined sensation of Adrien fingers slipping between her thigh flooded her thoughts, prompting a needy whimper to catch in her throat. How would it feel, she wondered, to have him tease across her slick (so, so slick) folds through the thin weave of her suit? How would it feel to have him mouth at her breasts, tongue lapping against the sensitive peaks of her nipples. How would it feel to have him whisper to her as she came, her legs clamping around his hand as she shuddered in his arms?

It was an attractive prospect, she wasn’t about to lie, but the not-so-stifled yawn Adrien gave (paired with the fact he was literally spattered in cum), convinced her to be the adult here.

“You’re sweet,” Marinette stated, “And also gross. Let me clean you off?”

“But what about…” Another yawn. Another reason he had no business doing this right now. “…you, my Lady?”

“I got all the pleasure I need from touching you,” Marinette half-lied, smiling sweetly and trying not to look as horny as she felt. “Besides, I think I agree with Plagg on the whole ‘coming while in costume’ debate. Not really what our suits were meant for, you know?”

For a moment, Adrien looked like he was going to contest her, but he seemed to think better of it, nodding as he withdrew his hands to less reactive places. Marinette’s libido rioted at the loss, but she managed to beat it back with the strict reminder Adrien probably hadn’t slept in about 20 hours and was still very much a mess.

(Besides, she’d have plenty of time to take care of herself once she got home, so really her vagina was just being a drama queen as per usual.)

Granting her boyfriend one last kiss, Marinette sat up with the intent of hunting down a washcloth, but she got distracted by the moonlit reflection glinting off Adrien’s abdomen. His release sat drying in small droplets about his form, pearlescent and almost… inviting?
Curiosity got the better of her.

Before Marinette could over-think it, she was dragging her finger along the space beneath his bellybutton, popping the seed-slick digit into her mouth and sucking hard.

‘Oh… well now that’s unique…’

Unique was an understatement.

Thankfully, Adrien’s cough of surprise was loud enough to drown out her soft sound of displeasure, so she didn’t feel too bad about gagging. Schooling her features into something that wouldn’t offend, she merely shrugged in response to his lifted brow, gulping to rid her mouth of the lingering pungent flavor.

“I was… not prepared to watch you do that,” Adrien choked, visibly stunned by her display. “Thoughts?”

“Well… it…” Marinette paused, heat rising along her neck as she gave a nervous laugh. The taste wasn’t bad per say, especially considering she hadn’t expected Adrien’s spunk to be some sort of delicacy, but it didn’t exactly make her want to lick him clean either.

She decided to stick to her initial assessment.

“It was unique,” she stated primly.

Adrien saw through the polite exterior at once. He snickered at the subtle distaste still resting at the corner of her expression, and Marinette gave up her attempt at chivalry. Her nose wrinkled slightly, only spurring his laughter further, and it wasn’t long before she’d joined in.

“I’ve got mouthwash in the bathroom,” he said, hand nudging her butt till she slid off the bed. “It’s in the blue carafe.”

“Sorry,” Marinette giggled as she made her way to the door. “Maybe I’ll get used to it?”

“I love you too!” Adrien chirped in reply, shooting her a flurry of obnoxious air kisses that did nothing to extinguish her adoration. She snatched each little treasure from the air, tucking them into invisible pockets as if to keep them for later, and Adrien beamed.

Giddy as she was, Marinette didn’t even notice the soft retching noise coming from the direction of the loft.

By the time Marinette returned from the bathroom (minty fresh and with a damp washcloth in hand) Adrien had already began righting himself- one hand raking through his hair while the other dabbed at his abdomen with a clump of tissues. His sleep pants (presumably along with his boxers) were back in their proper place, though that accursed shirt remained pooled on the floor.

Marinette kicked it up with toes on the way over, snatching it mid-air before slipping it on over her costume.
“Sexy,” Adrien remarked, wiggling his brows as if she’d donned the most expensive of lingerie.

“Thanks, it’s my boyfriend’s.” She motioned for him to lay back down, sweeping the warm washcloth along all the areas he remained sticky.

Adrien positively basked in the attention. His eyes fluttered shut in contentment, the very picture of a spoiled kitten, and once she was certain he was thoroughly clean, she stopped, only to hear him whine at the loss of heat.

Marinette reminded Adrien he had a perfectly functional shower.

Adrien reminded her that she was more than welcome to join.

And after a minute of squabbling over whether or not it was a good idea to shower while transformed, an agreement was reached- one that found both teens cocooned under the warmth of his downy comforter and lost in each other’s arms.

Until…

It was after Adrien’s fifth yawn that Marinette had to finally consider going home.

Tonight had been magical, and Marinette wanted nothing more than to stay curled up beside Adrien until morning broke outside his window. But things were more complicated than simple wants. Because at the end of the day, they weren’t just two people in love, they were two superheroes in love. One of whom was still clinging to the tattered shreds of her secret identity.

Of course when she’d told him that, the boy had only clamped around her like an industrial vice, refusing to let her move.

“I have to go.” Marinette cajoled, fighting against both his miraculously strong hold and her own reluctance to leave. “You’re tired.”

“No I’m not,” Adrien argued, sounding remarkably akin to a child who refused to go down for a nap. “I can stay up all night.”

“Well I can’t, and I’m tired.”

“Then go to sleep,” he murmured, nose pressed against her cheek and body sprawled half-against her own. “What’s the problem?”

He knew what the problem was. They both did despite their sincere desire not to.

“I’ll wait till you’re asleep,” Marinette whispered at last. “Just… don’t try and stay up.”

Adrien begrudgingly agreed, his pinkie finding hers beneath the covers, and despite the fact he was obviously attempting to stall her departure with enough whispered words of love to make her flush a florescent peach, it didn’t take more than fifteen minute for him to nod off into silence beside her. Marinette waited until she heard his breath even out into the slow, rhythmic pull of those truly lost to the waking world before she exited his bed, tucking the blanket tight around his sleeping form.

The atmosphere of his room was cold after the intoxicating heat of their embrace, and she shivered. Giving Adrien’s hair a final ruffle, she turned to-

“Is he dead?”

“Eee-!”
Marinette slapped one hand over her mouth, the other forcing her heart back into chest, and she might just have jumped six feet from the moon at the sudden voice if not for the fact she’d been living with a kwami of her own for three years.

“Yup, I live here too,” Plagg remarked, floating down from the loft to hover above where his chosen lay absolutely comatose. He tilted his head, swiping at Adrien’s nose as if checking for a sign of life. No response. “I repeat my initial question… Is he dead?”

“Nah,” Marinette said, struggling to regain a normal pulse. She inhaled deeply, holding it in for a long second before exhaling. “He’s just tired is all.”

“Well I’ve got to hand it to you,” Plagg said slyly, abandoning his annoyances to shoot her a knowing grin, “you really did one heck of a job on him.”

Marinette’s eyes narrowed. “Did you just-”

“He’s happy with you, you know.”

She blinked at the sudden, off-topic interjection. “I… I know.”

“He’s going to be happy with you, no matter who you turn out to be.”

“I know,” Marinette repeated, voice hardly above a whisper. She’d never heard Plagg sound so serious, and something about his tone made her stomach roil with shame.

Over by the bed, Adrien stirred, muttering something indistinct and happy before nestling back in, and Marinette resisted the urge to slip through the sheets in order to supply him with the companionship he sought. Plagg looked to be debating the same.

“Am I doing this wrong?” she asked aloud, voicing the very question that had been plaguing her since The Sighting™. Hell, since the beginning of their whole partnership really. “Is it wrong for me to put him through this?”

Adrien deserved warmth. He deserved love. And above all he deserved the truth.

Why is it that she felt like she was depriving him of all three?

Plagg sighed, casting one more watchful (protective) glance over Adrien’s sleeping form before flittering over to hover before Marinette. He regarded her, with eyes too green to even be real and stare so searching she almost felt as if her costume had melted right off. As if he was looking not at her but through her, to whatever lie inside.

Marinette wondered if he ever missed Tikki in the years they spent away from each other.

“Destruction and creation aren’t fit to be kept apart,” Plagg mused, as if he sensed her very thoughts. “It’s good you two are finally learning how to be with each other. I’ve seen too many lifetimes go by where otherwise decent Ladybug and Chat Noirs drift apart. Either because he’s too quick to act…”

Again, Marinette felt completely transparent under the weighty stare he threw her way.

“… or she never acts at all.”

Plagg hovered closer, whisker twitching and intelligent gaze unwavering as it met with her own. He examined her, with a look of worldly experience so much like his counterpart that Marinette had an abrupt vision of Tikki floating beside him- the two watching kingdoms crumble and centuries fly by.
“I’m going to show him soon,” she whispered, knowing that once the words left her thoughts they became real. That the task ahead of her became real.

“I think that would be good. If not for him than at least for you. Secret keeping is exhausting business.”

“Don’t I know it...” Marinette murmured, pinching the ridge of her nose. At that Plagg laughed, a sound that contained just enough mischief to help cut the tension midnight conversations always brought, and she was quick to join in.

Trailing into tandem breaths, the pair resumed their mutual Adrien-watching duties.

“Do you think he’ll be able to love me?” she asked, “Love Marinette?”

“Well why not?” Plagg countered easily. “You are the same person.”

“Not exactly… without my transformation...”

He waved her objection off with a swipe of his paw. “Bah, Tikki isn’t that great. Anything she does to make you into Ladybug is nothing more than a glamour. Think it like this: Ladybug couldn’t be sharp as a whip unless Marinette was already exceedingly clever. Ladybug couldn’t be divinely altruistic unless Marinette was already selfless to begin with. And Ladybug certainly wouldn’t be what Adrien describes as “the most stunningly beautiful girl in the world” unless Marinette was also knockout herself.”

Plagg dropped his voice conspiratorially.

“Though I can’t really attest to that last one seeing as though all humans really do look the same to me.” At his sly grin, Marinette gave a huff that might have either been the beginning of a laugh or an outright revelation, Plagg’s words swimming around her mind and sinking into her subconscious.

It was certainly food for thought.

After his earlier fawning over her civilian side, Marinette could at least confirm Adrien enjoyed her company. He’d called her a friend- no, a best friend, and had even rattled off reasons as to why he liked her. Those earlier worries of whether or not Chat would find the normal girl as “miraculous” as the superheroine were beginning to ebb away, leaving in its place a very meager number of excuses as to why she should keep the two identities separate to him.

Just one excuse, to be exact.

An excuse that, the more Marinette thought about it, wouldn’t be all that hard for her to conquer should she go about this tactfully.

A plan, half-hatched but already glorious, took shape in her mind

She and Adrien had agreed as a couple for there to be no more unnecessary drama in their relationship; No more games. But this? Oh, this was game-changer. It was devious but wonderful, subtle in execution but huge in payout, and if all went off without a hitch Adrien would be putty in Marinette’s hand by the end of the week.

And yes, she did mean Marinette's.
Inner cogs turning dangerously, she turned to Plagg.

"Do-"

"Don’t even tell me!” he interrupted, face alight with fiendish delight. “Whatever your plan is I’m in!”

“You sure?”

"Course im sure,” Plagg scoffed, “It’s getting boring around here. The kid hardly does anything besides wake up, go to school, model, fight crime, rub one out, and sleep. The most interesting thing I’ve seen him do this week was try and work a vacuum cleaner, and even that only lasted a few minutes. We need to give him a little excitement in his life. A little flair.”

“And you’re sure this isn’t just your reality tv addiction talking?” Marinette accused, poking a finger against Plagg’s belly and narrowing her eyes. “Adrien’s told me all about your tendency to stir up drama purely because you like to watch it unfold.”


Marinette glanced to where Adrien laid blissfully snoozing away. He looked peaceful when he slept, she realized, angelic.

_unsuspecting._

“Yes,” she said, a slow smile blooming across her face, “Yes I think we are.”

Chapter End Notes

LMAO Does anyone still read this story???

Well anyways, I hope you liked this update and I REALLY HOPE the next one doesn’t take as long. Thanks for reading and thanks for keeping up with the lovely comments <3
Chapter 38

Chapter Notes

These updates are becoming more like cryptids huh? Well, I promise I'm not abandoning this fic at least lol. I apologize for the lack of pictures in this chapter, I know y'all said they helped you visualize the sexts, but my tablet is broken and I do not have the money to commission an artist so y'all will just have to use your ~imaginations~ for the time being. As of now, I've just inserted [IMG] where a picture would go.

Huge shoutout to @persephoneandherhades for beta-ing this chapter and as always, enjoy sinners <3

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“I don’t like this,” Tikki murmured, still half-asleep from where Marinette’s alarm had roused her before sun-up. She watched, disapproval evident on her face, as her chosen carefully staged the loft, moving some items around while throwing others down to the room below. “Are you sure you can’t just tell Adrien you’re Ladybug? Maybe over coffee?”

Marinette scoffed, fluffing her pillow for optimal poof. “And risk him having a heart attack?” she asked incredulously. “Tikki he almost ceased to function the first time I stuck my tongue in his mouth, I’m not just going to crawl in his lap and transform into Ladybug.”

“That’s not…” Tikki sighed, massaging her temples. “I just don’t support this idea is all.”

“Plagg said it was a good idea…”

“Then I doubly don’t support it!”

Marinette rolled her eyes at the mother-hen treatment, tucking her blankets neatly under her pillow before changing her mind and messing them up again.

In some ways she could understand Tikki’s reservations- hell, she even shared some of them!- but that still didn’t stop her from seeing this as her best option. After last night, she no longer feared what Adrien’s reaction to her being Ladybug would be. Judging by the way he’d gushed about Marinette it was safe to assume he’d be fine- if not pleased with the fact she was also his partner-in-crime-fighting.

Problem was, crime fighting wasn’t the only thing they were partners in nowadays, and Marinette had no idea how Adrien would react to the knowledge he’d been… canoodling … with one of his classmates for the past couple months. Would he be uncomfortable? Elated? Would he want to go back to just being friends?

She wouldn’t hate him if he did, he had every right to change his mind, but it didn’t hurt to feel him out first, right? Maybe flirt a bit as Marinette and see how he reacts? Drop a few hints here and there so she could gauge his reaction to her being his girlfriend? At least that way she’d have time to prepare herself should it turn out he wasn’t interested in her like that.

Besides, what other option did she have? Tell Adrien to his face she was Ladybug and pray he didn’t
gently shatter her heart on the spot?

That would never work!

“This is a good idea,” Marinette reasoned aloud, more for the sake of convincing herself of this plan’s merit than convincing her kwami. “This is smart and it will work.”

“Well I still think you should be direct with him.”

“Oh sure, I’ll just walk up to him in the middle of class and say ‘Hey Adrien! I’m Ladybug! Do you still love me or should I go curl up in the corner and die?’ Perfect plan, thanks.”

Tikki clucked her tongue. “Well, you’re in a mood and a half this morning!”

“PMS,” Marinette threw over her shoulder, sitting back on her haunches and surveying her backdrop.

Strategically placed French textbook? Check.

Fashion illustrations pinned oh-so-casually to the wall? Check.

Her favorite tube of strawberry tinted lip balm balanced on the headboard?

Marinette frowned. That wasn’t part of the original plan, but maybe she could work it in. It was a bit early for makeup, and she was definitely going for a “fresh outta bed” vibe for this morning’s photoshoot, but the shade was subtle and she was feeling chapped.

Besides, since when had lipstick ever hurt anyone?

“I’m an adult now Tikki,” Marinette said, leaning over her pink kitty body pillow to flick off her monster-prevention nightlights. She paused, considering, then flicked them back on, using her other hand to swipe a thin coat of color across her lips. “I think I can handle this in a mature fashion.”

Adrien would like to say he woke up peacefully.

He’d like to tell you he awoke to the sound of birds chirping outside his window- to the taste of sweet syrupy memories, flavored like eclairs and kisses and her. Or he’d like to tell you he woke up feeling hot- scorched by the echoed sensation of feminine hands in places they’d never been before and set alight by the words she’d uttered right before she’d sent him careening off the edge.

But alas, Adrien awoke neither tranquil nor horny. Because the text tone currently shattering the morning silence of his bedroom wasn’t just a text tone, it was Ladybug’s text tone, and if he knew one thing about his oh-so-mysterious girlfriend, it was that she didn’t get up before 7:30 unless Armageddon was upon them.

Adrien’s eyelids snapped open, the last lingering whisper of whatever pleasant dream he’d been having slipping from his subconscious as he hastily groped for his phone.

Was she hurt? In trouble? Oh God he wouldn’t be able to handle it if she-
As pleased as he was by the message, Adrien couldn’t help but feel like he’d slipped into Underland by way of looking glass.

Heart still hammering in the aftermath of his panic, he typed with jittering fingers:

[ 1. good morning and I love you too <3 ]
[ 2…. are you okay? ]
[of course! why do you ask? ]
[it’s barely 7. why are you even conscious right now? ]
[I thought it’d be nice to text you awake for once ]

‘Curiouser and curiouser…’
[ let me get this straight…. you got up early just to tell me good morning? ]
[ uh-huh! ]
[ voluntarily? ]
[ yepper pepper! ]

“Wow,” Adrien breathed as his fingers typed the same, his sleep-deadened cheeks stinging a bit from all this early-morning smiling. “How the heck are you so cute?”

“I’ve had years of practice,” came a drowsy feline voice from the trash can by the bed. “Keep at it, and you too will be this adorable one day.”

Never looking away from the three little dots dancing on her side of the screen, Adrien silently reached over to put the lid on the garbage, his grin growing impossibly dopier as Ladybug sent him a veritable masterpiece of assorted heart emojis.

[ aw, you really think I’m cute? ]
[ the cutest <3 ]
[ oh yeah? ]
Even with my hair like thiiiiis?]

[IMG]

The attached picture showed a body Adrien recognized as Ladybug’s, sprawled out in a bed Adrien also recognized as Ladybug’s. The bedraggled hair, parted pink lips, and hint of a stuck-out tongue as Ladybug’s as well…

Unlike the black garment currently slipping off one pale shoulder.

Adrien sat up a bit straighter in bed, suddenly hyper-aware of the fact he was bare-chested. Alerted by the text, his typical morning wood twitched to life inside the confines of his boxers, poking it’s head up like a guard dog. It bobbed, curious, but for the most part behaved. Probably still too sated from last night’s tryst to make the usual fuss over Ladybug flirtation.

Which was good considering Adrien’s new goal for today was to make it to school without experiencing a full-on sexual meltdown.

[quick question: is that my shirt?]

He knew it was. Despite the fact most of last night’s memories past a certain (orgasmic) point were a bit fuzzy, he distinctly recalled his girlfriend had been wearing his favorite sleep shirt when she’d joined him in bed. Apparently she’d kept it on even after she’d left, which meant three things.

1. Ladybug had worn his shirt to bed.
2. Ladybug had transformed, stripped down, put his clothing on her body, and slept in it.
3. Ladybug was actually out to end his life.

[whoopsies ^.^]

[guess i forgot to take it off when i left last night]

[i promise i'll return it next time im over!]

[awesome cool]

[hey quick follow up question: why are you actively trying to murder me?]

There was a pause in which he could practically sense her smirk through the phone.

[I have no idea what you mean… ;)]

[ssssuuurrreex you dont…]
was it comfortable at least?

very comfortable

and it still smells like you <3

Bang.

Adrien clutched his chest, groaning like he’d been shot. Did Ladybug really think he could handle this much intimacy so early in the morning?? Especially after last night’s level of dream-come-trueness?

mercy

please

oh im sorry

does the thought of me wearing ur clothes to bed, burying my nose in the neckhole so I can imagine youre here with me, bother you in some way~?

Adrien breathed deeply through his nose.

If she didn’t-

yes, it does and I think you KNOW THAT

oh, well in that case

i probably shouldn’t tell you how awfully cold here it is here without you huh~?

IMG

Four seconds of looking at her newest picture was all Adrien could handle before he was forced to put the phone down and breathe.

If nothing else, he had to give mad credit to his girlfriend’s selfie skills. Somehow she’d managed to capture from collarbone to knees, showing off not only the proof of how “cold” she was, but also the reason for her being so chilled in the first place:

It seemed as though (funny story really!) his Lady had forgotten both a bra and panties this particular morning, as evidenced by her hardened nipples straining against his shirt and the small hand she had clasped over her unclothed mound.

Somehow, despite the fact he’d just felt the entirety of his body’s blood rush from his brain to his dick, Adrien still found the mental fortitude to be proud of Ladybug for setting up that clever shot.
Because he was a supportive boyfriend.

And also wanted to raw her.

“Holy sh**,” he whispered, cursing again as he picked his phone back up. Yup, there she was. Still mind-meltingly sexy. Still lying there with her back arched and her fingers cupped over the patch of dark curls just barely peeking out from behind them.

Adrien soaked in every minute detail of the scene, practically salivating at the thought of what he could do if only he were there with his Lady. Probably replace her hand with his, for starters. Then replace his shirt with his tongue. Maybe smear her pretty pink lipstick across both their mouths as he teased her...

...her...

Wait... was that ...?

Easing his hand out from where it had slipped beneath his waistband, Adrien squinted down at his phone, dragging two finger along the screen to zoom in on the background of the photo. There, curled along the head of her bed, was a stripped mass- long in body, familiar in face, and almost damning enough to make his last shred of coherent thought escape his ears via steam.

Ladybug slept.

With a fucking.

Cat. Body. Pillow.

Correction: Ladybug slept nearly-naked with a cat body pillow she probably cuddled in her sleep and oh god okay he really needed to calm down before he had a laundry situation on his hands.

Adrien bit the corner of his sheet to keep from growling aloud, unsure whether to be flattered, aroused, or jealous that his Lady slept with a stuffed version of his fursona-namesake. He closed the picture quick, lest he begin frothing at the mouth, and tapped back to their conversation window.

[ no wonder you’re cold, it looks like you’ve lost some clothes my Lady! ]

[ its a real shame such a beautiful girl doesnt own a single pair of panties ;3c ]

[ ...is that all you have to say? ]

[ to think I wasted a perfectly good slutty pic >:( ]

Adrien could argue that the image had been anything but a waste. If Ladybug’s goal was to get him so helplessly... well... helpless, then she had surely succeeded. His pitched tent now looked more like a full-fledged RV- one of the ones with the pop-out panels on the side -and his goal of making it to school without experiencing a sexual meltdown was seeming more impossible by the minute.

He sighed, reaching for the water bottle beside his bed. He really needed to cool it.
[ would you rather me tell you how badly I wish I could slip into bed with you? ]

[ yes! ]

[ well then I ~really wish~ I could slip in bed with you... ]

Adrien took a deep, much needed sip of water, hoping beyond hope the simple hydration would quench all his many thirsts.

[ that way I could steal my shirt back you fiend ]

He wasn't trying to be frigid, really he wasn't. In fact, if Adrien had it his way he would bid his Lady-love over right this minute and spend the next two to say... eight - ish hours making up for last night’s lack of orgasm-giving as many times over as she’d allow.

But today was a school day. A day for school. A 24 hour period of time in which about eight would be spent expanding his young mind. In addition to his regular classes, he had midterm tutoring, fencing practice, and piano lessons today- all of which he wasn’t exactly looking forward to but needed to do well in nonetheless.

All of which he simply could not do well in if he were sexually frustrated all day.

So Ladybug could tease all she wanted, she’d earned it after the spectacular night she’d treated him to, but there was no rule saying Adrien had to be affected by it. She was probably miles away, he reasoned, not within touching distance in any case, so there was absolutely no point in letting her rile him up with-

[ and what if im not wearing anything underneath it...<3? ]

-a topless picture, for example.

That would definitely be grounds for riling.

Adrien stared at the image for a good two minutes, his body outright aching at the desire to reach through the phone and touch. The fact Ladybug had one slender arm draped teasingly across her bare chest did nothing to dull his reaction- he could still see the soft swells of her breasts spilling out from behind their cover, leading down to her slim waist and cutting off right as her bare hips began to flare. Add on to that the fact she was pink from cheeks to collarbone, biting down on her even pinker lips in a way that was endlessly arousing to him for no discernible reason, and Adrien was gone.

His finger was tapping the “call” button before he’d even made the conscious decision to do so.

Ladybug answered on the second ring.

“Good morning sunshine~” she purred, and if Adrien wasn’t already rock hard before he certainly
“Are you here to warm me up?”

“Whatever my Lady wants...” Adrien vowed, pointedly ignoring the time as he stuck one hand down the front of his boxers.

Something told him today was going to be a long day.

“Long day?” Alya asked, spooning soup with one hand while the other stroked the blonde head plopped upon her chest. She shifted in her seat until the newly-arrived Adrien could slide into the corner booth beside her, which he did so with a murmured “thanks” and a nod that rubbed his nose against the neckhole of her shirt.

(Of all the many people who sought out the sanctuary of her bosom in times of distress, Adrien always had been one of her more polite patrons, sticking mostly to collarbone and upper-boob for his therapeutic motorboating purposes.)

“There there,” she soothed, careful not to dribble broth on either of them as she brought her full spoon up to her lips. “You are safe now my sweet summer child.”

If Adrien’s reply was actual human words, Alya couldn’t decipher them over the noise of the sandwich shop, but she figured he’d repeat himself if it was important.

“Shit,” Nino said in greeting, frowning as he set his food tray down at their usual table. “I really needed to use the Alya titties today.”

“It’s cram before midterms week, everyone needs to use the my titties.” Alya nabbed a potato chip off her totally-not-a-boyfriend’s platter, blindly bumping it against Adrien lips until he bit down. “Luckily, evolution has given me this rare and wonderful thing called a second boob, which you are more than welcome to use.”

Nino lit up, sliding into the spot to her right. “Oh man, I forgot they came in pairs!”

“Hey bro,” Adrien mumbled through his mouthful, reaching for another chip and adjusting his head so Nino could lay his down next to it.

“Sup dude,” Nino replied, slipping his hat off when the brim proved to be a nuisance. “Whatcha up to?”

“Oh, you know... eating... contemplating life...”

“Using a boob pillow?”

“Boob pillow,” Adrien agreed, perking up a bit when he really began to smell whatever it was Alya was eating. “What is that? Vegetable soup?”

Humming, Alya nudged the thermos towards him.“It’s minestrone, but you can just call it the rest of your lunch.”

“I couldn’t-“
“Eat,” Alya and Nino intoned in unison, followed by another, belated “eat” as Marinette finally made an appearance.

“Sorry I’m late,” she said, fluttering around their table a moment before biting her lip and taking a seat across from Adrien. She eyed him, a complicated little grin resting on the edge of her lips, but the boy was too busy grabbing for a spoon to notice. “What are we talking about?”

“Nothing right now. Any suggestion on topics?”

“Gosh, I don’t know,” Marinette said, stomach growling when she caught sight of the lo mein her mother had packed for her. “What do millennials even talk about nowadays?”

“Apps?” suggested Alya, taking the extra pair of chopsticks Marinette offered and immediately diving into noodle paradise.

“Dank memes?” murmured Adrien, already half-finished with the rest of Alya’s soup.

“Ways to cope with the debilitating anxiety brought on by the broken world we are set to inherit?”

Three pairs of eyes found Nino, to which he responded with double finger guns.

“Also sex and stuff.”

“Well I wouldn’t know anything about that,” Alya declared, ignoring the way Nino snorted into his lunch. “I’ve only ever held a hand.”

“Is that what they’re calling it nowadays?” Marinette teased, tossing Adrien a double-edged wink.

He laughed that unbridled laugh of his, and her urge to just lean over and kiss his face silly soared through the roof. This morning’s wakeup had ended up a bit more heated than originally planned, but then again she should’ve learned long ago Adrien had his own special knack for winding her up. How she’d ever believed they could get through a round of innocuous texting without it devolving into them panting their fantasies over the phone was a mystery, but it’s not like she could fault him for making her late to school when she’d left the house on shaking legs.

Since then, she’d been busy all morning with classes and clubs, meaning she hadn’t had time to flirt with Adrien for four whole hours. She had been able to slip Plagg her love note, and he’d presumably planted it in Adrien’s locker as planned, but there’d been no texts from Ladybug and (even worse) no face-to-face interaction with Marinette.

Which was pitiful really, once you considered the fact she was actively trying to seduce him.

Speaking of...

Marinette cleared her throat, dabbing her lips before replacing her napkin atop her lap. “So…” she began, casual as could be, “Ladybug or Chat Noir?”

...
“What are we choosing between here?” he questioned, always ready for a good old-fashioned round of gushing about his incredible partner in crime-fighting. This morning’s little phone conversation, combined with the wonderful note (“Rose are red, Violets are blue, You’re one silly kitten but I sure do love you!”) he’d found bafflingly taped to the inside of his locker meant Adrien had a lot of Ladylove in his heart right now. All of it just waiting to be spilled.

“Ladybug or Chat Noir,” Marinette repeated. “Which would you rather bang?”

Okay. Alright. Not the direction he expected his panda-chopstick-wielding friend to go in, but you learn something new about a person every day.

“That’s…” Adrien cleared his throat, not really sure how to play this. “That’s a toughie.”

“It really isn’t,” Nino said with a shrug. “There’s only one right answer.”

“Yeah,” Alya agreed, looking equally as decided. “It’s gotta be Ladybug.”

A snort. “Incorrect.”

“What are you- Correct!” she sputtered, glaring down at Nino with a look that was positively aghast. “She’s motherfucking Ladybug! There’s no topping that!”

Alya paused, considering.

“I mean… unless she wanted to be topped. In which case I think I could make some arrangement.” Her lips pursed, eyes going starry, and it took Marinette snapping under her chin to pull her from whatever daydream she’d wandered into. “Right! Anyways! Ladybug is a better bang for your buck than Chat Noir and that’s just smarts.”

“And just what makes you qualified to say that?” Nino retorted, slipping his head off Alya’s chest to regard her quizzically.

“I run the Ladybug,” Alya deadpanned. Nino just waved her off.

“Why would you want to sleep with Ladybug?” he asked, as if schooling a child.

“Why wouldn’t you want to sleep with Ladybug?” Alya countered. “She’s a perfect ten, strong as fuck, and could probably destroy me with a single finger. What more could you want?”

‘Cheers to that,’ Adrien thought, hiding his grin behind the lip of his water bottle.

“Those are all good traits,” Nino began, steepling his finger. “I’m not going to fight you on that. No doubt Ladybug would be phenomenal in bed, but if we are choosing between her and Chat it’s still no contest.”

“Explain,” Alya demanded at the same time Adrien (who was very super casual and not at all blushing) asked “How so?”

Nino held up a finger. “One, the costume. Nobody wears a suit like that unless they know at least twenty seven different ways to bring someone to orgasm.”

“Or unless their kwami gave them no choice…”

“Two, the staff. The dude’s got major hand strength, and knows how to grip a rod. Not so helpful in your case but works well with my downstairs bits.”
“Touche,” Alya conceded.

“Fair point,” Marinette remarked.

“Uh huh,” Adrien murmured, having never considered his own rod-gripping abilities as a selling point in the bedroom.

“Three…” Nino paused, taking a bite of his un-touched sandwich as he grasped for this words. “I don’t know man… I just have this feeling Chat would treat me right. Like he’d be gone in the morning but still drop by for coffee every few weeks to catch up. Ladybug seems more like the type to give you one amazing night, ruin you for other women, then never return for round two, and I’m not sure if I could take that.”

Adrien, now dangerously pink, could only nod in silent agreement.

(Listen, there was only so much talk of his best friend wanting to bang his superhero self he could handle before he started to get a heart boner.

And maybe, maybe just a bit of a dick boner too.

A bro-ner if you will)

“You make some fair points,” Alya conceded, “but my original answer still stands. I’d let Ladybug do whatever she wanted to my body, even if it meant she abandoned me forever afterwards.”

“She’d never do that,” Marinette protested, her hand seeking Alya’s atop the table. “Ladybug loves your blog, and I’m sure if you two did happen to share a night of passion she would still keep in touch with you.”

“Oh Marinette,” Alya sighed, wiping away a fake tear. “That is the sweetest thing anyone has ever said to me.” Marinette smiled brilliantly, bringing her best friend’s hand up to press lips against knuckles, and Alya gasped with a falsely scandalized “Not in front of the kids!”

Ignoring Nino’s cough of “get a room!” the girls continued snickered amongst themselves, until eventually Marinette turned back to Adrien “So,” she said, eyes dancing with humor. “What about you Hot Stuff? Ladybug or Chat Noir?”

Adrien weighed his options. Chat Noir would be the safe answer but Ladybug would-

Wait.

... Hot Stuff???

Adrien reasoned he must have just heard Marinette wrong, but Alya and Nino’s equally stunned expressions suggested he wasn’t going as crazy as originally thought. Two brows arched behind two pairs of glasses, asking a silent question he could only answer with a shrug.

Seemingly oblivious to her friends’ mutual confusion, Marinette took an innocuous sip of her lemonade.

“Well,” Adrien began, not really sure what to make of his new nickname (or the way it made his insides flutter) “I’m gonna go with Alya on this one. Ladybug is... something.”

“Really?” Marinette asked, looking politely surprised. “You’re not tempted by Chat’s... staff expertise?”
Never breaking eye contact, her lips wrapped around the straw of her drink once more, and Adrien decided to wonder why someone would pack a straw in their lunch to begin with, rather than fixate on the way Marinette’s rounded cheeks turned concave with every pull.

(Because that was literally what happened when people used a straw, so there was really no reason for it to draw his attention like it did.)

Marinette continued on breezily, “I’ve seen enough of your swimsuit ads to know Chat’s staff expertise would come in handy.”

Alya’s choked gasp mixed with the sound of Nino’s surprised bark, whereas Adrien’s jaw was silent as it flopped open. Marinette continued to sip her lemonade.

“I… w-well...I mean... that would…”

Adrien trailed off when it became apparent words were not happening today.

“Plus there’s what Nino pointed out about Chat’s costume,” Marinette added, because there was no God and Adrien was put on this earth to suffer. “Judging by the belted tail and studded cuffs, I’ll bet that boy knows all kinds of fun things to do in the bedroom.”

“Um,” replied Adrien, sounding super intelligent and not at all distracted.

Most likely noticing the way his traitorous eyes had latched back onto her lips, Marinette popped the straw from her mouth, shifting it to the other side before sliding the glass in his direction. She inclined her head, smiling, and Adrien realized with unimaginable relief that she’d taken his staring to mean he wanted a sip. He nodded his thanks, accepting the glass on pure instinct... but every ounce of his short-lived relief evaporated at the sight of a perfect rosy ring stamped at the tip of the straw.

Of course Marinette, the person who just so happened to remind him most of his girlfriend, was wearing pink lipstick today. Of. Fucking. Course.

Cheeks burning, Adrien silently accepted his life for the hell it was and took a well-needed drink.

“So…” Nino began, offering Marinette a tentative fistbump. “Does this mean you choose Chat? Team Furry for the tie?”

“Oh no,” she laughed, waving him off. “I choose both.”

Lemonade, as Adrien was quick to learn, stung as it shot through one’s nostrils.

“Dude...” Alya said incredulously, thumping his back as Nino and Marinette gathered as many napkins as they could find.

“S-sorry!” Adrien choked, his strangled coughing drawing the attention of half the other people in the cafe. “Did... d-did you just say both?”

Marinette nodded, dabbing at the table with the most downright casual expression.

“As in... at the same time?”

“Yep.”

A pause, and then-
“You never said threesomes were an option!” Alya nearly yelled, drawing the attention of anyone who wasn’t already staring at their table.

“I never said they weren’t,” Marinette said, shrugging.

“I’m changing my answer,” Nino declared.

“Me too,” Alya agreed. “Who wouldn’t want to be the cream filling in that miraculous sandwich? Ladybug coming at you from the front, Chat Noir swooping in from behind…”

“One for each side,” Nino mused. “Chat doing the pole work while Ladybug tackles the upstairs…”

Adrien was a cool, fine, and normal boy who was not getting hot and bothered by the idea of his best friends banging him and his girlfriend.

Also, he was not hiding an erection beneath the table.

Marinette eyes found his as her lips found that fucking goddamned straw he was going to tear to shreds the moment she-

“Chat on his back while Ladybug and I make an absolute mess out of him~”

…

Adrien neither a cool, fine, nor normal boy and was definitely getting hot and bothered by the idea of his best friends banging him and his girlfriend.

Also, he was hiding an erection beneath the table.

“Ooooo la la,” Alya purred, elbow nudging Marinette as she fanned her face. “Interesting approach Mari! Very spicy. You think Chat would be into that?”

“Something tells me Chat Noir isn’t opposed to being the center of attention,” Marinette giggled, and Adrien must have been imagining the way her eyes kept finding his. “I mean obviously I’m nowhere near as experienced as Ladybug, but I think with her help I could really ring that kitten’s bell.”

Adrien gulped.

It was at that moment the universe must have decided he’d had enough for one day, as Alya’s alarm chimed it’s fifteen minute warning. His friends continued to chatter amongst themselves as they cleaned up their lunch, but Adrien didn’t contribute much to the conversation, too wrapped up in his own mind.

Ladybug’s fault, that was it. It had to be Ladybug’s fault. He was probably still wound up from their phone call this morning, and that’s why he suddenly couldn’t keep his cool around-

“What about you?” Marinette asked, and Adrien snapped from his musing only to realize they were the last two at the table. “Would you be down for a heroic threesome?”

‘Yes!’ Adrien’s libido screamed.

“I-I don’t know,” Adrien answered instead, clearing his throat when it cracked and ignoring Marinette’s giggle for his own personal sanity. “I mean… it’s not likely I’ll ever get the chance to anyways so…”

He trailed off, and Marinette hummed.
“That’s a shame,” she said, packing her lunch utensils neatly away in her bag. “I’m sure Ladybug would just love to have two handsome blondes in her bed.”

Marinette slid out of the booth, smoothing down her short (‘bafflingly short’ he noted, considering the weather) skirt and locking eyes with him over her shoulder. Embarrassed to be caught staring, Adrien forced himself to meet her gaze.

“I know I sure would…” she murmured, giving his body an obvious once-over before heading towards the door.

“What is your opinion on threesomes?”

There probably existed a billion more tactful ways to open up this conversation, but Adrien had never really had been known for his social grace.

Ladybug paused on the edge of roof, abandoning her jump to glance back at him in amusement. “I give you one handjob and you’re already trying to rope me into an orgy?”

“I’m not asking because I want one,” he rushed to amend. “I’m just curious.” He donned his most Chat-worthy smirk, aiming for light-heartedness when he said: “That’s my gimmick, remember?”

“Threesomes huh…” Ladybug wrapped her yo-yo up around her waist, effectively signalling a break in their patrol. “Well, if I was going to have one I’d probably want you there.”

Chat rolled his eyes. ‘Gee thanks.”

“Or I could kick you out and find a different model,” Ladybug threatened. “That Adrien Agreste fellow is looking handsomer by the day.”

“I think could live with that,” he laughed.

There was a beat of silence.

“A girl,” Ladybug mused, drawing a raised eyebrow from her partner. “Our hypothetical threesome? I’d want it to include another girl, I think. Just to add a little variety.”

Oh.

Oh she was actually taking this seriously.

“Sure, sure,” Chat agreed, suddenly feeling as though maybe he wasn't entirely prepared for this conversation. Mentally, physically, or spiritually.

“It’d have to be someone good at keeping secrets,” Ladybug continued. “Someone who is sweet and loyal… but has a bit of a naughty side. Don’t you think?”

Did he think? No, not lately.

“I like dark-haired girls. And an athletic body doesn’t hurt.”
Chat nodded distractedly. He knew Ladybug was bi in the same way he knew she was allergic to papaya, but he’d never really stopped to consider that she might have a specific taste in girls.

A taste that was sounding remarkably aligned with his own…

“Dark hair is pretty,” he murmured in agreement, silently marking another of his best friends off the completely hypothetical list of potential threesome partners.

This, of course, left only one person.

“Well anyways,” Ladybug chirped, slipping his baton out from it’s holster and using it to tap at his bottom until he strode to the edge of the roof, “you let me know if you ever find anyone who is willing to put up with us, but until then I’m afraid you’re stuck with just plain old me.”

“You’re already more than I could ever want,” Chat vowed softly, as much a reminder to himself as it was to her.

The cool parisian air did little to clear his racing mind, and he continued to be distracted for the remainder of the night. There was something… something eating at him, that he couldn’t quite parse. Something he couldn’t even identify as either good or bad yet, just insistent.

That nagging in his head grew especially loud when they passed the Dupain-Cheng Bakery, Chat pulling up short on his vault as Ladybug unexpectedly dropped to the rooftop. She strode across the balcony with the utmost of ease, untangling the complicated wind chime that hung from the awning like she’d done it a million times before and straightening the blanket flung across the back of the lounge chair.

“That was nice of you my Lady,” Chat remarked, that little spark of… whatever it was burning even brighter than before.

Ladybug shrugged, giving him a quick peck on the cheek as she passed. “Someone’s gotta do it.”

Moments later, she was off, leaving Chat to stew in his own tumultuous thoughts.

Chapter End Notes

I cut the phone sex section because it was getting too damn long, but I might post it as an alternate scene??
That strange nagging feeling followed Adrien throughout the night, filling his dreams with confusing images and scenarios that slipped sand-like from his mind the moment he awoke. All he could recall were brief flashes: A hint of inky black hair, sometimes worn up and sometime laid loose. A laugh-turned-stutter-turned flirtatious purr, whispered low in his ear. A strange shade of pink that looked red under moonlight, worn by a young woman with his mother’s smile and his heart in her hand.

Rising from his bed, Adrien ground his fists into his eye sockets, unable to shake the feeling he was just barely missing something important.

Speaking of: He really needed to find out how Ladybug was smuggling things into his locker. Yesterday had been a love letter. Today? A tupperware filled to the brim with all the sugary snacks he wasn’t allowed to eat at home. Adrien knew his partner could be stealthy when she wanted to, but surely Paris’ most recognizable figure sneaking onto a busy campus would draw attention from someone.

That is, if she were sneaking in at all…

Biting down on his biscotti, Adrien shook his head free of the thought. Certain... coincidences he’d been noticing lately were far from solid proof, and he had other things to dwell on besides lipstick colors and familiar French Lit textbooks tucked into the selfies his girlfriend had taken to sending him each morning. He could drive himself mad with theories, pushing pins into cork boards and connecting clues via red yarn, but it was an ultimately fruitless pursuit.

Surely if Ladybug were as close as Adrien suspected she was, it wouldn’t be long before she did something to reveal herself.

“Just so we’re clear… everyone here is madly infatuated with Marinette, right?”

A dozen heads nodded in distracted affirmation.

“And this isn’t considered voyeurism if we all keep our hands on the table?”

Twelve more nods.

“Awesome,” Alya breathed, eyes never leaving the heaven-sent display taking place across the courtyard. “Glad we’re all on the same page.”
It was a wide-spread phenomenon at their school; Had been since college really. Marinette Dupain-Cheng was the girl to crush on.

Whether it be with random acts of kindness (an encouraging note pinned to the locker of a stressed-out sophomore, a macaroon pressed into the palm of the soccer player who’d missed his goal at the last game, etc) or through sheer sunny demeanor, Marinette had somehow managed to wrap nearly the entire student body around her little finger. With an infectious personality and dazzling appearance, she was the type of girl to sneak right into someone’s heart, making herself at home before the owner even had a chance to protest.

She was an enigma, an anomaly that existed outside of the normal bounds of mere romantic and sexual orientation. Falling for Marinette didn’t make you anything… other than human, that is. And even though many of her admirers had since moved on, forging new relationships amongst themselves, it was still a universally understood rule that one never quite got over their “Mari-crush”.

Which is probably why her current position had drawn such a crowd.

Alya had been the first one to spot that blessed sight, elbowing Nino who in turn elbowed Adrien, who’d somehow tripped and fallen into Ivan who… well, you got the idea. It had taken all of two minutes for the founding members of the “Madly In Love With Marinette” club to congregate on and around one of the concrete tables that dotted the school’s inner courtyard. Far enough to avoid immediate detection but close enough to grant a front row seat to the show.

And boy, was it a show.

Legs folded delicately atop the bench, shoulders lounging against the backrest and head slightly ducked as she scanned the magazine before her, Marinette was looking criminally cute on this crisp fall day. With her flower printed sweater and boots adorned with tiny pink puffballs, hair falling loose around her shoulders, she painted an image that so deceptively adorable that it clashed almost jarringly with the less-than-innocent actions of her glossed up lips.

Lips that were currently teasing at the long, ridged, rainbow-striped lollipop that served as Marinette’s lunch.

“I just want everyone here to know that I’m simultaneously kink-shaming us all,” Nino announced, his eyes fixed upon the curiously-phallic candy concoction. “This is absolutely despicable behavior.”

“She’s got to know what she’s doing, right?” Alix interjected, perched atop Kim’s shoulders, her own eyes screwing up to survey the situation.

“She’s got to know what she’s doing?” Kim drawled from below. “It’s pretty obvious she knows what she’s doing.”

“Yeah but does she know?” came Juleka’s almost pitiful reply, one gloved hand swooping up to pull her bangs aside for a better view. The only answer she got was a collective intake of breath, the gathered teens leaning forward in anticipation as Marinette’s tongue snuck out to swipe lazily across the tip, inspiring another chorus of muffled groaning.

Her actions were mindless, effortless. It was obvious Marinette’s sole attention was zeroed in on her fashion magazine (probably the only reason they’d yet to been busted for peeping), but her inattentiveness did little to dull the downright masterful way she went at her mid-day snack. Alternating between idle (devastating) licks along the length and tiny (catastrophic) twirls of her tongue at the very top, Marinette was unwittingly pulling moves that would put a pornstar to shame. And when she let a single inch slip into her mouth, the subtle shift of her jaw hinted at some very
creative tongue action going on behind the scenes, an almost palpable shiver ran through the group.

“Alright, I’ll be the one to ask,” Alya sighed, as if she were about to shoulder an extraordinary burden, “What color?”

The understanding was immediate, no clarification necessary. A shroud of contemplation fell over the crowd.

You see, Marinette’s lollipop was comprised of six colors. One for each sinful inch of candy. It was red at the tip (as if the shape alone wasn’t suggestive enough) and purple at the base, following the flow of the rainbow as it radiated downward. So far, she had yet to venture past the warm tones, but the ardent peridots and steely indigos of places untouched sat in devious wait for her inevitable caress.

“At this point I’d give up a kidney to see yellow,” Nino admitted with an almost dreamy sigh.

“You’re underestimating her,” Alya assured him.

“Green,” Max piped up, clearing his throat from where his voice had cracked. “Given the average capacity of the female throat, cross analyzed with her age and experience, I calculate she’ll be able to reach the green stripe.”

A derisive snort sounded from the back. “Oh please! Thats-”

Chloe’s snide interjection was cut off by a chorus of shushes, leaving her to stew in silence.

(Shes could deny it all she wanted, but the fact she’d still stuck around for Marinette’s little display only confirmed her supposed “dislike” for her classmate was wholly fabricated.)

“I think she could take it down to purple,” Mylene cut in, her voice soft but insistent, “Six inches is not that hard to handle.”

Now that almost drew a few stares, but it was at that exact moment Marinette decided to return to licking at her treat, and any questions over Mylene’s supposed know-how quickly died upon the tongues that might have formed them.

Speaking of tongues…

Eyes never veering from her reading, Marinette tilted her head, dragging the lollipop length-wise across her tongue. It spanned the whole damn rainbow, that clever little organ, dipping into the shallow ridges the spiraled along the confection before lapping at the sweet flavor. It tasted, teased, explored…

And Adrien knew he was so fucked.

He knew he should look away, if not out of deference to their friendship than out of respect for his own very committed relationship, and yet his eyes remained glued alongside his classmates as they spectated with bated breath. He tried futilely, for perhaps the millionth time since the start of Marinette’s little snack break, to focus on anything but her mouth. He tried to focus on the homework beneath his hands, the kwami snoring in his breast pocket. Hell, he’d even gotten so desperate as to run through the benchmarks of quantum theory! But alas, no amount of theoretical physics was enough to occupy his mind, it would seem. Not with Marinette “Down-To-Bang-Both-Ladybug-And-Chat-Noir” Dupain-Cheng performing fellatio on a sugar stick a mere courtyard away.
“Orange!” Rose squeaked, voicing the thoughts shared by the group that surround her. “She’s hit orange!”

And she certainly had.

Adrien locked up in place, swallowing hard as he watched Marinette’s mouth wrap around the tip of the lollipop then sink down a good two inches. It was devious, the way she went at her treat. Devious, yet unintentionally so. And something about the notion this girl could render an entire squadron of teens to their metaphorical (and in the case of Nathaniel, literal) knees spoke volumes.

“Yellow,” Nino corrected in a pitchy voice, removing his hat and running his fingers thought the short hair beneath, “That’s definitely yellow territory.”

She sunk lower still, and Adrien was devastated to find he had to bite back an honest-to-God whimper.

“Green,” Rose breathed with a subtle undertone of pride, “looks like she bottoms out at gre-“

“B-blue!” came the distinctive voice of a certain hunched-over redhead, almost drowned out by the cacophony of stifled groans and gasps that rang out in response to Marinette dipping impossibly farther down.

It was a certifiable Code Blue, people. This was not a fucking drill.

Marinette’s cheeks hollowed, plastering to the sides of the lollipop within, and when her nimble fingers reached out to twirl the wooden stick between two digits, the gathered students warbled with another wave of wrecked and appreciative sounds. It didn’t matter that there were members of the group not equipped with the kind of... well... tools one might associate with the girl’s actions. It didn’t matter that half of the onlookers were already in relationships (some staring right alongside their partner.)

And Adrien tried to tell himself it didn’t matter that he felt a stirring low in his gut when Marinette’s eyelids fluttered shut. What he felt was inconsequential, purely physical.

“Yes!” Alya hissed out triumphantly, watching as her best friend finally breached purple, “Damn, that’s my girl! C.N better watch his fucking back, because I might just have to snap her right out from under him.”

“Or atop him,” Nino murmured, earning a few affirmative hums at the proposed mental picture.

Meanwhile, Marinette just continued to idly suck away, now lightly pumping and twirling the lollipop as it slid between her lips. She’d obliterated the line between ‘suggestive’ and ‘cheeky’, now charging straight into ‘erotic’ territory, and Adrien found himself in urgent need of a tall glass of ice water (possibly cold shower as well.)

His last hazy thought before the bell rang, effectively halting Marinette’s performance and drawing a chorus of complaints from the gathered crowd, was that C.N was one lucky guy.

Adrien watched, heartrate slowly descending back into it regular pulse, as Marinette withdrew the lollipop, it’s candy coating glistening with crystalline clarity in the sunlight. He watched as she slowly licked her lips of the lingering flavor, watched her throat bob as she swallowed the last bit of sweetness and finally had to stop watching as she leisurely pushed herself up from the bench to regroup with her friends.

“Scramble!” Kim commanded, he and about half of the others situated around the table rushing to
make themselves scarce. Still, a few people lingered, perhaps hoping to get a line in with the object of their infatuation. Adrien forcibly glued his attention to the worksheet below.

“I swear these lunch breaks keep getting shorter and shorter,” Marinette announced as she rejoined them at the table. “I hardly have time to finish anything!”

(Her voice was too sweet, Adrien thought a bit plaintively, her tone too innocent in the wake of her prior actions.)

“Oh I don’t think you need to worry about your ability to finish things,” Alya murmured under her breath, giving Adrien a suggestive elbow to the sides. He choked on air.

“You’re keeping it?” Nino asked skeptically, eyeballing the way Marinette wrapped her lollipop before stuffing it in her purse.

Marinette shrugged. “My French teacher is pretty lax when it comes to eating in class-“

If anyone noticed the way Adrien suddenly seized up, there was never a mention.

“-I’ll just finish it then.”

“Are you sure you’ll even want it later?” Nino asked.

“Please,” Marinette said with a dismissive wave of her hand, the other yanking her magazine out from under her armpit, “I could go at that thing for hours.”

There was a spattering of stifled coughing, accompanied by the swift exit of the lingering crowd, and suddenly it was just Marinette’s three best friends that remained. Wide eyed and gaping at her double edged response.

“H-hours?” Adrien heard himself stutter out, and was immediately hit with the overwhelming urge to slam his head against the table in regret. This was not a conversation to be having with his sweet, kind, innocent, sexy -platonic, he meant to say platonic!- friend. Even if she had put on what could arguably be classified as a soft-core porno right before his eyes.

Marinette turned to Adrien, her lips (‘DO NOT THINK ABOUT HER LIPS’) quirking up into a pleasant smile as she slid her magazine down into her shoulder bag. The publication was still folded open to the page she’d left off on, and Adrien felt his throat run dry as he saw the word “Gabriel” printed in a dignified font across the header...

As well as the image of his smirking, leather-clad self nestled beneath it.

“Hours~” Marinette purred, granting Adrien a final, inscrutable look before turning to slowly saunter away.

The noise of the busy hallways was perhaps the only thing keeping Marinette on her feet.

At this point she was practically a ghost. A ghost running on caffeine, sugar, and the desire to not fail her mid-terms. Between getting up early to help her parents with the seasonal rush in the morning and sneaking into a certain boyfriend’s bedroom late at night, she’d been surviving on an average of four hours of sleep per night for the past week, and it was beginning to take its toll. To top it all off,
she’d completely forgotten to pack a lunch today, meaning she’d had to scavenge her locker for something remotely edible. Though, in the end, that mistake had actually worked in her favor.

Marinette hadn’t even planned on using the unicorn lollipop she’d bought at a school fundraiser a few weeks back in her grand seduction, but then moment she’d spotted Adrien (alongside the majority of her class) watching her from across the courtyard, she just knew she had to put on a show. It was easy, really, and boy was it effective. In fact, Marinette was a little disappointed in herself for not thinking of it earlier. Discovering the Gabriel ad half-way through the magazine she was browsing had just been the icing on the cake, and she was pretty sure she’d never forget the expression on Adrien’s face when when he’d realized what she’d been looking at whilst she enjoyed her mid-day treat. It was very similar to the expression he wore now, watching her intently as she entered the classroom.

“Hey there, Adrien,” Marinette said sweetly, taking her assigned seat to his left. Adrien returned her greeting with a quick nod, his eyes darting almost imperceptibly to her bag before attaching themselves to the textbook in front of him, and Marinette almost snickered at just how very bad of a poker face he had. The way his body stiffened as she pulled out her half-finished lollipop, his Adam's apple bobbing as he very visibly swallowed, was so simultaneously expectant and agitated that she had to ask herself: Had she crossed the line between flirtatious and needlessly cruel?

Unfortunately, Marinette didn’t get the chance to ponder the cruelty of her seduction before the faint sound of a nearby akuma echoed through the open window, spurring her to action. This time neither the teacher nor Adrien tried to stop her as she bolted from the classroom, assumedly headed for the nurse’s office to treat the stomach ache she quite suddenly complained about, so finding a nearby janitor’s closet and suiting up was no problem. Ladybug was already two blocks over and closing in on the akuma when Chat Noir caught up, greeting her with a wave as he vaulted alongside her. From there it was a simple matter of discovering the who (delivery boy) and the why (non-existent tipper) of the situation before locating where the akuma was trapped (hat) and using lucky charm (clothes hanger) to nab it. When all was said and done the battle took a neat half hour, leaving two victorious heroes to wave for the cameras before leaping over the nearest building and out of public sight.

“Pound it,” Ladybug trilled, hoping her exhaustion wasn’t evident in her voice. She held her fist out for their customary bump, expectant, but it never came.

Instead Chat grabbed her hand and twined their finger together, his eyes finding hers. He looked at her, really looked at her, as if searching for something in her face, and Ladybug squirmed under his appraisal, unable to escape the feeling he knew more than he was letting on.

“What?” she finally asked, aiming for playfulness but unable to quell her nervous chuckle. Now slowly circling her, Chat shrugged, as if his behavior were completely normal and not the actions of a psychopath. “What???”

“What???” he finally answered, giving her face one last inscrutable sweep before he shook his head free of whatever thought had come over him. In its place sat an almost bemused smile, turned dangerous by the curiosity still lingering behind his eyes. “I just missed you is all.”

Suddenly, Chat leaned down, wrapping an arm around her slender waist to haul her in for a kiss, and she forgot all about her lethargy as she instinctively melted into the embrace. His tongue was uncharacteristically insistent, she thought. Almost desperate in the way he sought to explore her. Ladybug was used to being the aggressor in these types of situations, especially since the incident by the billboard had made him wary to initiate contact, but the sudden passion was far from unappreciated. Her eyelids fluttered shut as she basked in the sensation.

“You taste so sweet today,” Chat murmured between kisses. "Like candy."
Ladybug stiffened. Surely that was a coincidence, right? Surely he wasn't referencing anything in particular. Just a causal observation, or one of his usual love-sick musings.

The feeling of clawed fingers playfully pinching at her backside broke her from her reverie.

“Someone's needy today,” Ladybug teased through a breathless laugh. "I wonder what's got you all wound up,” she mused, as if she didn't already know.

“Can I not thank my girlfriend for bringing me breakfast?” he countered, eyes once again finding her lips seconds before his mouth followed. They shared another brief but heated kiss, before Chat broke their contact with a contented hum. “Also, how do you keep sneaking me things?”

Ladybug bit down on a smile. “I have my ways…”

At that, Chat Noir cocked his head, giving her face another obvious sweep, and this time she met his appraisal with confidence, almost daring him to make the connection.

‘C’mon Kitty, you’re so close…’

Her miraculous beeped.

“We should probably get going,” Chat said after a short eternity, and Ladybug dispelled the breath she hadn’t been aware of holding.

“Yeah, you’re right,” she conceded, reaching reluctantly for her yo-yo. Before she could grab it, his gloved hand grasped hers, bringing it up to feather his customary kiss across her knuckles. Ladybug's cheeks bloomed pink.

“See you later?” Chat asked hopefully, giving her fingers a quick squeeze. His expression still held a curiosity she wasn’t quite sure how to react to, inspiring nerves and giddiness alike and driving her to give him one final peck on the lips.

“Sooner than you think,” Ladybug whispered to his retreating back, her heart beating oddly as she watched him vault off towards the school.

Nathalie was not pleased. That much was obvious. And when Nathalie wasn’t pleased she made sure everyone around her wasn’t pleased either.

“Your behavior tonight was unacceptable. Completely unbefitting of an Agreste.”

“Really?” Adrien replied, slurring just the teensiet bit as he focused on crossing through the front door without tripping on the door jamb. He made it past in one piece, though the sight of the winding staircase between him and his bedroom made his temples pound even harder than the five… or was it six?... glasses of champagne he’d downed at the gala. “I could’ve sworn getting drunk and making a scene was a family tradition.”

“Don’t start,” Nathalie warned, hints of venom seeping into her usual clipped tone.

Adrien stayed silent, but rolled his eyes at her hypocrisy. Oh sure, when his father went on a cognac bender and had a shouting match with a foreign dignitary (complete with a toppled bronze bust and no less than six destroyed paintings) he was a “passionate discussionist who wasn’t afraid to make
his voice heard”. When his mother drank mimosas by the pitcher-full and wound up face-down in a bistro planter box at 10:38 on a Tuesday morning she was “a typical young starlette enjoying her time off between movie shoots”. But God forbid Adrien lose track of how much champagne he’d drank and accidentally stumble a bit when he’d stood to accept the philanthropist (ha!) award on behalf of his currently abroad father. Hell, it wasn’t like he was hammered! He was just… a bit more buzzed than what was usually appropriate for a charity banquet. So sue him.

"You will go straight to bed and we will further discuss this in the morning,” his handler instructed, as if he were some child who needed scolding. She didn't even wait for his response before she turned on her heel and made for her own quarters, leaving him alone to stew.

It was through sheer luck and determination Adrien made it up the steps unscathed, staying steady on his feet till he finally plopped down in his desk chair, kicking his shoes off and loosening his tie in one fluid motion (if clumsy) motion. He didn’t like the way his head swam with the movement, and personally didn’t see the appeal in being drunk. He’d only drank because he’d been in public, surrounded by people he would never choose to surround himself with, and had been expected to deliver a speech on how selfless and altruistic his dear old father was.

As you can imagine, it’d taken a great deal of time and embellishment on Adrien’s part to scrape up a few decent words about the man.

This was, of course, written in his own personal time, of which Adrien had roughly ten minutes of each day. Between classes, shoots, tutoring, extracurriculars, homework, and miraculous-related activity his schedule was booked solid, and any shred of free time was usually reserved for sleeping. “Usually” being the key word here, as the last few night had be occupied by visits from-

“Ladybuuuuggg~” Adrien crooned, smiling dopily at his desktop background. It was the mother of all collages, made exclusively for him by none other than Alya (aka Ladybug’s second biggest fan) and he adored it. That beautiful clusterfuck of roughly 122 Ladybug’s in different action poses never failed to make him grin. Never failed to make him love and cherish and miss his darling girlfriend with a fervor only heightened by his slight inebriation. She’d been ravenous for attention lately, much to Adrien’s delight, and the fact she hadn’t contacted him at all tonight was suddenly cause for concern.

It was late, nearing 2 am, and Adrien was tired. Tired and tipsy and desperate to hear that lovely voice he so missed in Ladybug’s absence.

So it’s understandable, really, that he might be a bit clumsy in pulling his phone out of his breast pocket. Understandable that his finger would accidently press Facetime instead of Call. Understandable that he wouldn’t even recognize his mistake until she picked up.

...Until Marinette Motherfucking Dupain-Cheng picked up.

Chapter End Notes

lmao anyways see you next year :)
Chapter 40

Chapter Notes

A reveal?? In my ridiculously slow-burn train wreck of a puberty fic? It's more likely than you think.

lmao but anyways fun fact i made myself cry while writing this chapter enjoy

See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Chat...?” Marinette asked in Ladybug’s voice, peering out from beneath Ladybug’s contact name, blinking Ladybug’s gorgeous blue eyes, and yawning with Ladybug’s perfect lips.

Somewhere, beneath his soul-shaking revelation, Adrien figured he probably should’ve put this together sooner.

Like a prey animal cornered, Adrien froze, gripping his phone so tightly his knuckles went ghost white. Some nameless emotion at the chaotic crossroad of pure shock and utter elation swirled typhoon-like around his pounding heart, mixing with his wine buzz in the best/worst of ways. He stared at the spectre before him, waiting for her to recognize the insane situation they were in and react, but no reaction came. Marinette just continued to squint blearily through screen, seemingly unaware of what was going on.

“Hha-mgh… ughh, h-hey!” Adrien finally blurted, mouth dry and words cracking beneath the unhinged laughter that threatened to escape him. “You… y-you’re… oh, fuck.”

Marinette rubbed her eyes. “Wus wrong?”

“Nothing!” he piped, trying to sound cool and sincere despite the fact he was experiencing no less than fifteen crises simultaneously. “I just… called to say I love you?” Adrien cringed at the way it came out, almost as a question rather than the absolute truth it was, but if Marinette noticed his odd tone she didn’t comment.

“Aw, I love you too, Kitty,” she cooed, and damn if her sleepy smile didn’t make Adrien’s heart nearly beat its way right out of his chest. “I hope you have nice dreams.”

“I will,” he promised, though he foresaw a long night of overthinking ahead of him. “I’ll let you get back to sleep now. Sorry I woke you up.”

Marinette yawned again, burrowing further beneath her blanket. “S’okay. I like hearing your voice.”

“I like hearing your voice too,” Adrien responded, hushed. Awed. Half-unbelieving that any of this was even occurring. “Now get to bed, bug.”

Too drowsy to even call him out on the pun, Marinette whispered a soft “g’night” before the screen faded to black, and Adrien stared at his own reflection in the glass for what seemed like hours, trying to decipher what the everloving fuck had just happened. It was late, almost 3 am, and he was tired. Exhausted, really. Though his body remained abuzz with a jarring entanglement of excitement, disbelief, and drunkenness, his poor overworked brain was begging for the sweet release of sleep. Perhaps even a small coma. So he did what any sensible person would do in his situation:
Left the problem for Future Adrien to deal with, and went to bed.

Future Adrien groaned, loathing Past Adrien with every fiber of his aching being. Not only had that bastard left him to deal with the ramifications of last night's phone call alone, he’d left him to do it while nursing a hangover.

What a prick.

“Good morning,” Plagg greeted brightly, his tone far too jovial given the circumstances. Too knowing. “Sleep well?”

Adrien grunted in answer, burying his face under his pillow. Judging by the amount of light streaming through his windows, he figured it must be around noon, but the fact he’d just woken up meant it was technically morning, and he wasn’t in the mood for Plagg’s teasing. Especially not after the night he’d had.

“That bad?” Plagg drawled. “Can’t imagine why. Not like you were on the phone all night talking to your little girlfriend.” Floating down to make sure he was being heard, Plagg poked at his human’s prone form, tail lashing for attention. “Speaking of, what are you planning to do about all that?”

“I don’t know. Probably die.”

“Wow, you hate Marinette that much?”

“What?” Adrien croaked, flinging his pillow aside to glare up at the kwami.

“Marinette?” Plagg clarified. “The girl who’s Ladybug? I sorta got the impression you liked her, but if you’re this upset about finding out…”

“I’m not upset,” Adrien argued. “Marinette is great! She’s awesome, I love her!”

Silence rang in the wake of his words, and everything seemed to click into place.

‘Oh.’

“I love Marinette,” he whispered to himself, like it was a secret. Like it was a revelation. He grinned, and that same giddy excitement from the night before came rushing back, only this time without the shock and disbelief to sour it. Marinette was Ladybug! Of course she was! She was his friend and his partner and she—

“She was flirting with me!” Adrien exclaimed, sitting up so fast his head nearly spun clean off.

“She has been for the last three years but congrats on finally noticing,” Plagg deadpanned.

Adrien ignored both him and the pounding of temples, running through a mental checklist of the little coincidences he’d been trying to ignore. The pictures, the flirting, Marinette’s downright bizarre behavior—it all made sense now. All her little “slip-ups” weren’t slip-ups at all; Ladybug was far too
careful for that kind of carelessness. Which could only mean that he was supposed to notice the coincidences, that she wanted him to connect the dots.

Adrien laughed at the absurdity of it all, too excited to be as upset as he probably should've been, when something else dawned on him. “You!” he accused, stabbing a finger in Plagg’s direction.

“Me?” the kwami echoed, nonplussed.

“You’ve been helping her!”

Plagg shrugged. “So I snuck a few things in your locker. Big deal. It was her idea. Mostly.”

Adrien’s eyes narrowed. “You’re a demon.”

“Some cultures have called me that, yes. Why? You looking to make a deal?” Plagg’s voice grew conspiratorial, nose twitching in fiendish glee. “Maybe exact a little revenge?”

The offer gave Adrien pause.

For a brief moment, he imagined it: Giving Ladybug a taste of her own medicine. Teasing her to the point of combustion. Dangling her on the end of a string as he sat grinning on the other side. He could play dumb, pretend he didn’t remember facetime her, and ignore the increasingly obvious clues she was sending his way. He could flirt and feign until she finally broke down and told him the truth. She more than deserved a little toying with.

“Yessss~” Plagg hissed, floating close to whisper in Adrien’s ear. “Embrace the chaos~”

Like an errant soap bubble, the spell popped, and suddenly Adrien knew exactly what he had to do.

“No, no more chaos,” he declared, tossing his covers off and rising to his feet. Breathing deeply through the heave of his stomach, Adrien checked his calendar app. Today was his first Sunday off in months. He could easily stay in bed until it was time to sleep again, nursing his hangover and agonizing over what should be done about all this, but his mind was made up.

This ended today.

“Plagg, claws out!”

*Screeeeeeeeck*

The trapdoor wailed mournfully as Marinette climbed up to her rooftop balcony. Something to add to her growing list of chores, she supposed. Superheroes who regularly sneak out at night needed a quiet route of exit, but perhaps she could put it off till tomorrow. It was such a lovely day. Too lovely for menial tasks like oiling hinges. The October air had a crisp, cool bite to it, made pleasant by the early-afternoon sun, and Marinette breathed the feeling of Fall into her very lungs. Yes, definitely a chore for another time.
It was a rare find, an Autumn day without rain. She couldn’t remember the last time she’d had to actively water the plants on her terrace, but the roses had been wilting as of late and the lavender could use a nice spritz as well, so here she was, spray bottle in hand. Humming softly to herself, Marinette lifted the leaves of her tomato sprout one by one, coating every inch of the plant in a fine mist. The droplets clung to the pulpy hairs that lined the vines in a dazzling spider web pattern, and so transfixed by the sunlight playing off its surface was Marinette that she almost didn’t hear the dull thud on the roof behind her.

Almost.

“Whoa!” Chat Noir yelped, bringing his hands up in a placating motion. His eyes zeroed in on the spray bottle Marinette now brandished as a weapon, tail lashing idly behind him before wrapping around the wrought iron railing that lined the balcony. “Don’t shoot!”

“Chat Noir,” Marinette breathed, relaxing from her instinctive battle stance to press one hand to her pounding chest. “Wha… What are you doing here?”

“Just in the neighborhood. Thought I might drop by and say hi.” His lip twitched up at one corner. “If you’re going to punch me again, go for the left jaw. My right side is still aching from last time.”

Marinette’s cheeks flamed at the memory. “Maybe if you didn’t sneak up on me I wouldn’t punch you.”

“Maybe I like it when you hurt me,” Chat countered, still smiling that goddamn cryptic smile she just couldn’t get a read on. Marinette tried, futilely, to find something in his expression, some indication of why he was here and how much he actually knew, but it was no use. For all the time they’d spent as partners, both platonic and otherwise, Chat Noir still knew how to bluff like a champ.

Luckily, so did she.

“Didn’t know you were into that sort of thing,” Marinette remarked, keeping her voice balanced on the razor’s edge of neutral and playful. It wasn’t a flirtation exactly, but it wasn’t not a flirtation either. More of a litmus test for how the rest of this conversation was going to go. Schrödinger’s Pickup Line, if you will.

“I’m into a lot of things you don’t know about,” Chat Noir responded, hopping up on that metaphorical tightrope right alongside her. “What about you? Got any… proclivities you’d like to share?”

“Not with a stranger.”

“Well then, it’s a good thing we aren’t strangers, huh?”

If her pulse leapt then, Marinette didn’t let it show. She simply hummed, gliding past him to begin misting the bonsai tree towards the back of the terrace.

“C’mon,” Chat cajoled, trailing behind her. “Fiesty girl like you’s gotta have some fantasies floating around in that head of yours. Perhaps about a certain strong, sexy hero of Paris…?”

“Perhaps,” Marinette said. “But it wouldn’t be proper to talk about Ladybug like that. Considering
she is your girlfriend after all."

Her view of leaves and branches was suddenly replaced with his smirking face. “What’s your opinion on threesomes?”

Water, it seemed, wasn't much of a deterrent for this particular cat, as Chat’s roguish expression stayed dutifully intact even as she delivered a point-blank spritz to the center of his mask.

“Why are you really here, Chat Noir?” Marinette asked, ignoring the way her hands shook as she placed them atop her hips.

Chat Noir seemed to mull the question over, tapping one finger to the bottom of his chin in contemplation. He looked at her, shook his head, then scanned the balcony before his gaze snagged on the planter box. A light bulb must’ve gone off somewhere in that head of his because he crossed the space in two steps, quickly locating the biggest bloom and reaching down to grasp it.

“I’m here,” Chat began, snapping the delicate stem between his claws, “because I like being around you.”

Ignoring the fact he’d just slaughtered one of her prized roses, Marinette watched him hoist the flower up for examination, his green eyes tracing each and every petal before flitting over to land on her face. He smiled.

“One might even say I love being around you.”

Much as she’d like to think she was past the point of infatuation, Marinette couldn’t help but blush as he slotted the flower behind her left ear, her breath catching at the simple intimacy of the act. It was a cliche move, to be sure, but Chat Noir had a particular knack for making even the most overplayed moves seem exhilarating. Sensitive, charming, wonderful dork that he was.

“I’m here because you’re sweet,” he continued, gloved fingers still resting against the curve of her jaw in the most distracting way. “Because you’re fun, talented, beautiful...”

He knew. He had to know. There’s no way Chat Noir would be acting like this, saying these things if he didn’t.

“...and way too devious for your own good.”

Despite the gravity of the situation, Marinette had to bite down a grin, though it seemed she wasn’t quick enough on the bluff. Without warning, Chat’s smile hooked a hard right into smirk territory, and he began to slowly circle her, full on cat-and-mouse style.

“I’m here because you’ve been getting bold,” he purred, so close to her ear she could feel his breath stir the hairs of the back of her head. His hand on her shoulder began a slow path down her spine, claws occasionally catching in the delicate knit of her cardigan before slipping inside her belt loop. His next words were whispered directly in her ear. “Because I’m not nearly as clueless as you seem to think I am...”

This was it. The moment she’d been psyching herself up for for weeks. Gathering her courage, Marinette turned in Chat’s arms, locking their gazes with fierce determination. Old feelings of inadequacy clawed at the surface of her nerves, hissing a thousand reminders of just how badly this could all go wrong, but for once Marinette found it easy to tune them out.
She trusted Adrien. With her life, with her heart. Surely she could trust him with the rest.

“I’m guessing this means you know I’m Ladybug.”

Whatever reaction she’d been expecting, what came next wasn't it.

“You’re what?!” Chat shrieked, feline green eyes blowing so wide they nearly turned black. His hands flew from her body as if burned by her touch, one grasping at his heaving chest while the other braced against the balcony rail to keep himself upright, and Marinette felt as though the earth had opened up beneath her.

“I-I thought! I… that you…!” she stammered, frantic, looking around as if someone could help pull her out from the bottomless pit she’d dug herself into.

This was the disaster scenario! The one situation she’d been trying to avoid this whole time! She thought she’d eased him into it, dropped enough hints to make sure this wouldn’t come as a surprise, but she was wrong. She was wrong and fucked and now the love of her life was... was...

Biting on his lip to keep from laughing?

Marinette blinked, stunned but somehow not surprised. “Why you little—”

Chat Noir exploded, doubling over as unbridled laughter shook him from ear to tail. Hands braced on his knees, he gasped a great lungful of air, glancing up at her shocked expression only to fall apart all over again, nearly rolling at his own childish trick. Trying to recover from her emotional whiplash, a boneless Marinette collapsed back against the ledge where her smaller planters sat. Her poor heart still beat so violently it threatened to escape her ribs, only now for an entirely different reason. Here she was, watching her dork of a boyfriend laugh at his own dumb prank.

And she was so in love.

“Y-You should’ve—” Gasp. “—seen—” Gasp. “—the l-look on your face!” Chat cackled, wiping tears of mirth as they spilled out from behind his mask.

“That was cruel,” Marinette groused, poking her lip out in an attempt at a pout. It was difficult, considering how contagious his smile was, but she managed.

“So is performing fellatio on a lollipop,” Chat Noir shot back, sauntering over and plopping down on the ledge beside her. “And teasing me with hypothetical threesomes that will never happen. And flirting with me when you knew I couldn’t flirt back. And making my life a complicated, horny hellscape.”

With each offense Marinette sunk further into her collar, retreating from his accusatory stare. Her plan had been solid—it had worked! She'd drawn her little treasure map and Adrien had followed it right to her door, but when he framed it like that her methods did start to seem a bit cruel.

“I’m sorry,” she apologized, facing him so he could see the apology in her expression, hear the sincerity of her words. “For how this all happened. Tikki told me there were better ways to do this. Much more mature ways. I know I should’ve listened to her b-but I couldn’t…”

Ah, anxiety. Welcome back to the fold. You were not missed.
"Marinette?" Chat prompted, the humor in his eyes now replaced with worry. His hands found hers where they clutched atop her knees, drawing her fingers between his until she relaxed them.

"It scared me to think you might not want this anymore after you found out," Marinette admitted, voice rough. "I thought—" She shook her head. "I-I don’t know what I thought."

Chat’s mask creased in worry, his thumb swiping soothing arcs along her shaking hands. "Please talk to me."

Marinette gnawed her lip. "I was worried the way you cared about Ladybug and the way you cared about Marinette wouldn’t... match up," she began, trying to put all the thoughts and fears that kept her from this for so long into words. "You—Adrien, were always nice to me, but it was never romantic. I know that. I thought maybe, after you found out I was Ladybug, you’d want to go back to just being friends, which you have every right to do! I just—" Marinette sucked in a harsh breath, looking down at her lap. "I was selfish. I wanted to have you for a little while longer. J-Just in case."

"Bug—"

"And I realize this is complicated," she powered on, cutting off whatever he was about to say. She couldn’t hear it. Not until she got this all out. "I know I’ve made mistakes, and treated you unfairly. If you need some time to step back and examine things I get it. I can give you space. And if you decide you don’t want to b-be with me any more..."

Marinette didn’t know how to finish that thought, so she didn’t. The balcony went still, silent aside from the soft tinkling of her windchimes, and what couldn’t have been more than three seconds passed as an eternity.

"I don’t think this is complicated at all," Chat finally replied. "Ladybug’s my partner, Marinette’s my friend, both are the same person, and I love her.” Three leather clad fingers slipped gently beneath her jaw, tilting her face until she was forced to confront the sincerity in his expression. “I love you.”

Simple. How did he make everything seem so simple? How, with three little words, was he able to both break her into a million pieces and stitch her back together in the same instant? How?

Marinette would probably never know how Adrien miraculously loved her the exact way she needed to be loved, but that didn’t stop her from thanking every lucky star that he did. Didn’t stop her from burying her face in his neck and finally, finally allowing herself the moment of vulnerability she’d feared for so long. Months of worry, compacted by her own knack for fixating on the worst possible outcome, left her body in the form of tears, welling hot in her eyes before dripping down her cheeks and onto his suit.

"I didn’t say that to make you cry," Chat laughed, but it was a fragile thing. Choked.

"Stupid PMS," Marinette blubbered and he chuckled again, somewhat steadier this time. She loved the way it rumbled out from the very center of his chest, radiating up to where her head rested atop his shoulder. She loved the way his arm wrapped effortlessly around her waist, tucking her in close. She loved him. A lot.

"You alright?" Chat asked once the bulk of her tears had died out. His hand continued to rub soothing circles against the middle of her back, and with how emotionally drained she felt Marinette feared she might fall asleep on the spot.
“Hmm,” she hummed in affirmation, leaning into his warmth when a sudden cool breeze invaded the balcony. “Are you surprised?”

Marinette felt more than saw him shake his head. “I was a little bit at first, but it seems kinda obvious now.

“What gave me away?”

“Well, I’d had my suspicions for a while, but I think facetimeing while you were half-asleep really nailed it down.”

Marinette shot out of his embrace like a bat out of hell, her eyebrows following suit as they launched themselves skyward. “We what?!”

“Facetimed. It’s like calling but we see each other.”

“When?”

“Last night,” Chat informed her, chipper as could be. “Naturally I was freaking out, but you didn't even notice what was happening. It was kinda cute, actually. Are you always that oblivious when you’re tired?”

“No,” Marinette defended, racking her brain for any memory of answering her phone last night only to come up empty. “I’ve just been too busy to sleep lately.”

“Busy seducing me into insanity, you mean?” Chat clarified. Marinette chuckled nervously under his accusatory stare. “You’re not off the hook for that, by the way.”

“I figured,” she sighed, putting on her most contrite expression. “For what it’s worth, I’m really sorry. I didn’t mean to tease you.”

Chat’s mask hitched at one corner.

“Okay so maybe I did mean to tease you a little bit, but you hardly seemed put off by it!”

“Oh darn it you got me,” he bemoaned, throwing his hands up in mock surrender. “I like it when my girlfriend sends me topless pics and flaunts her lack of a gag reflex. Lock me away, boys!”

Marinette sputtered. “I was not topless!”

“So you were wearing an invisible shirt?”

“My arm was there! I was covered!”

“Barely,” Chat said, unable to hide his grin. “And topless or not, you’re still in trouble, Little Lady.”

“Oh am I?” Marinette replied, intrigued by the direction this conversation was headed. Eager to see what a week's worth of winding up would earn her. Emboldened by his words, she leaned closer on their makeshift bench, fingers snaking up to flick the bell at her kitty’s throat.

Ding.

“How do you plan on punishing me?” she purred. Chat’s eyes grew wide, first glancing down at the hand fiddling with his collar then swooping up to meet her hooded gaze.
“How, uh—” He cleared his throat. “How do you think I should punish you?”

‘God he’s so cute when he’s flustered.’

Marinette wet her lips. “C’mere and find out~”

She leaned in, slowly, savoring the way his breath caught. She enjoyed the way his adam’s apple bobbed in anticipation, the way his hands lightly came to rest atop her hips. Her eyes fluttered shut as she felt his breath play across her lips, their surface aching for the kiss she’d probably never grow tired of, and Marinette waited patiently for him to finally close the distance, counting down in her head.

3…

2…

Chat suddenly wrenched himself back.

“No. Nope. I can’t do this,” he announced, nervously rubbing his palms up and down the length of his thighs. Marinette’s gut plummeted through the bottoms of her feet, anxiety flooding her veins like a virus. This was it. He’d changed his mind. He didn’t want to be with her at all and this was how it all fell apart.

“No! No no no! That is not what I meant at all!” Chat blurted, as if he could read her very thoughts. He cursed when he saw the glint of fear in her eyes, quickly bringing his hands up to cup her face. “Hey! Hey look! I love you! I love you so so so much!” As if to prove his point, he began peppering her cheeks with obnoxious, smacking kisses, refusing to let up until a relieved Marinette pushed him off.

“Okay okay!” she giggled, her gut slowly returning to it proper place. She fixed him with a serious look. “Tell me what’s bothering you.”

Chat sighed. “I know this is stupid, but it feels like I’m cheating on you.”

“Because I look like Marinette instead of Ladybug?” Marinette clarified. Chat nodded sheepishly. “Do you want me to transform?”

"No," he answered. “It’s just... I know I’ve been dating Ladybug-you for a while now, and I know you’re the same person regardless if you’re wearing a mask or not, but after being friends with Marinette-you for so long it seems weird that I’m able to just kiss you out of the blue. I feel like I haven’t wooed you enough to deserve it, you know?

“Wooed me?”

“Wooed me?”

“Well yeah. Chat-me has been flirting with Ladybug-you since we first meet, but Adrien-me hasn’t flirted Marinette-you at all. I haven’t wooed her-you.”

Marinette blinked. “No offense, but are you like... okay ?”

“Little hungover,” he admitted, sidestepping her concern. “My point is, I should’ve been walking you to class and bringing you flowers for years now, I was just too clueless to realize it! And now I have many, many months of woo-ing to make up for.” His expression grew soft. “I’ve gotta win your heart.”
Marinette felt said heart thump in glee. “You’ve already won it, though.”

“Well I need to win it more,” he dismissed. “You deserve candlelight dinners and picnics in the park, not me jumping you in every dirty alleyway and abandoned building in Paris.”

“To be fair, I think about eight out of ten times it was Ladybug doing the jumping,” Marinette pointed out.

Chat waved a hand as if to fan the notion away. “Well that’s fine for a vixen of the night like Ladybug, but my fair, sweet, innocent Marinette—”

“I jerked you off like four days ago,” his fair, sweet, innocent Marinette interjected drily.

“—needs to be handled chastely. She needs a gentleman to capture her tender affections with only the most romantic of gestures—”

“Plus you definitely got me off over the phone on Wednesday,” she recounted.

“—and the purest of intentions—”

“Remember when you mentioned us ‘not leaving the bed for hours’ after you found out my identity? I sure do.”

“—TO SWEEP HER OFF HER FEET,” Chat finished in a near shout. He glared her down, the look far too loving to even hit the edge of annoyance, and Marinette fluttered her lashes harmlessly up at him. “You know what? I think I’ve decided on your punishment.”

“Oh?”

“Yeah,” he said, his expression turning smug. “You’re going to let me take you out. Like on a real date. You’re going to let me bring you flowers and hold your hand and walk you back to your door.”

“That doesn’t sound like a punishment to me.”

“And no more messing around until after our third date.”

Silence.

Marinette cleared her throat. “Define ‘messing around’...”

“No handjobs,” Chat began, ignoring her sudden pout. “No taking off clothes. No feeling each other up through our clothes.”

Marinette opened her mouth to speak.

“And no more funny business over the phone either!” he rushed to add. “We can kiss and cuddle, but nothing beyond that. Not until I’ve properly wooed you.”

A bit stunned by this turn of events, Marinette searched her boyfriend up and down, but she could find no evidence that he was kidding. If anything Chat looked determined, almost pleading, and it confused her. Marinette had hoped assumed her week-long seduction would result in Adrien tossing
her into bed and having his wicked way with her, so why was he backing off now? Had she pushed too hard? Crossed a line?

And then it hit her.

Marinette thought back to the night by the billboard. She recalled how she’d felt after finding out Chat Noir’s identity. She remembered the resulting shock, the confliction, the reconciliation of two people becoming one. It had been a lot to take in at once, which is exactly what Adrien was now going through. The only difference between her reaction to such a revelation and Adrien’s was that he wanted to spend this adjustment period with her, not running away from her, and Marinette figured the very least she could do was respect his need to ease into things slowly. He more than deserved that much.

“Alright,” she said, reaching out to twine their fingers together. She smiled. “I give you permission to woo me.”

“And?” Chat prompted.

“And no funny business till after the third date.”

“Thank you,” he said, squeezing their joined hands. “Now that’s not so bad a punishment, is it?”

“Still kinda wish you would’ve just spanked me,” Marinette murmured beneath her breath, covering it with a cough.

“See that?” Chat began, poking an accusatory finger to the very tip of her nose, “That’s against the rules. Dirty talk falls under the bounds of funny business so you better watch yourself Dupain-Cheng.”

Marinette’s face was a mask of pure innocence. “Alright. You hate dirty talk and you never want me to do it ever again. Noted.”

Chat’s eyes narrowed. “That’s not—”

“Marinette!”

Both teens jumped at the muffled call from below, scooting apart like they’d been caught in the act. Marinette held up a finger, signalling Chat to wait silently as she crept to the porthole and stuck her head into her bedroom.

“Yes, Maman?”

“I know it’s your day off, but Papa could really use some help in the kitchen if you’re feeling up to it.”

Marinette cringed, conflicted. Did she want to go proof dough and fill cream puffs after what she’d just gone through? Absolutely not. But her parents worked hard enough as is, and she hated to leave them short-handed when she was perfectly capable of helping.

“You can go if you need to,” Chat whispered from behind her.

“You sure?” Marinette asked. He nodded.

“Marinette?” her mother called again. “Did you hear me?”
“Coming! Let me just change and I’ll be down in a minute!” Marinette flipped the hatch shut with another metallic screech, turning to face her boyfriend. “Sorry about that.”

“It’s alright,” Chat assured her, standing and stretching in a particularly feline manner. He blinked up at the sun, seeming put off by it’s brightness. “As much as I like spending time with you, I could really go for a shower and like six glasses of water. Maybe some painkillers.”

Marinette giggled. “How much did you drink last night?”

“Just enough to make the best mistake of my life,” he answered with a wink, slipping his baton out from it’s holster and idly twirling it between his fingers.

Marinette rolled her eyes. “Go home and sleep off your hangover, Alley Cat. I’ll see you in class tomorrow.”

Chat paused, glancing out to where their campus sat a scant two blocks down the road. “Can I walk you there?” he asked, his earlier bravado melting into something impossibly earnest and excited. Marinette felt herself melt right alongside it.

“Yeah. You can.”

“Cool,” he breathed, sticking his fist out with a crooked smile. Returning the smile, Marinette dutifully bumped it with her own, just as she had done a million time before. Chat followed this up by seamlessly grabbing her hand and hoisting it up for a kiss, just as he had done a million times before, and despite the familiarity of it all Marinette still found herself flushing at the gesture.

“Love you, Bugaboo,” said Adrien Agreste.


She watched him vault off until he disappeared over the Parisian skyline, feeling more whole than she had in a very long time.

Chapter End Notes

The evil is defeated. I'm finally free.

Also, a side note: Consider this your second mercy release. I realized I could've easily ended the fic here and published any post-reveal happenings as a sequel, but after THREE YEARS of writing this monstrosity I've gotten kind of attached, and can't help but want to see if I could possibly drag it out for another 40 chapters.

Because I'm a masochist, apparently.

But ANYWAYS, I definitely wouldn't be upset if some of y'all consider this the final chapter and decide to dip. Thank you so much for reading and supporting me over the years. It means the world. <3 And for those of you slow-burn lovers out there who would gladly read another 150k+ more words of Adrien and Marinette being dumb and in love with absolutely no other plot beyond that, buckle in. We've got so much more to explore...
Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!